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OF THE

ESSAY ON HUMAN UNDERSTANDING continued.

BOOK III.

OF WORDS.

CHAP. VII.

Of particles.

SECT.

1. Particles connect parts, or whole sentences together.
2. In them consists the art of well speaking.
3, 4. They show what relation the mind gives to its own thoughts.
5. Instance in But.
6. This matter but lightly touched here.

CHAP. VIII.

Of abstract and concrete terms.

SECT.

1. Abstract terms not predicable one of another, and why.
2. They show the difference of our ideas.

CHAP. IX.

Of the imperfection of words.

SECT.

1. Words are used for recording and communicating our thoughts.
2. Any words will serve for recording.
3. Communication by words, civil or philosophical.
4. The imperfection of words, is the doubtfulness of their signification.
5. Causes of their imperfection.
6. The names of mixed modes doubtful: first, because the ideas they stand for, are so complex.
7. Secondly, because they have no standards.
8. Propriety not a sufficient remedy.
9. The way of learning these names contributes also to their doubtfulness.
10. Hence unavoidable obscurity in ancient authors.
11. Names of substances, of doubtful signification.
12. Names of substances referred, first, to real essences, that cannot be known.
13, 14. Secondly, to co-existing qualities, which are known but imperfectly.
15. With this imperfection they may serve for civil, but not well for philosophical use.
16. Instance, liquor of the nerves.
17. Instance, gold.
18. The names of simple ideas, the least doubtful.

19. And next to them, ſimple modes.
20. The moſt doubtful, are the names of very compounded mixed modes and ſubſtances.
21. Why this imperfection charged upon words.
22, 23. This ſhould teach us moderation in impoſing our own ſenſe of old authors.

CHAP. X.

Of the abuſe of words.

SECT.
1. Abuſe of words.
2, 3. Firſt, words without any, or without clear ideas.
4. Occaſioned by learning names, before the ideas they belong to.
5. Secondly, a ſteady application of them.
6. Thirdly, affected obſcurity, by wrong application.
7. Logic and diſpute have much contributed to this.
8. Calling it ſubtilty.
9. This learning very little benefits ſociety.
10. But deſtroys the inſtruments of knowledge and communication.
11. As uſeful as to confound the ſound of the letters.
12. This art has perplexed religion and juſtice.
13. And ought not to paſs for learning.
14. Fourthly, taking them for things.
15. Inſtance in matter.
16. This makes errours laſting.
17. Fifthly, ſetting them for what they cannot ſignify.
18. V. g. putting them for the real eſſences of ſubſtances.
19. Hence we think every change of our idea in ſubſtances, not to change the ſpecies.
20. The cauſe of this abuſe, a ſuppoſition of nature's working always regularly.
21. This abuſe contains two falſe ſuppoſitions.
22. Sixthly, a ſuppoſition that words have a certain and evident ſignification.
23. The ends of language: firſt, to convey our ideas.
24. Secondly, to do it with quickneſs.
25. Thirdly, therewith to convey the knowledge of things.
26—31. How men's words fail in all theſe.
32. How in ſubſtances.
33. How in modes and relations.
34. Seventhly, figurative ſpeech alſo an abuſe of language.

CHAP. XI.

Of the remedies of the foregoing imperfections and abuſes.

SECT.
1. They are worth ſeeking.
2. Are not eaſy.
3. But yet neceſſary to philoſophy.
4. Miſuſe of words, the cauſe of great errours.
5. Obſtinacy.
6. And wrangling.
7. Inſtance, bat and bird.
8. Firſt remedy, to uſe no word without an idea.
9. Secondly, to have diſtinct ideas annexed to them in modes.
10. And diſtinct and conformable in ſubſtances.
11. Thirdly, propriety.
12. Fourthly, to make known their meaning.
13. And that three ways.
14. Firſt,

14. First, in simple ideas by synonimous terms, or showing.
15. Secondly, in mixed modes by definition.
16. Morality capable of demonstration.
17. Definitions can make moral discourses clear.
18. And is the only way.
19. Thirdly, in substances, by showing and defining.
20, 21. Ideas of the leading qualities of substances, are best got by showing.
22. The ideas of their powers, best by definition.
23. A reflection on the knowledge of spirits.
24. Ideas also of substances must be conformable to things.
25. Not easy to be made so.
26. Fifthly, by constancy in their signification.
27. When the variation is to be explained.

BOOK IV.

Of Knowledge and Opinion.

CHAP. I.

Of knowledge in general.

SECT.

1. Our knowledge conversant about our ideas.
2. Knowledge is the perception of the agreement, or disagreement, of two ideas.
3. This agreement fourfold.
4. First, of identity, or diversity.
5. Secondly, relation.
6. Thirdly, of co-existence.
7. Fourthly, of real existence.
8. Knowledge actual or habitual.
9. Habitual knowledge, twofold.

CHAP. II.

Of the degrees of our knowledge.

SECT.

1. Intuitive.
2. Demonstrative.
3. Depends on proofs,
4. But not so easy.
5. Not without precedent doubt.
6. Not so clear.
7. Each step must have intuitive evidence.
8. Hence the mistake ex præcognitis & præconcessis.
9. Demonstration not limited to quantity.
10—13. Why it has been so thought.
14. Sensitive knowledge of particular existence.
15. Knowledge not always clear, where the ideas are so.

CHAP. III.

Of the extent of human knowledge.

SECT.

1. First, no farther than we have ideas.
2. Secondly, no farther than we can perceive their agreement or disagreement.
3. Thirdly, intuitive knowledge extends itself not to all the relations of all our ideas.

4. Fourthly, not demonstrative knowledge.
5. Fifthly, sensitive knowledge, narrower than either.
6. Sixthly, our knowledge, therefore, narrower than our ideas.
7. How far our knowledge reaches.
8. First, our knowledge of identity and diversity, as far as our ideas.
9. Secondly, of co-existence, a very little way.
10. Because the connexion between most simple ideas is unknown.
11. Especially of secondary qualities.
12—14. And farther, because all connexion between any secondary and primary qualities is undiscoverable.
15. Of repugnancy to co-exist, larger.
16. Of the co-existence of powers, a very little way.
17. Of spirits yet narrower.
18. Thirdly, of other relations, it is not easy to say how far. Morality capable of demonstration.
19. Two things have made moral ideas thought incapable of demonstration. Their complexedness and want of sensible representations.
20. Remedies of those difficulties.
21. Fourthly, of real existence; we have an intuitive knowledge of our own, demonstrative of God's, sensitive of some few other things,
22. Our ignorance great.
23. First, one cause of it, want of ideas, either such as we have no conception of, or such as particularly we have not.
24. Because of their remoteness, or,
25. Because of their minuteness.
26. Hence no science of bodies.
27. Much less of spirits.
28. Secondly, want of a discoverable connexion, between ideas we have.
29. Instances.
30. Thirdly, want of tracing our ideas.
31. Extent in respect of universality.

CHAP. IV.

Of the reality of our knowledge.

SECT.
1. Objection, knowledge placed in ideas, may be all bare vision.
2, 3. Answer, not so, where ideas agree with things.
4. As, first, all simple ideas do.
5. Secondly, all complex ideas, except of substances.
6. Hence the reality of mathematical knowledge.
7. And of moral.
8. Existence not required to make it real.
9. Nor will it be less true, or certain, because moral ideas are of our own making and naming.
10. Mis-naming disturbs not the certainty of the knowledge.
11. Ideas of substances have their archetypes without us.
12. So far as they agree with these, so far our knowledge concerning them is real.

13. In

13. In our inquiries about substances, we must consider ideas, and not confine our thoughts to names, or species supposed set out by names.
14, 15. Objection against a changeling being something between man and beast answered.
16. Monsters.
17. Words and species.
18. Recapitulation.

CHAP. V.

Of truth in general.

SECT.

1. What truth is.
2. A right joining, or separating of signs; i. e. ideas or words.
3. Which make mental, or verbal propositions.
4. Mental propositions are very hard to be treated of.
5. Being nothing but joining, or separating ideas, without words.
6. When mental propositions contain real truth, and when verbal.
7. Objection against verbal truth, that thus it may be all chimerical.
8. Answered, real truth is about ideas agreeing to things.
9. Falshood is the joining of names, otherwise than their ideas agree.
10. General propositions to be treated of more at large.
11. Moral and metaphysical truth.

CHAP. VI.

Of universal propositions, their truth and certainty.

SECT.

1. Treating of words, necessary to knowledge.
2. General truths hardly to be understood, but in verbal propositions.
3. Certainty two-fold, of truth, and of knowledge.
4. No proposition can be known to be true, where the essence of each species mentioned, is not known.
5. This more particularly concerns substances.
6. The truth of few universal propositions concerning substances, is to be known.
7. Because co existence of ideas in few cases is to be known.
8, 9. Instance in gold.
10. As far as any such co-existence can be known, so far universal propositions may be certain. But this will go but a little way, because,
11, 12. The qualities, which make our complex ideas of substances, depend mostly on external, remote, and unperceived causes.
13. Judgment may reach farther, but that is not knowledge.
14. What is requisite for our knowledge of substances.
15. Whilst our ideas of substances contain not their real constitutions, we can make but few general, certain propositions concerning them.
16. Wherein lies the general certainty of propositions.

CHAP. VII.

Of maxims.

SECT.

1. They are self-evident.
2. Wherein that self-evidence consists.
3. Self-evidence not peculiar to received axioms.

4. First,

4. First, as to identity and diversity, all propositions are equally self-evident.
5. Secondly, in co-existence, we have few self-evident propositions.
6. Thirdly, in other relations we may have.
7. Fourthly, concerning real existence, we have none.
8. These axioms do not much influence our other knowledge.
9. Because they are not the truths the first known.
10. Because on them the other parts of our knowledge do not depend.
11. What use these general maxims have.
12. Maxims, if care be not taken in the use of words, may prove contradictions.
13. Instance in vacuum.
14. They prove not the existence of things without us.
15. Their application dangerous about complex ideas.
16—18. Instance in man.
19. Little use of these maxims, in proofs, where we have clear and distinct ideas.
20. Their use dangerous, where our ideas are confused.

CHAP. VIII.

Of trifling propositions.

SECT.

1. Some propositions bring no increase to our knowledge.
2, 3. As, first, identical propositions.
4. Secondly, when a part of any complex idea is predicated of the whole.
5. As part of the definition of the term defined.
6. Instance, man and palfry.
7. For this teaches but the signification of words.
8. But no real knowledge.
9. General propositions, concerning substances, are often trifling.
10. And why.
11. Thirdly, using words variously, is trifling with them.
12. Marks of verbal propositions. First, predication in abstract.
13. Secondly, a part of the definition, predicated of any term.

CHAP. IX.

Of our knowledge of existence.

SECT.

1. General, certain propositions concern not existence.
2. A threefold knowledge of existence.
3. Our knowledge of our own existence, is intuitive.

CHAP. X.

Of the existence of a God.

SECT.

1. We are capable of knowing certainly that there is a God.
2. Man knows that he himself is.
3. He knows also, that nothing cannot produce a being, therefore something eternal.
4. That eternal being must be most powerful.
5. And most knowing.
6. And therefore God.
7. Our idea of a most perfect being, not the sole proof of a God.
8. Something from eternity.
9. Two sorts of beings, cogitative and incogitative.
10. In-

10. Incogitative being cannot produce a cogitative.
11, 12. Therefore there has been an eternal wisdom.
13. Whether material, or no.
14. Not material, first, because every particle of matter is not cogitative.
15. Secondly, one particle alone of matter cannot be cogitative.
16. Thirdly, a system of incogitative matter cannot be cogitative.
17. Whether in motion or at rest.
18, 19. Matter not co-eternal with an eternal mind.

CHAP. XI.

Of the knowledge of the existence of other things.

SECT.

1. Is to be had only by sensation.
2. Instance, whiteness of this paper.
3. This, though not so certain as demonstration, yet may be called knowledge, and proves the existence of things without us.
4. First, because we cannot have them but by the inlets of the senses.
5. Secondly, because an idea from actual sensation, and another from memory, are very distinct perceptions.
6. Thirdly, pleasure or pain, which accompanies actual sensation, accompanies not the returning of those ideas, without the external objects.
7. Fourthly, our senses assist one another's testimony of the existence of outward things.
8. This certainty is as great as our condition needs.
9. But reaches no farther than actual sensation.
10. Folly to expect demonstration in every thing.
11. Past existence is known by memory.
12. The existence of spirits not knowable.
13. Particular propositions concerning existence, are knowable.
14. And general propositions concerning abstract ideas.

CHAP. XII.

Of the improvement of our knowledge.

SECT.

1. Knowledge is not from maxims.
2. (The occasion of that opinion.)
3. But from the comparing clear and distinct ideas.
4. Dangerous to build upon precarious principles.
5. This no certain way to truth.
6. But to compare clear, complete ideas under steady names.
7. The true method of advancing knowledge, is by considering our abstract ideas.
8. By which, morality, also, may be made clearer.
9. But knowledge of bodies is to be improved only by experience.
10. This may procure us convenience, not science.
11. We are fitted for moral knowledge, and natural improvements.
12. But must beware of hypotheses and wrong principles.

13. The

13. The true use of hypotheses.
14. Clear and distinct ideas, with settled names, and the finding of those, which show their agreement or disagreement, are the ways to enlarge our knowledge.
15. Mathematics an instance of it.

CHAP. XIII.

Some other considerations concerning our knowledge.

SECT.
1. Our knowledge partly necessary, partly voluntary.
2. The application voluntary; but we know as things are, not as we please.
3. Instances in number, and in natural religion.

CHAP. XIV.

Of judgment.

SECT.
1. Our knowledge being short, we want something else.
2. What use to be made of this twilight estate.
3. Judgment supplies the want of knowledge.
4. Judgment is the presuming things to be so, without perceiving it.

CHAP. XV.

Of probability.

SECT.
1. Probability is the appearance of agreement, upon fallible proofs.
2. It is to supply the want of knowledge.
3. Being that, which makes us presume things to be true, before we know them to be so.
4. The grounds of probability are two; conformity with our own experience, or the testimony of others experience.
5. In this all the arguments, pro and con, ought to be examined, before we come to a judgment.
6. They being capable of great variety.

CHAP. XVI.

Of the degrees of assent.

SECT.
1. Our assent ought to be regulated by the grounds of probability.
2. These cannot be always actually in view, and then we must content ourselves with the remembrance, that we once saw ground for such a degree of assent.
3. The ill consequence of this, if our former judgment were not rightly made.
4. The right use of it, is mutual charity and forbearance.
5. Probability is either of matter of fact, or speculation.
6. The concurrent experience of all other men with ours produces assurance approaching to knowledge.
7. Unquestionable testimony and experience for the most part produce confidence.
8. Fair testimony, and the nature of the thing indifferent, produces also confident belief.

9. Ex-

9. Experience and testimonies clashing, infinitely vary the degrees of probability.
10. Traditional testimonies, the farther removed, the less their proof.
11. Yet history is of great use.
12. In things, which sense cannot discover, analogy is the great rule of probability.
13. One case, where contrary experience lessens not the testimony.
14. The bare testimony of revelation is the highest certainty.

CHAP. XVII.

Of reason.

SECT.
1. Various significations of the word reason.
2. Wherein reasoning consists.
3. Its four parts.
4. Syllogism, not the great instrument of reason.
5. Helps little in demonstration, less in probability.
6. Serves not to increase our knowledge, but fence with it.
7. Other helps should be sought.
8. We reason about particulars.
9. First, reason fails us for want of ideas.
10. Secondly, because of obscure and imperfect ideas.
11. Thirdly, for want of intermediate ideas.
12. Fourthly, because of wrong principles.
13. Fifthly, because of doubtful terms.
14. Our highest degree of knowledge is intuitive, without reasoning.
15. The next is demonstration by reasoning.
16. To supply the narrowness of this, we have nothing but judgment upon probable reasoning.
17. Intuition, demonstration, judgment.
18. Consequences of words, and consequences of ideas.
19. Four sorts of arguments: first, ad verecundiam.
20. Secondly, ad ignorantiam.
21. Thirdly, ad hominem.
22. Fourthly, ad judicium.
23. Above, contrary, and according to reason.
24. Reason and faith not opposite.

CHAP. XVIII.

Of faith and reason, and their distinct provinces.

SECT.
1. Necessary to know their boundaries.
2. Faith and reason what, as contra-distinguished.
3. No new simple idea can be conveyed by traditional revelation.
4. Traditional revelation may make us know propositions, knowable also by reason, but not with the same certainty that reason doth.
5. Revelation cannot be admitted, against the clear evidence of reason.
6. Traditional revelation much less.
7. Things above reason,
8. Or not contrary to reason, if revealed, are matter of faith.
9. Revelation in matters where reason cannot judge, or but probably, ought to be hearkened to.

10. In matters, where reason can afford certain knowledge, that is to be hearkened to.
11. If the boundaries be not set between faith and reason, no enthusiasm, or extravagancy in religion, can be contradicted.

CHAP. XIX.

Of enthusiasm.

SECT.
1. Love of truth necessary.
2. A forwardness to dictate, from whence.
3. Force of enthusiasm.
4. Reason and revelation.
5. Rise of enthusiasm.
6, 7. Enthusiasm.
8, 9. Enthusiasm mistaken for seeing and feeling.
10. Enthusiasm, how to be discovered.
11. Enthusiasm fails of evidence, that the proposition is from God.
12. Firmness of persuasion, no proof that any proposition is from God.
13. Light in the mind, what.
14. Revelation must be judged of by reason.
15, 16. Belief, no proof of revelation.

CHAP. XX.

Of wrong assent, or errour.

SECT.
1. Causes of errour.
2. First, want of proofs.
3. Obj. What shall become of those who want them, answered.
4. People hindered from inquiry.
5. Secondly, want of skill to use them.
6. Thirdly, want of will to use them.
7. Fourthly, wrong measures of probability; whereof,
8—10. First, doubtful propositions, taken for principles.
11. Secondly, received hypotheses.
12. Thirdly, predominant passions.
13. The means of evading probabilities, 1st, supposed fallacy.
14. 2dly, supposed arguments for the contrary.
15. What probabilities determine the assent.
16. Where it is in our power to suspend it.
17. Fourthly, authority.
18. Men not in so many errours, as is imagined.

CHAP. XXI.

Of the division of the sciences.

SECT.
1. Three sorts.
2. First, Physica.
3. Secondly, Practica.
4. Thirdly, Σημειωτικὴ.
5. This is the first division of the objects of knowledge,

OF

Human Underſtanding.

BOOK III. CHAP. VII.

Of Particles.

§. 1. BESIDES words which are names of ideas in the mind, there are a great many others that are made uſe of, to ſignify the connexion that the mind gives to ideas, or propoſitions, one with another. The mind, in communicating its thought to others, does not only need ſigns of the ideas it has then before it, but others alſo, to ſhow or intimate ſome particular action of its own, at that time, relating to thoſe ideas. This it does ſeveral ways; as is, and is not, are the general marks of the mind, affirming or denying. But beſides affirmation or negation, without which there is in words no truth or falſhood, the mind does, in declaring its ſentiments to others, connect not only the parts of propoſitions, but whole ſentences one to another, with their ſeveral relations and dependencies, to make a coherent diſcourſe.

Particles connect parts, or whole ſentences together.

§. 2. The words, whereby it ſignifies what connexion it gives to the ſeveral affirmations and negations, that it unites in one continued reaſoning or narration, are generally called particles; and it is in the right uſe of theſe, that more particularly conſiſts the clearneſs and beauty of a good ſtyle. To think well, it is not enough that a

In them conſiſts the art of well-ſpeaking.

man has ideas clear and diſtinct in his thoughts, nor that he obſerves the agreement or diſagreement of ſome of them; but he muſt think in train, and obſerve the dependence of his thoughts and reaſonings upon one another. And to expreſs well ſuch methodical and rational thoughts, he muſt have words to ſhow what connexion, reſtriction, diſtinction, oppoſition, emphaſis, &c. he gives to each reſpective part of his diſcourſe. To miſtake in any of theſe, is to puzzle, inſtead of informing his hearer; and therefore it is that thoſe words which are not truly by themſelves the names of any ideas, are of ſuch conſtant and indiſpenſable uſe in language, and do much contribute to men's well expreſſing themſelves.

They ſhow what relation the mind gives to its own thoughts.

§. 3. This part of grammar has been perhaps as much neglected, as ſome others over-diligently cultivated. It is eaſy for men to write, one after another, of caſes and genders, moods and tenſes, gerunds and ſupines: in theſe, and the like, there has been great diligence uſed; and particles themſelves, in ſome languages, have been, with great ſhow of exactneſs, ranked into their ſeveral orders. But though prepoſitions and conjunctions, &c. are names well known in grammar, and the particles contained under them carefully ranked into their diſtinct ſubdiviſions; yet he who would ſhow the right uſe of particles, and what ſignificancy and force they have, muſt take a little more pains, enter into his own thoughts, and obſerve nicely the ſeveral poſtures of his mind in diſcourſing.

§. 4. Neither is it enough, for the explaining of theſe words, to render them, as is uſual in dictionaries, by words of another tongue which come neareſt to their ſignification: for what is meant by them is commonly as hard to be underſtood in one, as another language. They are all marks of ſome action, or intimation of the mind; and therefore to underſtand them rightly, the ſeveral views, poſtures, ſtands, turns, limitations, and exceptions, and ſeveral other thoughts of the mind, for which we have either none, or very deficient names, are diligently to be ſtudied. Of theſe there is a great variety,

riety, much exceeding the number of particles that moſt languages have to expreſs them by; and therefore it is not to be wondered that moſt of theſe particles have divers, and ſometimes almoſt oppoſite ſignifications. In the Hebrew tongue there is a particle conſiſting of but one ſingle letter, of which there are reckoned up, as I remember, ſeventy, I am ſure above fifty ſeveral ſignifications.

Inſtance in But.

§. 5. But is a particle, none more familiar in our language; and he that ſays it is a diſcretive conjunction, and that it anſwers *ſed* in Latin, or *mais* in French, thinks he has ſufficiently explained it. But it ſeems to me to intimate ſeveral relations the mind gives to the ſeveral propoſitions or parts of them, which it joins by this monoſyllable.

Firſt, "but to ſay no more:" here it intimates a ſtop of the mind in the courſe it was going, before it came quite to the end of it.

Secondly, "I ſaw but two plants:" here it ſhows, that the mind limits the ſenſe to what is expreſſed, with a negation of all other.

Thirdly, "you pray; but it is not that God would bring you to the true religion,"

Fourthly, "but that he would confirm you in your own." The firſt of theſe Buts intimates a ſuppoſition in the mind of ſomething otherwiſe than it ſhould be; the latter ſhows, that the mind makes a direct oppoſition between that, and what goes before it.

Fifthly, "all animals have ſenſe; but a dog is an animal:" here it ſignifies little more, but that the latter propoſition is joined to the former, as the minor of a ſyllogiſm.

This matter but lightly touched here.

§. 6. To theſe, I doubt not, might be added a great many other ſignifications of this particle, if it were my buſineſs to examine it in its full latitude, and conſider it in all the places it is to be found: which if one ſhould do, I doubt, whether in all thoſe manners it is made uſe of, it would deſerve the title of diſcretive, which grammarians give to it. But I intend not here a full

explication of this sort of signs. The instances I have given in this one, may give occasion to reflect on their use and force in language, and lead us into the contemplation of several actions of our minds in discoursing, which it has found a way to intimate to others by these particles; some whereof constantly, and others in certain constructions, have the sense of a whole sentence contained in them.

CHAP. VIII.

Of Abstract and Concrete Terms.

Abstract terms not predicable one of another, and why.

§. 1. THE ordinary words of language, and our common use of them, would have given us light into the nature of our ideas, if they had been but considered with attention. The mind, as has been shown, has a power to abstract its ideas, and so they become essences, general essences, whereby the sorts of things are distinguished. Now each abstract idea being distinct, so that of any two the one can never be the other, the mind will, by its intuitive knowledge, perceive their difference; and therefore in propositions no two whole ideas can ever be affirmed one of another. This we see in the common use of language, which permits not any two abstract words, or names of abstract ideas, to be affirmed one of another. For how near of kin soever they may seem to be, and how certain soever it is, that man is an animal, or rational, or white, yet every one at first hearing perceives the falshood of these propositions; humanity is animality, or rationality, or whiteness: and this is as evident, as any of the most allowed maxims. All our affirmations then are only inconcrete, which is the affirming, not one abstract idea to be another, but one abstract idea to be joined to another; which abstract ideas, in substances, may be of any sort; in all the rest, are little else but of relations; and

and in substances, the most frequent are of powers; v. g. "a man is white," signifies, that the thing that has the essence of a man, has also in it the essence of whiteness, which is nothing but a power to produce the idea of whiteness in one, whose eyes can discover ordinary objects; or "a man is rational," signifies that the same thing that hath the essence of a man, hath also in it the essence of rationality, i. e. a power of reasoning.

They show the difference of our ideas.

§. 2. This distinction of names shows us also the difference of our ideas: for if we observe them, we shall find that our simple ideas have all abstract, as well as concrete names; the one whereof is (to speak the language of grammarians) a substantive, the other an adjective; as whiteness, white, sweetness, sweet. The like also holds in our ideas of modes and relations; as justice, just; equality, equal; only with this difference, that some of the concrete names of relations, amongst men chiefly, are substantives; as paternitas, pater; whereof it were easy to render a reason. But as to our ideas of substances, we have very few or no abstract names at all. For though the schools have introduced animalitas, humanitas, corporietas, and some others; yet they hold no proportion with that infinite number of names of substances, to which they never were ridiculous enough to attempt the coining of abstract ones: and those few that the schools forged, and put into the mouths of their scholars, could never yet get admittance into common use, or obtain the licence of public approbation. Which seems to me at least to intimate the confession of all mankind, that they have no ideas of the real essences of substances, since they have not names for such ideas: which no doubt they would have had, had not their consciousness to themselves of their ignorance of them kept them from so idle an attempt. And therefore though they had ideas enough to distinguish gold from a stone, and metal from wood; yet they but timorously ventured on such terms, as aurietas and saxietas, metallietas and lignietas, or the like names, which should pretend to signify the real essences of those substances, whereof they knew they had no ideas. And indeed it

was only the doctrine of ſubſtantial forms, and the confidence of miſtaken pretenders to a knowledge that they had not, which firſt coined, and then introduced animalitas, and humanitas, and the like; which yet went very little farther than their own ſchools, and could never get to be current amongſt underſtanding men. Indeed, humanitas was a word familiar amongſt the Romans, but in a far different ſenſe, and ſtood not for the abſtract eſſence of any ſubſtance; but was the abſtracted name of a mode, and its concrete humanus, not homo.

CHAP. IX.

Of the Imperfection of Words.

Words are uſed for recording and communicating our thoughts.

§. 1. FROM what has been ſaid in the foregoing chapters, it is eaſy to perceive what imperfection there is in language, and how the very nature of words makes it almoſt unavoidable for many of them to be doubtful and uncertain in their ſignifications. To examine the perfection or imperfection of words, it is neceſſary firſt to conſider their uſe and end: for as they are more or leſs fitted to attain that, ſo are they more or leſs perfect. We have, in the former part of this diſcourſe, often upon occaſion mentioned a double uſe of words.

Firſt, one for the recording of our own thoughts.

Secondly, the other for the communicating of our thoughts to others.

Any words will ſerve for recording.

§. 2. As to the firſt of theſe, for the recording our own thoughts for the help of our own memories, whereby, as it were, we talk to ourſelves, any words will ſerve the turn. For ſince ſounds are voluntary and indifferent ſigns of any ideas, a man may uſe what words he pleaſes, to ſignify his own ideas to himſelf: and there will be no imperfection in them, if he conſtantly uſe the ſame ſign

ſign for the ſame idea; for then he cannot fail of having his meaning underſtood, wherein conſiſts the right uſe and perfection of language.

§. 3. Secondly, as to communication of words, that too has a double uſe.

I. Civil.

II. Philoſophical.

Communication by words civil or philoſophical.

Firſt, by their civil uſe, I mean ſuch a communication of thoughts and ideas by words, as may ſerve for the upholding common converſation and commerce, about the ordinary affairs and conveniencies of civil life, in the ſocieties of men one amongſt another.

Secondly, by the philoſophical uſe of words, I mean ſuch an uſe of them, as may ſerve to convey the preciſe notions of things, and to expreſs, in general propoſitions, certain and undoubted truths, which the mind may reſt upon, and be ſatisfied with, in its ſearch after true knowledge. Theſe two uſes are very diſtinct; and a great deal leſs exactneſs will ſerve in the one than in the other, as we ſhall ſee in what follows.

§. 4. The chief end of language in communication being to be underſtood, words ſerve not well for that end, neither in civil nor philoſophical diſcourſe, when any word does not excite in the hearer the ſame idea which it ſtands for in the mind of the ſpeaker. Now ſince ſounds have no natural connexion with our ideas, but have all their ſignification from the arbitrary impoſition of men, the doubtfulneſs and uncertainty of their ſignification, which is the imperfection we here are ſpeaking of, has its cauſe more in the ideas they ſtand for, than in any incapacity there is in one ſound more than in another, to ſignify any idea: for in that regard they are all equally perfect.

The imperfection of words is the doubtfulneſs of their ſignification.

That then which makes doubtfulneſs and uncertainty in the ſignification of ſome more than other words, is the difference of ideas they ſtand for.

§. 5. Words having naturally no ſignification, the idea which each ſtands for muſt be learned and retained by thoſe who would exchange thoughts, and hold intelligible

Cauſes of their imperfection.

discourse with others in any language. But this is hardest to be done, where,

First, the ideas they stand for are very complex, and made up of a great number of ideas put together.

Secondly, where the ideas they stand for have no certain connexion in nature; and so no settled standard, any where in nature existing, to rectify and adjust them by.

Thirdly, when the signification of the word is referred to a standard, which standard is not easy to be known.

Fourthly, where the signification of the word, and the real essence of the thing, are not exactly the same.

These are difficulties that attend the signification of several words that are intelligible. Those which are not intelligible at all, such as names standing for any simple ideas, which another has not organs or faculties to attain; as the names of colours to a blind man, or sounds to a deaf man; need not here be mentioned.

In all these cases we shall find an imperfection in words, which I shall more at large explain, in their particular application to our several sorts of ideas: for if we examine them, we shall find that the names of mixed modes are most liable to doubtfulness and imperfection, for the two first of these reasons; and the names of substances chiefly for the two latter.

The names of mixed modes doubtful. First, because the ideas they stand for are so complex.

§. 6. First the names of mixed modes are many of them liable to great uncertainty and obscurity in their signification.

I. Because of that great composition these complex ideas are often made up of. To make words serviceable to the end of communication, it is necessary (as has been said) that they excite in the hearer exactly the same idea they stand for in the mind of the speaker. Without this, men fill one another's heads with noise and sounds; but convey not thereby their thoughts, and lay not before one another their ideas, which is the end of discourse and language. But when a word stands for a very complex idea that is compounded and decompounded, it is not easy for men to form and retain that idea so exactly,

as

as to make the name in common use stand for the same precise idea, without any the least variation. Hence it comes to pass, that men's names of very compound ideas, such as for the most part are moral words, have seldom, in two different men, the same precise signification; since one man's complex idea seldom agrees with another's, and often differs from his own, from that which he had yesterday, or will have to-morrow.

Secondly, because they have no standards.

§. 7. II. Because the names of mixed modes, for the most part, want standards in nature, whereby men may rectify and adjust their significations; therefore they are very various and doubtful. They are assemblages of ideas put together at the pleasure of the mind, pursuing its own ends of discourse, and suited to its own notions; whereby it designs not to copy any thing really existing, but to denominate and rank things, as they come to agree with those archetypes or forms it has made. He that first brought the word sham, or wheedle, or banter, in use, put together, as he thought fit, those ideas he made it stand for: and as it is with any new names of modes, that are now brought into any language; so it was with the old ones, when they were first made use of. Names therefore that stand for collections of ideas which the mind makes at pleasure, must needs be of doubtful signification, when such collections are no where to be found constantly united in nature, nor any patterns to be shown whereby men may adjust them. What the word murder, or sacrilege, &c. signifies, can never be known from things themselves: there be many of the parts of those complex ideas, which are not visible in the action itself; the intention of the mind, or the relation of holy things, which make a part of murder or sacrilege, have no necessary connection with the outward and visible action of him that commits either: and the pulling the trigger of the gun, with which the murder is committed, and is all the action that perhaps is visible, has no natural connexion with those other ideas that make up the complex one, named murder. They have their union and combination only from the understanding, which unites them under one name: but uniting

uniting them without any rule or pattern, it cannot be but that the ſignification of the name that ſtands for ſuch voluntary collections ſhould be often various in the minds of different men, who have ſcarce any ſtanding rule to regulate themſelves and their notions by, in ſuch arbitrary ideas.

Propriety not a ſufficient remedy.

§. 8. It is true, common uſe, that is the rule of propriety, may be ſuppoſed here to afford ſome aid, to ſettle the ſignification of language; and it cannot be denied, but that in ſome meaſure it does. Common uſe regulates the meaning of words pretty well for common converſation; but no-body having an authority to eſtabliſh the preciſe ſignification of words, nor determined to what ideas any one ſhall annex them, common uſe is not ſufficient to adjuſt them to philoſophical diſcourſes; there being ſcarce any name of any very complex idea (to ſay nothing of others) which in common uſe has not a great latitude, and which keeping within the bounds of propriety, may not be made the ſign of far different ideas. Beſides, the rule and meaſure of propriety itſelf being no where eſtabliſhed, it is often matter of diſpute whether this or that way of uſing a word be propriety of ſpeech or no. From all which it is evident, that the names of ſuch kind of very complex ideas are naturally liable to this imperfection, to be of doubtful and uncertain ſignification; and even in men that have a mind to underſtand one another, do not always ſtand for the ſame idea in ſpeaker and hearer. Though the names glory and gratitude be the ſame in every man's mouth through a whole country, yet the complex collective idea, which every one thinks on, or intends by that name, is apparently very different in men uſing the ſame language.

The way of learning theſe names contributes alſo to their doubtfulneſs.

§. 9. The way alſo wherein the names of mixed modes are ordinarily learned, does not a little contribute to the doubtfulneſs of their ſignification. For if we will obſerve how children learn languages, we ſhall find that to make them underſtand what the names of ſimple ideas, or ſubſtances, ſtand for, people ordinarily ſhow them the thing, whereof they would have

have them have the idea; and then repeat to them the name that ſtands for it, as white, ſweet, milk, ſugar, cat, dog. But as for mixed modes, eſpecially the moſt material of them, moral words, the ſounds are uſually learned firſt; and then to know what complex ideas they ſtand for, they are either beholden to the explication of others, or (which happens for the moſt part) are left to their own obſervation and induſtry; which being little laid out in the ſearch of the true and preciſe meaning of names, theſe moral words are in moſt men's mouths little more than bare ſounds; or when they have any, it is for the moſt part but a very looſe and undetermined, and conſequently obſcure and confuſed ſignification. And even thoſe themſelves, who have with more attention ſettled their notions, do yet hardly avoid the inconvenience, to have them ſtand for complex ideas, different from thoſe which other, even intelligent and ſtudious men, make them the ſigns of. Where ſhall one find any, either controverſial debate, or familiar diſcourſe, concerning honour, faith, grace, religion, church, &c. wherein it is not eaſy to obſerve the different notions men have of them? which is nothing but this, that they are not agreed in the ſignification of thoſe words, nor have in their minds the ſame complex ideas which they make them ſtand for: and ſo all the conteſts that follow thereupon, are only about the meaning of a ſound. And hence we ſee, that in the interpretation of laws, whether divine or human, there is no end; comments beget comments, and explications make new matter for explications; and of limiting, diſtinguiſhing, varying the ſignification of theſe moral words, there is no end. Theſe ideas of men's making are, by men ſtill having the ſame power, multiplied in infinitum. Many a man who was pretty well ſatisfied of the meaning of a text of ſcripture, or clauſe in the code at firſt reading, has by conſulting commentators quite loſt the ſenſe of it, and by theſe elucidations given riſe or increaſe to his doubts, and drawn obſcurity upon the place. I ſay not this, that I think commentaries needleſs; but to ſhow how uncertain the names of mixed modes naturally are, even in the mouths of thoſe who had both the intention

and

and the faculty of ſpeaking as clearly as language was capable to expreſs their thoughts.

Hence unavoidable obſcurity in ancient authors.

§. 10. What obſcurity this has unavoidably brought upon the writings of men, who have lived in remote ages and different countries, it will be needleſs to take notice; ſince the numerous volumes of learned men, employing their thoughts that way, are proofs more than enough to ſhow what attention, ſtudy, ſagacity, and reaſoning are required, to find out the true meaning of ancient authors. But there being no writings we have any great concernment to be very ſolicitous about the meaning of, but thoſe that contain either truths we are required to believe, or laws we are to obey, and draw inconveniencies on us when we miſtake or tranſgreſs; we may be leſs anxious about the ſenſe of other authors; who writing but their own opinions, we are under no greater neceſſity to know them, than they to know ours. Our good or evil depending not on their decrees, we may ſafely be ignorant of their notions: and therefore, in the reading of them, if they do not uſe their words with a due clearneſs and perſpicuity, we may lay them aſide, and, without any injury done them, reſolve thus with ourſelves,

"Si non vis intelligi, debes negligi."

Names of ſubſtances of doubtful ſignification.

§. 11. If the ſignification of the names of mixed modes are uncertain, becauſe there be no real ſtandards exiſting in nature, to which thoſe ideas are referred, and by which they may be adjuſted; the names of ſubſtances are of a doubtful ſignification, for a contrary reaſon, viz. becauſe the ideas they ſtand for are ſuppoſed conformable to the reality of things, and are referred to ſtandards made by nature. In our ideas of ſubſtances we have not the liberty, as in mixed modes, to frame what combinations we think fit, to be the characteriſtical notes to rank and denominate things by. In theſe we muſt follow nature, ſuit our complex ideas to real exiſtences, and regulate the ſignification of their names by the things themſelves, if we will have our names to be ſigns of them, and ſtand for them. Here, it is true, we have patterns to follow; but

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to communicate his complex ideas, which he is therefore forced to make known by an enumeration of the ſimple ones that compoſe them; and ſo is fain often to uſe twenty words, to expreſs what another man ſignifies in one.

§. 28. Thirdly, he that puts not conſtantly the ſame ſign for the ſame idea, but uſes the ſame words ſometimes in one, and ſometimes in another ſignification, ought to paſs in the ſchools and converſation for as fair a man, as he does in the market and exchange, who ſells ſeveral things under the ſame name.

§. 29. Fourthly, he that applies the words of any language to ideas different from thoſe to which the common uſe of that country applies them, however his own underſtanding may be filled with truth and light, will not by ſuch words be able to convey much of it to others, without defining his terms. For however the ſounds are ſuch as are familiarly known, and eaſily enter the ears of thoſe who are accuſtomed to them; yet ſtanding for other ideas than thoſe they uſually are annexed to, and are wont to excite in the mind of the hearers, they cannot make known the thoughts of him who thus uſes them.

§. 30. Fifthly, he that imagined to himſelf ſubſtances ſuch as never have been, and filled his head with ideas which have not any correſpondence with the real nature of things, to which yet he gives ſettled and defined names; may fill his diſcourſe, and perhaps another man's head, with the fantaſtical imaginations of his own brain, but will be very far from advancing thereby one jot in real and true knowledge.

§. 31. He that hath names without ideas, wants meaning in his words, and ſpeaks only empty ſounds. He that hath complex ideas without names for them, wants liberty and diſpatch in his expreſſions, and is neceſſitated to uſe periphraſes. He that uſes his words looſely and unſteadily, will either be not minded, or not underſtood. He that applies his names to ideas different from their common uſe, wants propriety in his language, and ſpeaks gibberiſh. And he that hath the ideas of ſubſtances diſagreeing with the real exiſtence of things,

ſo far wants the materials of true knowledge in his underſtanding, and hath inſtead thereof chimeras.

How in ſubſtances.

§. 32. In our notions concerning ſubſtances, we are liable to all the former inconveniencies: v. g. he that uſes the word tarantula, without having any imagination or idea of what it ſtands for, pronounces a good word; but ſo long means nothing at all by it. 2. He that in a new-diſcovered country ſhall ſee ſeveral ſorts of animals and vegetables, unknown to him before, may have as true ideas of them, as of a horſe or a ſtag; but can ſpeak of them only by a deſcription, till he ſhall either take the names the natives call them by, or give them names himſelf. 3. He that uſes the word body ſometimes for pure extenſion, and ſometimes for extenſion and ſolidity together, will talk very fallaciouſly. 4. He that gives the name horſe to that idea, which common uſage calls mule, talks improperly, and will not be underſtood. 5. He that thinks the name centaur ſtands for ſome real being, impoſes on himſelf, and miſtakes words for things.

How in modes and relations.

§. 33. In modes and relations generally we are liable only to the four firſt of theſe inconveniencies; viz. 1. I may have in my memory the names of modes, as gratitude or charity, and yet not have any preciſe ideas annexed in my thoughts to thoſe names. 2. I may have ideas, and not know the names that belong to them; v. g. I may have the idea of a man's drinking till his colour and humour be altered, till his tongue trips, and his eyes look red, and his feet fail him; and yet not know, that it is to be called drunkenneſs. 3. I may have the ideas of virtues or vices, and names alſo, but apply them amiſs: v. g. when I apply the name frugality to that idea which others call and ſignify by this ſound, covetouſneſs. 4. I may uſe any of thoſe names with inconſtancy. 5. But, in modes and relations, I cannot have ideas diſagreeing to the exiſtence of things: for modes being complex ideas, made by the mind at pleaſure; and relation being but by way of conſidering or comparing two things together, and ſo alſo an idea of my

own

own making; theſe ideas can ſcarce be found to diſagree with any thing exiſting, ſince they are not in the mind as the copies of things regularly made by nature, nor as properties inſeparably flowing from the internal conſtitution or eſſence of any ſubſtance; but as it were patterns lodged in my memory, with names annexed to them, to denominate actions and relations by, as they come to exiſt. But the miſtake is commonly in my giving a wrong name to my conceptions; and ſo uſing words in a different ſenſe from other people, I am not underſtood, but am thought to have wrong ideas of them, when I give wrong names to them. Only if I put in my ideas of mixed modes or relations any inconſiſtent ideas together, I fill my head alſo with chimeras; ſince ſuch ideas, if well examined, cannot ſo much as exiſt in the mind, much leſs any real being ever be denominated from them.

7. Figurative ſpeech alſo an abuſe of language.

§. 34. Since wit and fancy find eaſier entertainment in the world, than dry truth and real knowledge, figurative ſpeeches and alluſion in language will hardly be admitted as an imperfection or abuſe of it. I confeſs, in diſcourſes where we ſeek rather pleaſure and delight than information and improvement, ſuch ornaments as are borrowed from them can ſcarce paſs for faults. But yet if we would ſpeak of things as they are, we muſt allow that all the art of rhetorick, beſides order and clearneſs, all the artificial and figurative application of words eloquence hath invented, are for nothing elſe but to inſinuate wrong ideas, move the paſſions, and thereby miſlead the judgment, and ſo indeed are perfect cheats: and therefore however laudable or allowable oratory may render them in harangues and popular addreſſes, they are certainly, in all diſcourſes that pretend to inform or inſtruct, wholly to be avoided; and where truth and knowledge are concerned, cannot but be thought a great fault, either of the language or perſon that makes uſe of them. What, and how various they are, will be ſuperfluous here to take notice; the books of rhetorick which abound in the world, will inſtruct thoſe who want to be informed: only I cannot but obſerve how little the preſervation

ſervation and improvement of truth and knowledge is the care and concern of mankind; ſince the arts of fallacy are endowed and preferred. It is evident how much men love to deceive and be deceived, ſince rhetorick, that powerful inſtrument of error and deceit, has its eſtabliſhed profeſſors, is publickly taught, and has always been had in great reputation: and, I doubt not, but it will be thought great boldneſs, if not brutality in me, to have ſaid thus much againſt it. Eloquence, like the fair ſex, has too prevailing beauties in it, to ſuffer itſelf ever to be ſpoken againſt. And it is in vain to find fault with thoſe arts of deceiving, wherein men find pleaſure to be deceived.

CHAP. XI.

Of the Remedies of the foregoing Imperfections and Abuſes.

They are worth ſeeking.

§. 1. THE natural and improved imperfections of languages we have ſeen above at large; and ſpeech being the great bond that holds ſociety together, and the common conduit whereby the improvements of knowledge are conveyed from one man, and one generation to another; it would well deſerve our moſt ſerious thoughts to conſider what remedies are to be found for the inconveniencies above-mentioned.

Are not eaſy.

§. 2. I am not ſo vain to think, that any one can pretend to attempt the perfect reforming the languages of the world, no not ſo much as of his own country, without rendering himſelf ridiculous. To require that men ſhould uſe their words conſtantly in the ſame ſenſe, and for none but determined and uniform ideas, would be to think that all men ſhould have the ſame notions, and ſhould talk of nothing but what they have clear and diſtinct ideas of; which is not to be expected by any one, who hath not vanity enough to imagine he can prevail with men to be very knowing or very ſilent. And he muſt be very little ſkilled in the world,

world, who thinks that a voluble tongue ſhall accompany only a good underſtanding; or that men's talking much or little ſhould hold proportion only to their knowledge.

§. 3. But though the market and exchange muſt be left to their own ways of talking, and goſſipings not be robbed of their ancient privilege; though the ſchools and men of argument would perhaps take it amiſs to have any thing offered to abate the length, or leſſen the number, of their diſputes: yet methinks thoſe who pretend ſeriouſly to ſearch after or maintain truth, ſhould think themſelves obliged to ſtudy how they might deliver themſelves without obſcurity, doubtfulneſs, or equivocation, to which men's words are naturally liable, if care be not taken. But yet neceſſary to philoſophy.

§. 4. For he that ſhall well conſider the errors and obſcurity, the miſtakes and confuſion, that are ſpread in the world by an ill uſe of words, will find ſome reaſon to doubt whether language, as it has been employed, has contributed more to the improvement or hindrance of knowledge amongſt mankind. How many are there that, when they would think on things, fix their thoughts only on words, eſpecially when they would apply their minds to moral matters? And who then can wonder, if the reſult of ſuch contemplations and reaſonings, about little more than ſounds, whilſt the ideas they annexed to them are very confuſed and very unſteady, or perhaps none at all; who can wonder, I ſay, that ſuch thoughts and reaſonings end in nothing but obſcurity and miſtake, without any clear judgment or knowledge? Miſuſe of words the great cauſe of errors.

§. 5. This inconvenience, in an ill uſe of words, men ſuffer in their own private meditations: but much more manifeſt are the diſorders which follow from it, in converſation, diſcourſe, and arguings with others. For language being the great conduit, whereby men convey their diſcoveries, reaſonings, and knowledge, from one to another; he that makes an ill uſe of it, though he does not corrupt the fountains of knowledge, which are in things themſelves; Obſtinacy,

yet

yet he does, as much as in him lies, break or ſtop the pipes, whereby it is diſtributed to the public uſe and advantage of mankind. He that uſes words without any clear and ſteady meaning, what does he but lead himſelf and others into errors? And he that deſignedly does it, ought to be looked on as an enemy to truth and knowledge. And yet who can wonder, that all the ſciences and parts of knowledge have been ſo overcharged with obſcure and equivocal terms, and inſignificant and doubtful expreſſions, capable to make the moſt attentive or quick-ſighted very little or not at all the more knowing or orthodox; ſince ſubtilty, in thoſe who make profeſſion to teach or defend truth, hath paſſed ſo much for a virtue: a virtue, indeed, which conſiſting for the moſt part in nothing but the fallacious and illuſory uſe of obſcure or deceitful terms, is only fit to make men more conceited in their ignorance, and more obſtinate in their errors.

And wrangling.

§. 6. Let us look into the books of controverſy of any kind; there we ſhall ſee, that the effect of obſcure, unſteady or equivocal terms, is nothing but noiſe and wrangling about ſounds, without convincing or bettering a man's underſtanding. For if the idea be not agreed on betwixt the ſpeaker and hearer, for which the words ſtand, the argument is not about things, but names. As often as ſuch a word, whoſe ſignification is not aſcertained betwixt them, comes in uſe, their underſtandings have no other object wherein they agree, but barely the ſound; the things that they think on at that time, as expreſſed by that word, being quite different.

Inſtance, bat and bird.

§. 7. Whether a bat be a bird or no, is not a queſtion; whether a bat be another thing than indeed it is, or have other qualities than indeed it has, for that would be extremely abſurd to doubt of: but the queſtion is, 1. Either between thoſe that acknowledged themſelves to have but imperfect ideas of one or both of this ſort of things, for which theſe names are ſuppoſed to ſtand; and then it is a real inquiry concerning the name of a bird or a bat, to make their yet imperfect ideas of it more complete, by examining

mining whether all the ſimple ideas, to which, combined together, they both give the name bird, be all to be found in a bat: but this is a queſtion only of inquirers (not diſputers) who neither affirm, nor deny, but examine. Or, 2. It is a queſtion between diſputants, whereof the one affirms, and the other denies, that a bat is a bird. And then the queſtion is barely about the ſignification of one or both theſe words; in that they not having both the ſame complex ideas, to which they give theſe two names, one holds, and the other denies, that theſe two names may be affirmed one of another. Were they agreed in the ſignification of theſe two names, it were impoſſible they ſhould diſpute about them: for they would preſently and clearly ſee (were that adjuſted between them) whether all the ſimple ideas, of the more general name bird, were found in the complex idea of a bat, or no; and ſo there could be no doubt, whether a bat were a bird or no. And here I deſire it may be conſidered, and carefully examined, whether the greateſt part of the diſputes in the world are not merely verbal, and about the ſignification of words; and whether if the terms they are made in were defined, and reduced in their ſignification (as they muſt be where they ſignify any thing) to determined collections of the ſimple ideas they do or ſhould ſtand for, thoſe diſputes would not end of themſelves, and immediately vaniſh. I leave it then to be conſidered, what the learning of diſputation is, and how well they are employed for the advantage of themſelves or others, whoſe buſineſs is only the vain oſtentation of ſounds; i. e. thoſe who ſpend their lives in diſputes and controverſies. When I ſhall ſee any of thoſe combatants ſtrip all his terms of ambiguity and obſcurity (which every one may do in the words he uſes himſelf) I ſhall think him a champion for knowledge, truth and peace, and not the ſlave of vain-glory, ambition, or a party.

§. 8. To remedy the defects of ſpeech before-mentioned to ſome degree, and to prevent the inconveniencies that follow from them, I imagine the obſervation of theſe following rules may be of uſe, till ſomebody better able ſhall judge it worth his while to think more maturely

maturely on this matter, and oblige the world with his thoughts on it.

1. Remedy, to use no word without an idea.

First, a man shall take care to use no word without a signification, no name without an idea for which he makes it stand. This rule will not seem altogether needless, to any one who shall take the pains to recollect how often he has met with such words, as instinct, sympathy and antipathy, &c. in the discourse of others, so made use of, as he might easily conclude, that those that used them had no ideas in their minds to which they applied them; but spoke them only as sounds, which usually served instead of reasons on the like occasions. Not but that these words, and the like, have very proper significations in which they may be used; but there being no natural connexion between any words and any ideas, these, and any other, may be learned by rote, and pronounced or writ by men, who have no ideas in their minds, to which they have annexed them, and for which they make them stand; which is necessary they should, if men would speak intelligibly even to themselves alone.

2. To have distinct ideas annexed to them in modes.

§. 9. Secondly, it is not enough a man uses his words as signs of some ideas: those he annexes them to, if they be simple, must be clear and distinct; if complex, must be determinate, i. e. the precise collection of simple ideas settled in the mind, with that sound annexed to it, as the sign of that precise determined collection, and no other. This is very necessary in names of modes, and especially moral words; which having no settled objects in nature, from whence their ideas are taken, as from their original, are apt to be very confused. Justice is a word in every man's mouth, but most commonly with a very undetermined loose signification: which will always be so, unless a man has in his mind a distinct comprehension of the component parts, that complex idea consists of: and if it be decompounded, must be able to resolve it still on, till he at last comes to the simple ideas that make it up: and unless this be done, a man makes an ill use of the word, let it be justice, for example, or any other. I do not say, a man need

need ſtand to recollect and make this analyſis at large, every time the word juſtice comes in his way: but this at leaſt is neceſſary, that he have ſo examined the ſignification of that name, and ſettled the idea of all its parts in his mind, that he can do it when he pleaſes. If one, who makes his complex idea of juſtiee to be ſuch a treatment of the perſon or goods of another, as is according to law, hath not a clear and diſtinct idea what law is, which makes a part of his complex idea of juſtice; it is plain his idea of juſtice itſelf will be confuſed and imperfect. This exactneſs will, perhaps, be judged very troubleſome; and therefore moſt men will think they may be excuſed from ſettling the complex ideas of mixed modes ſo preciſely in their minds. But yet I muſt ſay, till this be done, it muſt not be wondered that they have a great deal of obſcurity and confuſion in their own minds, and a great deal of wrangling in their diſcourſe with others.

And diſtinct and conformable in ſubſtances.

§. 10. In the names of ſubſtances, for a right uſe of them, ſomething more is required than barely determined ideas. In theſe the names muſt alſo be conformable to things as they exiſt: but of this I ſhall have occaſion to ſpeak more at large by and by. This exactneſs is abſolutely neceſſary in inquiries after philoſophical knowledge, and in controverſies about truth. And though it would be well too, if it extended itſelf to common converſation, and the ordinary affairs of life? yet I think that is ſcarce to be expected. Vulgar notions ſuit vulgar diſcourſes; and both, though confuſed enough, yet ſerve pretty well the market and the wake. Merchants and lovers, cooks and taylors, have words wherewithal to diſpatch their ordinary affairs; and ſo, I think, might philoſophers and diſputants too, if they had a mind to underſtand, and to be clearly underſtood.

3. Propriety.

§. 11. Thirdly, it is not enough that men have ideas, determined ideas, for which they make theſe ſigns ſtand; but they muſt alſo take care to apply their words, as near as may be, to ſuch ideas as common uſe has annexed them to. For words, eſpecially of languages already framed, being no man's private

vate poſſeſſion, but the common meaſure of commerce and communication, it is not for any one, at pleaſure, to change the ſtamp they are current in, nor alter the ideas they are affixed to; or at leaſt, when there is a neceſſity to do ſo, he is bound to give notice of it. Men's intentions in ſpeaking are, or at leaſt ſhould be, to be underſtood; which cannot be without frequent explanations, demands, and other the like incommodious interruptions, where men do not follow common uſe. Propriety of ſpeech is that which gives our thoughts entrance into other men's minds with the greateſt eaſe and advantage; and therefore deſerves ſome part of our care and ſtudy, eſpecially in the names of moral words. The proper ſignification and uſe of terms is beſt to be learned from thoſe, who in their writings and diſcourſes appear to have had the cleareſt notions, and applied to them their terms with the exacteſt choice and fitneſs. This way of uſing a man's words, according to the propriety of the language, though it have not always the good fortune to be underſtood; yet moſt commonly leaves the blame of it on him, who is ſo unſkilful in the language he ſpeaks, as not to underſtand it, when made uſe of as it ought to be.

4. To make known their meaning.

§. 12. Fourthly, but becauſe common uſe has not ſo viſibly annexed any ſignification to words, as to make men know always certainly what they preciſely ſtand for; and becauſe men, in the improvement of their knowledge, come to have ideas different from the vulgar and ordinary received ones, for which they muſt either make new words (which men ſeldom venture to do, for fear of being thought guilty of affectation or novelty) or elſe muſt uſe old ones, in a new ſignification: therefore after the obſervation of the foregoing rules, it is ſometimes neceſſary, for the aſcertaining the ſignification of words, to declare their meaning; where either common uſe has left it uncertain and looſe (as it has in moſt names of very complex ideas) or where the term, being very material in the diſcourſe, and that upon which it chiefly turns, is liable to any doubtfulneſs or miſtake.

§. 13.

§. 13. As the ideas, men's words ſtand for, are of different ſorts; ſo the way of making known the ideas, they ſtand for, when there is occaſion, is alſo different. For though defining be thought the proper way to make known the proper ſignification of words; yet there are ſome words that will not be defined, as there are others, whoſe preciſe meaning cannot be made known, but by definition; and perhaps a third, which partake ſomewhat of both the other, as we ſhall ſee in the names of ſimple ideas, modes, and ſubſtances.

And that three ways.

§. 14. Firſt, when a man makes uſe of the name of any ſimple idea, which he perceives is not underſtood, or is in danger to be miſtaken, he is obliged by the laws of ingenuity, and the end of ſpeech, to declare his meaning, and make known what idea he makes it ſtand for. This, as has been ſhown, cannot be done by definition; and therefore, when a ſynonymous word fails to do it, there is but one of theſe ways left. Firſt, ſometimes the naming the ſubject, wherein that ſimple idea is to be found, will make its name to be underſtood by thoſe who are acquainted with that ſubject, and know it by that name. So to make a countryman underſtand what "feuillemorte" colour ſignifies, it may ſuffice to tell him, it is the colour of withered leaves falling in autumn. Secondly, but the only ſure way of making known the ſignification of the name of any ſimple idea is by preſenting to his ſenſes that ſubject, which may produce it in his mind, and make him actually have the idea that word ſtands for.

1. In ſimple ideas, by ſynonymous terms, or ſhowing.

§. 15. Secondly, mixed modes, eſpecially thoſe belonging to morality, being moſt of them ſuch combinations of ideas, as the mind puts together of its own choice, and whereof there are not always ſtanding patterns to be found exiſting; the ſignification of their names cannot be made known, as thoſe of ſimple ideas, by any ſhowing; but, in recompence thereof, may be perfectly and exactly defined. For they being combinations of ſeveral ideas, that the mind of man has arbitrarily put together, without re-

2. In mixed modes, by definition.

ference to any archetypes, men may, if they pleaſe, exactly know the ideas that go to each compoſition, and ſo both uſe theſe words in a certain and undoubted ſignification, and perfectly declare, when there is occaſion, what they ſtand for. This, if well conſidered, would lay great blame on thoſe, who make not their diſcourſes about moral things very clear and diſtinct. For ſince the preciſe ſignification of the names of mixed modes, or, which is all one, the real eſſence of each ſpecies is to be known, they being not of nature's but man's making, it is a great negligence and perverſeneſs to diſcourſe of moral things with uncertainty and obſcurity; which is more pardonable in treating of natural ſubſtances, where doubtful terms are hardly to be avoided, for a quite contrary reaſon, as we ſhall ſee by and by.

Morality capable of demonſtration.

§. 16. Upon this ground it is, that I am bold to think, that morality is capable of demonſtration, as well as mathematicks: ſince the preciſe real eſſence of the things moral words ſtand for may be perfectly known; and ſo the congruity and incongruity of the things themſelves be certainly diſcovered; in which conſiſts perfect knowledge. Nor let any one object, that the names of ſubſtances are often to be made uſe of in morality, as well as thoſe of modes, from which will ariſe obſcurity. For as to ſubſtances, when concerned in moral diſcourſes, their divers natures are not ſo much inquired into, as ſuppoſed; v. g. when we ſay that man is ſubject to law, we mean nothing by man, but a corporeal rational creature: what the real eſſence or other qualities of that creature are, in this caſe, is no way conſidered. And therefore, whether a child or changeling be a man in a phyſical ſenſe, may amongſt the naturaliſts be as diſputable as it will, it concerns not at all the moral man, as I may call him, which is this immoveable unchangeable idea, a corporeal rational being. For were there a monkey, or any other creature to be found, that has the uſe of reaſon to ſuch a degree as to be able to underſtand general ſigns, and to deduce conſequences about general ideas, he would no doubt be ſubject to law, and in that ſenſe be a man, how much ſoever he differed in ſhape

from

from others of that name. The names of ſubſtances, if they be uſed in them as they ſhould, can no more diſturb moral than they do mathematical diſcourſes: where, if the mathematician ſpeaks of a cube or globe of gold, or any other body, he has his clear ſettled idea which varies not, though it may by miſtake be applied to a particular body to which it belongs not.

Definitions can make moral diſcourſes clear.

§. 17. This I have here mentioned by the by, to ſhow of what conſequence it is for men, in their names of mixed modes, and conſequently in all their moral diſcourſes, to define their words when there is occaſion: ſince thereby moral knowledge may be brought to ſo great clearneſs and certainty. And it muſt be great want of ingenuity (to ſay no worſe of it) to refuſe to do it: ſince a definition is the only way whereby the preciſe meaning of moral words can be known; and yet a way whereby their meaning may be known certainly, and without leaving any room for any conteſt about it. And therefore the negligence or perverſeneſs of mankind cannot be excuſed, if their diſcourſes in morality be not much more clear than thoſe in natural philoſophy: ſince they are about ideas in the mind, which are none of them falſe or diſproportionate: they having no external beings for the archetypes which they are referred to, and muſt correſpond with. It is far eaſier for men to frame in their minds an idea which ſhall be the ſtandard to which they will give the name juſtice, with which pattern ſo made, all actions that agree ſhall paſs under that denomination; than, having ſeen Ariſtides, to frame an idea that ſhall in all things be exactly like him; who is as he is, let men make what idea they pleaſe of him. For the one, they need but know the combination of ideas that are put together in their own minds; for the other, they muſt inquire into the whole nature, and abſtruſe hidden conſtitution, and various qualities of a thing exiſting without them.

And is the only way.

§. 18. Another reaſon that makes the defining of mixed modes ſo neceſſary, eſpecially of moral words, is what I mentioned a little before, viz. that it is the only way whereby the

ſignification of the moſt of them can be known with certainty. For the ideas they ſtand for, being for the moſt part ſuch whoſe component parts no where exiſt together, but ſcattered and mingled with others, it is the mind alone that collects them, and gives them the union of one idea: and it is only by words, enumerating the ſeveral ſimple ideas which the mind has united, that we can make known to others what their names ſtand for; the aſſiſtance of the ſenſes in this caſe not helping us, by the propoſal of ſenſible objects, to ſhow the ideas which our names of this kind ſtand for, as it does often in the names of ſenſible ſimple ideas, and alſo to ſome degree in thoſe of ſubſtances.

3. In ſubſtances, by ſhowing and defining.

§. 19. Thirdly, for the explaining the ſignification of the names of ſubſtances, as they ſtand for the ideas we have of their diſtinct ſpecies, both the fore-mentioned ways, viz. of ſhowing and defining, are requiſite in many caſes to be made uſe of. For there being ordinarily in each ſort ſome leading qualities, to which we ſuppoſe the other ideas, which make up our complex idea of that ſpecies, annexed; we forwardly give the ſpecifick name to that thing, wherein that characteriſtical mark is found, which we take to be the moſt diſtinguiſhing idea of that ſpecies. Theſe leading or characteriſtical (as I may call them) ideas, in the ſorts of animals and vegetables, are (as has been before remarked, ch. vi. §. 29. and ch. ix. §. 15.) moſtly figure, and in inanimate bodies, colour, and in ſome both together. Now,

Ideas of the leading qualities of ſubſtances are beſt got by ſhowing.

§. 20. Theſe leading ſenſible qualities are thoſe which make the chief ingredients of our ſpecifick ideas, and conſequently the moſt obſervable and invariable part in the definitions of our ſpecifick names, as attributed to ſorts of ſubſtances coming under our knowledge. For though the ſound man, in its own nature, be as apt to ſignify a complex idea made up of animality and rationality, united in the ſame ſubject, as to ſignify any other combination; yet uſed as a mark to ſtand for a ſort of creatures we count of our own kind, perhaps, the outward ſhape is as neceſſary to be taken

into

into our complex idea, ſignified by the word man, as any other we find in it: and therefore why Plato's "animal implume bipes latis unguibus" ſhould not be a good definition of the name man, ſtanding for that ſort of creatures, will not be eaſy to ſhow: for it is the ſhape, as the leading quality, that ſeems more to determine that ſpecies, than a faculty of reaſoning, which appears not at firſt, and in ſome never. And if this be not allowed to be ſo, I do not know how they can be excuſed from murder, who kill monſtrous births, (as we call them) becauſe of an unordinary ſhape, without knowing whether they have a rational ſoul or no; which can be no more diſcerned in a well-formed than ill-ſhaped infant, as ſoon as born. And who is it has informed us, that a rational ſoul can inhabit no tenement, unleſs it has juſt ſuch a ſort of frontiſpiece; or can join itſelf to, and inform no ſort of body but one that is juſt of ſuch an outward ſtructure?

§. 21. Now theſe leading qualities are beſt made known by ſhowing, and can hardly be made known otherwiſe. For the ſhape of an horſe, or caſſuary, will be but rudely and imperfectly imprinted on the mind by words; the ſight of the animals doth it a thouſand times better: and the idea of the particular colour of gold is not to be got by any deſcription of it, but only by the frequent exerciſe of the eyes about it, as is evident in thoſe who are uſed to this metal, who will frequently diſtinguiſh true from counterfeit, pure from adulterate, by the ſight; where others (who have as good eyes, but yet by uſe have not got the preciſe nice idea of that peculiar yellow) ſhall not perceive any difference. The like may be ſaid of thoſe other ſimple ideas, peculiar in their kind to any ſubſtance; for which preciſe ideas there are no peculiar names. The particular ringing ſound there is in gold, diſtinct from the ſound of other bodies, has no particular name annexed to it, no more than the particular yellow that belongs to that metal.

The ideas of their powers beſt by definition.

§. 22. But becauſe many of the ſimple ideas that make up our ſpecifick ideas of ſubſtances, are powers which lie not obvious to our ſenſes in the things as they

ordinarily appear; therefore in the ſignification of our names of ſubſtances, ſome part of the ſignification will be better made known by enumerating thoſe ſimple ideas, than by ſhowing the ſubſtance itſelf. For he that to the yellow ſhining colour of gold got by ſight, ſhall, from my enumerating them, have the ideas of great ductility, fuſibility, fixedneſs, and ſolubility in aq. regia, will have a perfecter idea of gold, than he can have by ſeeing a piece of gold, and thereby imprinting in his mind only its obvious qualities. But if the formal conſtitution of this ſhining, heavy, ductile thing (from whence all theſe its properties flow) lay open to our ſenſes, as the formal conſtitution, or eſſence of a triangle does, the ſignification of the word gold might as eaſily be aſcertained as that of triangle.

A reflection on the knowledge of ſpirits.

§. 23. Hence we may take notice how much the foundation of all our knowledge of corporeal things lies in our ſenſes. For how ſpirits, ſeparate from bodies (whoſe knowledge and ideas of theſe things are certainly much more perfect than ours) know them, we have no notion, no idea at all. The whole extent of our knowledge or imagination reaches not beyond our own ideas limited to our ways of perception. Though yet it be not to be doubted that ſpirits of a higher rank than thoſe immerſed in fleſh, may have as clear ideas of the radical conſtitution of ſubſtances, as we have of a triangle, and ſo perceive how all their properties and operations flow from thence: but the manner how they come by that knowledge exceeds our conceptions.

4. Ideas alſo of ſubſtances muſt be conformable to things.

§. 24. But though definitions will ſerve to explain the names of ſubſtances as they ſtand for our ideas; yet they leave them not without great imperfection as they ſtand for things. For our names of ſubſtances being not put barely for our ideas, but being made uſe of ultimately to repreſent things, and ſo are put in their place; their ſignification muſt agree with the truth of things as well as with men's ideas. And therefore in ſubſtances we are not always to reſt in the ordinary complex idea, commonly received as the ſignification of

of that word, but muſt go a little farther, and inquire into the nature and properties of the things themſelves, and thereby perfect, as much as we can, our ideas of their diſtinct ſpecies; or elſe learn them from ſuch as are uſed to that ſort of things, and are experienced in them. For ſince it is intended their names ſhould ſtand for ſuch collections of ſimple ideas as do really exiſt in things themſelves, as well as for the complex idea in other men's minds, which in their ordinary acceptation they ſtand for: therefore to define their names right, natural hiſtory is to be inquired into; and their properties are, with care and examination, to be found out. For it is not enough, for the avoiding inconveniencies in diſcourſe and arguings about natural bodies and ſubſtantial things, to have learned, from the propriety of the language, the common, but confuſed, or very imperfect idea, to which each word is applied, and to keep them to that idea in our uſe of them: but we muſt, by acquainting ourſelves with the hiſtory of that ſort of things, rectify and ſettle our complex idea belonging to each ſpecific name; and in diſcourſe with others, (if we find them miſtake us) we ought to tell what the complex idea is, that we make ſuch a name ſtand for. This is the more neceſſary to be done by all thoſe who ſearch after knowledge and philoſophical verity, in that children, being taught words whilſt they have but imperfect notions of things, apply them at random, and without much thinking, and ſeldom frame determined ideas to be ſignified by them. Which cuſtom (it being eaſy, and ſerving well enough for the ordinary affairs of life and converſation) they are apt to continue when they are men: and ſo begin at the wrong end, learning words firſt and perfectly, but make the notions to which they apply thoſe words afterwards very overtly. By this means it comes to paſs, that men ſpeaking the proper language of their country, i. e. according to grammar rules of that language, do yet ſpeak very improperly of things themſelves; and, by their arguing one with another, make but ſmall progreſs in the diſcoveries of uſeful truths, and the knowledge of things, as they are to be found in themſelves, and not in our

imaginations; and it matters not much, for the improvement of our knowledge, how they are called.

Not easy to be made so.

§. 25. It were therefore to be wished, that men, versed in physical inquiries, and acquainted with the several sorts of natural bodies, would set down those simple ideas, wherein they observe the individuals of each sort constantly to agree. This would remedy a great deal of that confusion which comes from several persons applying the same name to a collection of a smaller or greater number of sensible qualities, proportionably as they have been more or less acquainted with, or accurate in examining the qualities of any sort of things which come under one denomination. But a dictionary of this sort containing, as it were, a natural history, requires too many hands, as well as too much time, cost, pains, and sagacity, ever to be hoped for; and till that be done, we must content ourselves with such definitions of the names of substances as explain the sense men use them in. And it would be well, where there is occasion, if they would afford us so much. This yet is not usually done; but men talk to one another, and dispute in words, whose meaning is not agreed between them, out of a mistake, that the significations of common words are certainly established, and the precise ideas they stand for perfectly known; and that it is a shame to be ignorant of them. Both which suppositions are false: no names of complex ideas having so settled determined significations, that they are constantly used for the same precise ideas. Nor is it a shame for a man not to have a certain knowledge of any thing, but by the necessary ways of attaining it; and so it is no discredit not to know what precise idea any sound stands for in another man's mind, without he declare it to me by some other way than barely using that sound; there being no other way, without such a declaration, certainly to know it. Indeed the necessity of communication by language brings men to an agreement in the signification of common words, within some tolerable latitude, that may serve for ordinary conversation: and so a man cannot be supposed wholly ignorant of the ideas which are annexed to words by common

mon uſe, in a language familiar to him. But common uſe, being but a very uncertain rule, which reduces itſelf at laſt to the ideas of particular men, proves often but a very variable ſtandard. But though ſuch a dictionary, as I have above-mentioned, will require too much time, coſt, and pains, to be hoped for in this age; yet methinks it is not unreaſonable to propoſe, that words ſtanding for things, which are known and diſtinguiſhed by their outward ſhapes, ſhould be expreſſed by little draughts and prints made of them. A vocabulary made after this faſhion would perhaps, with more eaſe, and in leſs time, teach the true ſignification of many terms, eſpecially in languages of remote countries or ages, and ſettle truer ideas in men's minds of ſeveral things, whereof we read the names in antient authors, than all the large and laborious comments of learned criticks. Naturaliſts, that treat of plants and animals, have found the benefit of this way: and he that has had occaſion to conſult them, will have reaſon to confeſs, that he has a clearer idea of apium or ibex, from a little print of that herb or beaſt, than he could have from a long definition of the names of either of them. And ſo no doubt he would have of ſtrigil and ſiſtrum, if inſtead of curry-comb and cymbal, which are the Engliſh names dictionaries render them by, he could ſee ſtamped in the margin ſmall pictures of theſe inſtruments, as they were in uſe amongſt the ancients. "Toga, tunica, pallium," are words eaſily tranſlated by gown, coat, and cloak; but we have thereby no more true ideas of the faſhion of thoſe habits amongſt the Romans, than we have of the faces of the taylors who made them. Such things as theſe, which the eye diſtinguiſhes by their ſhapes, would be beſt let into the mind by draughts made of them, and more determine the ſignification of ſuch words than any other words ſet for them, or made uſe of to define them. But this only by the by.

5. By conſtancy in their ſignification.

§. 26. Fifthly, if men will not be at the pains to declare the meaning of their words, and definitions of their terms are not to be had; yet this is the leaſt that can be expected, that in all diſcourſes, wherein one man pretends

to inſtruct or convince another, he ſhould uſe the ſame word conſtantly in the ſame ſenſe: if this were done (which no body can refuſe without great diſingenuity) many of the books extant might be ſpared; many of the controverſies in diſpute would be at an end; ſeveral of thoſe great volumes, ſwoln with ambiguous words, now uſed in one ſenſe, and by and by in another, would ſhrink into a very narrow compaſs; and many of the philoſophers (to mention no other) as well as poets works, might be contained in a nutſhell.

When the variation is to be explained.

§. 27. But after all, the proviſion of words is ſo ſcanty in reſpect of that infinite variety of thoughts, that men, wanting terms to ſuit their preciſe notions, will, notwithſtanding their utmoſt caution, be forced often to uſe the ſame word in ſomewhat different ſenſes. And though in the continuation of a diſcourſe, or the purſuit of an argument, there can be hardly room to digreſs into a particular definition, as often as a man varies the ſignification of any term; yet the import of the diſcourſe will, for the moſt part, if there be no deſigned fallacy, ſufficiently lead candid and intelligent readers into the true meaning of it: but where there is not ſufficient to guide the reader, there it concerns the writer to explain his meaning, and ſhow in what ſenſe he there uſes that term.

BOOK IV.

CHAP. I.

Of Knowledge in General.

Our knowledge converſant about our ideas.

§. 1. SINCE the mind, in all its thoughts and reaſonings, hath no other immediate object but its own ideas, which it alone does or can contemplate; it is evident, that our knowledge is only converſant about them.

§. 2. Knowledge then ſeems to me to be nothing but the perception of the connexion and agreement, or diſagreement and repugnancy, of any of our ideas. In this alone it conſiſts. Where this perception is, there is knowledge; and where it is not, there, though we may fancy, gueſs, or believe, yet we always come ſhort of knowledge. For when we know that white is not black, what do we elſe but perceive that theſe two ideas do not agree? When we poſſeſs ourſelves with the utmoſt ſecurity of the demonſtration, that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right ones, what do we more but perceive, that equality to two right ones does neceſſarily agree to, and is inſeparable from the three angles of a triangle *?

Knowledge is the perception of the agreement or diſagreement of two ideas.

§. 3.

* The placing of certainty, as Mr. Locke does, in the perception of the agreement or diſagreement of our ideas, the biſhop of Worceſter ſuſpects may be of dangerous conſequence to that article of faith which he has endeavoured to defend; to which Mr. Locke anſwers, † ſince your lordſhip hath not, as I remember, ſhown, or gone about to ſhow, how this propoſition, viz. that certainty conſiſts in the perception of the agreement or diſagreement of two ideas, is oppoſite or inconſiſtent with that article of faith which your lordſhip has endeavoured to defend; it is plain, it is but your lordſhip's fear, that it may be of dangerous conſequence to it, which, as I humbly conceive, is no proof that it is any way inconſiſtent with that article.

No body, I think, can blame your lordſhip, or any one elſe, for being concerned for any article of the chriſtian faith; but if that concern (as it may, and as we know it has done) makes any one apprehend danger, where no danger is, are we, therefore, to give up and condemn any propoſition, becauſe any one, though of the firſt rank and magnitude, fears it may be of dangerous conſequence to any truth of religion, without ſhowing that it is ſo? If ſuch fears be the meaſures whereby to judge of truth and falſhood, the affirming that there are antipodes would be ſtill a hereſy; and the doctrine of the motion of the earth muſt be rejected, as overthrowing the truth of the ſcripture; for of that dangerous conſequence it has been apprehended to be, by many learned and pious divines, out of their great concern for religion. And yet, notwithſtanding thoſe great apprehenſions of what dangerous conſequence it might be, it is now univerſally received by learned men, as an undoubted truth; and writ for by ſome, whoſe belief of the ſcripture is not at all queſtioned; and particularly, very lately, by a divine of the church of England, with great ſtrength of reaſon, in his wonderfully ingenious New Theory of the Earth.

† In his 2d letter to the biſhop of Worceſter.

The

This agreement fourfold.

§. 3. But to underſtand a little more diſtinctly wherein this agreement or diſagreement conſiſts, I think we may reduce it all to theſe four ſorts:

1. Identity, or diverſity.
2. Relation.
3. Co-exiſtence, or neceſſary connexion.
4. Real exiſtence.

1. Of identity or diverſity.

§. 4. Firſt, as to the firſt ſort of agreement or diſagreement, viz. identity or diverſity. It is the firſt act of the mind, when it has any ſentiments or ideas at all, to perceive its ideas; and ſo far as it perceives them, to know each what it is, and thereby alſo to perceive their difference, and that one is not another. This is ſo abſolutely

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The reaſon your lordſhip gives of your fears, that it may be of ſuch dangerous conſequence to that article of faith which your lordſhip endeavours to defend, though it occur in more places than one, is only this, viz. That it is made uſe of by ill men to do miſchief, i. e. to oppoſe that article of faith which your lordſhip hath endeavoured to defend. But, my lord, if it be a reaſon to lay by any thing as bad, becauſe it is, or may be uſed to an ill purpoſe, I know not what will be innocent enough to be kept. Arms, which were made for our defence, are ſometimes made uſe of to do miſchief; and yet they are not thought of dangerous conſequence for all that. No body lays by his ſword and piſtols, or thinks them of ſuch dangerous conſequence as to be neglected, or thrown away, becauſe robbers, and the worſt of men, ſometimes make uſe of them, to take away honeſt men's lives or goods. And the reaſon is, becauſe they were deſigned, and will ſerve to preſerve them. And who knows but this may be the preſent caſe? If your lordſhip thinks, that placing of certainty in the perception of the agreement or diſagreement of ideas be to be rejected as falſe, becauſe you apprehend it may be of dangerous conſequence to that article of faith: on the other ſide, perhaps others, with me, may think it a defence againſt error, and ſo (as being of good uſe) to be received and adhered to.

I would not, my lord, be hereby thought to ſet up my own, or any one's judgement againſt your lordſhip's. But I have ſaid this only to ſhow, whilſt the argument lies for or againſt the truth of any propoſition, barely in an imagination that it may be of conſequence to the ſupporting or overthrowing of any remote truth; it will be impoſſible, that way, to determine of the truth or falſhood of that propoſition. For imagination will be ſet up againſt imagination, and the ſtronger probably will be againſt your lordſhip; the ſtrongeſt imaginations being uſually in the weakeſt heads. The only way, in this caſe, to put it paſt doubt, is to ſhow the inconſiſtency of the two propoſitions; and then it will be ſeen, that one overthrows the other; the true, the falſe one.

Your

lutely neceſſary, that without it there could be no knowledge, no reaſoning, no imagination, no diſtinct thoughts at all. By this the mind clearly and infallibly perceives each idea to agree with itſelf, and to be what it is; and all diſtinct ideas to diſagree, i. e. the one not to be the other: and this it does without pains, labour, or deduction; but at firſt view, by its natural power of perception and diſtinction. And though men of art have reduced this into thoſe general rules, "what is, is;" and "it is impoſſible for the ſame thing to be and not to be;" for ready application in all caſes, wherein there may be occaſion to reflect on it: yet it is certain, that the firſt exerciſe of this faculty is about particular ideas. A man infallibly knows, as ſoon as ever he has them in his mind, that the ideas he calls white and round, are the

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Your lordſhip ſays indeed, this is a new method of certainty. I will not ſay ſo myſelf, for fear of deſerving a ſecond reproof from your lordſhip, for being too forward to aſſume to myſelf the honour of being an original. But this, I think, gives me occaſion, and will excuſe me from being thought impertinent, if I aſk your lordſhip, whether there be any other, or older method of certainty? and what it is? For, if there be no other, nor older than this, either this was always the method of certainty, and ſo mine is no new one; or elſe the world is obliged to me for this new one, after having been ſo long in the want of ſo neceſſary a thing as a method of certainty. If there be an older, I am ſure your lordſhip cannot but know it; your condemning mine as new, as well as your thorough inſight into antiquity, cannot but ſatisfy every body that you do. And therefore to ſet the world right in a thing of that great concernment, and to overthrow mine, and thereby prevent the dangerous conſequence there is in my having unreaſonably ſtarted it, will not, I humbly conceive, miſbecome your lordſhip's care of that article you have endeavoured to defend, nor the good-will you bear to truth in general. For I will be anſwerable for myſelf, that I ſhall; and I think I may be for all others, that they all will give off the placing of certainty in the perception of the agreement or diſagreement of ideas, if your lordſhip will be pleaſed to ſhow, that it lies in any thing elſe.

But truly, not to aſcribe to myſelf an invention of what has been as old as knowledge is in the world, I muſt own, I am not guilty of what your lordſhip is pleaſed to call ſtarting new methods of certainty. Knowledge, ever ſince there has been any in the world, has conſiſted in one particular action in the mind; and ſo, I conceive, will continue to do to the end of it. And to ſtart new methods of knowledge, or certainty, (for they are to me the ſame thing) i. e. to find out and propoſe new methods of attaining knowledge, either with more eaſe and quickneſs, or in things yet unknown, is what I think no body could blame: but this is not that which your lordſhip here means, by new methods of certainty. Your lord-

the very ideas they are, and that they are not other ideas which he calls red or ſquare. Nor can any maxim or propoſition in the world make him know it clearer or ſurer than he did before, and without any ſuch general rule. This then is the firſt agreement or diſagreement, which the mind perceives in its ideas; which it always perceives at firſt ſight: and if there ever happen any doubt about it, it will always be found to be about the names, and not the ideas themſelves, whoſe identity and diverſity will always be perceived, as ſoon and clearly as the ideas themſelves are; nor can it poſſibly be otherwiſe.

2. Relative. §. 5. Secondly, the next ſort of agreement or diſagreement, the mind perceives in any of its ideas, may, I think, be called relative, and is nothing but the perception of the relation between any

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lordſhip, I think, means by it, the placing of certainty in ſomething, wherein either it does not conſiſt, or elſe wherein it was not placed before now; if this be to be called a new method of certainty. As to the latter of theſe, I ſhall know whether I am guilty or no, when your lordſhip will do me the favour to tell me, wherein it was placed before: which your lordſhip knows I profeſſed myſelf ignorant of, when I writ my book, and ſo I am ſtill. But if ſtarting new methods of certainty, be the placing of certainty in ſomething wherein it does not conſiſt; whether I have done that or no, I muſt appeal to the experience of mankind.

There are ſeveral actions of men's minds, that they are conſcious to themſelves of performing, as willing, believing, knowing, &c. which they have ſo particular ſenſe of, that they can diſtinguiſh them one from another; or elſe they could not ſay, when they willed, when they believed, and when they knew any thing. But though theſe actions were different enough from one another, not to be confounded by thoſe who ſpoke of them, yet no body, that I had met with, had, in their writings, particularly ſet down wherein the act of knowing preciſely conſiſted.

To this reflection upon the actions of my own mind the ſubject of my Eſſay concerning Human Underſtanding naturally led me; wherein if I have done any thing new, it has been to deſcribe to others, more particularly than had been done before, what it is their minds do when they perform that action which they call knowing; and if, upon examination, they obſerve I have given a true account of that action of their minds in all the parts of it, I ſuppoſe it will be in vain to diſpute againſt what they find and feel in themſelves. And if I have not told them right and exactly what they find and feel in themſelves, when their minds perform the act of knowing, what I have ſaid will be all in vain; men will not be perſuaded againſt their ſenſes. Knowledge is an internal perception of their minds; and if, when they reflect on it, they find it is not what I have ſaid it is, my groundleſs conceit will not be hearkened to, but be exploded by every body, and die of itſelf: and no body need to be at any pains to drive

any two ideas, of what kind ſoever, whether ſubſtances, modes, or any other. For ſince all diſtinct ideas muſt eternally be known not to be the ſame, and ſo be univerſally and conſtantly denied one of another, there could be no room for any poſitive knowledge at all, if we could not perceive any relation between our ideas, and find out the agreement or diſagreement they have one with another, in ſeveral ways the mind takes of comparing them.

§. 6. Thirdly, the third ſort of agreement, or diſagreement, to be found in our ideas, which the perception of the mind is employed about, is co-exiſtence, or non-co-exiſtence in the ſame ſubject; and this belongs particularly to ſubſtances. Thus when we pronounce concerning gold that

3. Of co-exiſtence.

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drive it out of the world. So impoſſible is it to find out, or ſtart new methods of certainty, or to have them received, if any one places it in any thing, but in that wherein it really conſiſts: much leſs can any one be in danger to be miſled into error, by any ſuch new, and to every one viſibly ſenſeleſs project. Can it be ſuppoſed, that any one could ſtart a new method of ſeeing, and perſuade men thereby, that they do not ſee what they do ſee? Is it to be feared, that any one can caſt ſuch a miſt over their eyes, that they ſhould not know when they ſee, and ſo be led out of their way by it?

Knowledge, I find in myſelf, and I conceive in others, conſiſts in the perception of the agreement or diſagreement of the immediate objects of the mind in thinking, which I call ideas: but whether it does ſo in others or no, muſt be determined by their own experience, reflecting upon the action of their mind in knowing; for that I cannot alter, nor, I think, they themſelves. But whether they will call thoſe immediate objects of their minds in thinking ideas or no, is perfectly in their own choice. If they diſlike that name, they may call them notions or conceptions, or how they pleaſe; it matters not, if they uſe them ſo as to avoid obſcurity and confuſion. If they are conſtantly uſed in the ſame and a known ſenſe, every one has the liberty to pleaſe himſelf in his terms; there lies neither truth, nor error, nor ſcience, in that; though thoſe that take them for things, and not for what they are, bare arbitrary ſigns of our ideas, make a great deal ado often about them; as if ſome great matter lay in the uſe of this or that ſound. All that I know, or can imagine of difference about them, is, that thoſe words are always beſt, whoſe ſignifications are beſt known in the ſenſe they are uſed; and ſo are leaſt apt to breed confuſion.

My lord, your lordſhip hath been pleaſed to find fault with my uſe of the new term, ideas, without telling me a better name for the immediate objects of the mind in thinking. Your lordſhip alſo has been pleaſed to find fault with my definition of knowledge, without doing me the favour to

that it is fixed, our knowledge of this truth amounts to no more but this, that fixednefs, or a power to remain in the fire unconfumed, is an idea that always accompanies, and is joined with that particular fort of yellownefs, weight, fufibility, malleablenefs, and folubility in aq. regia, which make our complex idea, fignified by the word gold.

4. Of real exiftence.

§. 7. Fourthly, the fourth and laft fort is that of actual and real exiftence agreeing to any idea. Within thefe four forts of agreement or difagreement, is, I fuppofe, contained all the knowledge we have, or are capable of: for all the inquiries we can make concerning any of our ideas, all that we know or can affirm concerning any of them, is, that it is, or is not, the fame with fome other; that it does,

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to give me a better. For it is only about my definition of knowledge that all this ftir concerning certainty is made. For, with me, to know and to be certain, is the fame thing; what I know, that I am certain of; and what I am certain of, that I know. What reaches to knowledge, I think may be called certainty; and what comes fhort of certainty, I think cannot be called knowledge; as your lordfhip could not but obferve in the 18th fection of chap. 4. of my 4th book, which you have quoted.

My definition of knowledge ftands thus: "knowledge feems to me to be nothing but the perception of the connexion and agreement, or difagreement and repugnancy of any of our ideas." This definition your lordfhip diflikes, and apprehends it may be of dangerous confequence as to that article of chriftian faith which your lordfhip hath endeavoured to defend. For this there is a very eafy remedy: it is but for your lordfhip to fet afide this definition of knowledge by giving us a better, and this danger is over. But your lordfhip choofes rather to have a controverfy with my book for having it in it, and to put me upon the defence of it; for which I muft acknowledge myfelf obliged to your lordfhip for affording me fo much of your time, and for allowing me the honour of converfing fo much with one fo far above me in all refpects.

Your lordfhip fays, it may be of dangerous confequence to that article of chriftian faith which you have endeavoured to defend. Though the laws of difputing allow bare denial as a fufficient anfwer to fayings, without any offer of a proof: yet, my lord, to fhow how willing I am to give your lordfhip all fatisfaction, in what you apprehend may be of dangerous confequence in my book, as to that article, I fhall not ftand ftill fullenly, and put your lordfhip upon the difficulty of fhowing wherein that danger lies; but fhall on the other fide, endeavour to fhow your lordfhip that that definition of mine, whether true or falfe, right or wrong, can be of no dangerous confequence to that article of faith. The reafon which I fhall offer for it, is this: becaufe it can be of no confequence to it at all.

That

does, or does not, always co-exist with some other idea in the same subject; that it has this or that relation with some other idea; or that it has a real existence without the mind. Thus blue is not yellow; is of identity: two triangles upon equal bases between two parallels are equal; is of relation: iron is susceptible of magnetical impressions; is of co-existence: God is; is of real existence. Though identity and co-existence are truly nothing but relations, yet they are such peculiar ways of agreement or disagreement of our ideas, that they deserve well to be considered as distinct heads, and not under relation in general; since they are so different grounds of affirmation and negation, as will easily appear to any one, who will but reflect on what is said in several

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That which your lordship is afraid it may be dangerous to, is an article of faith: that which your lordship labours and is concerned for, is the certainty of faith. Now, my lord, I humbly conceive the certainty of faith, if your lordship thinks fit to call it so, has nothing to do with the certainty of knowledge. As to talk of the certainty of faith, seems all one to me, as to talk of the knowledge of believing, a way of speaking not easy to me to understand.

Place knowledge in what you will; start what new methods of certainty you please, that are apt to leave men's minds more doubtful than before; place certainty on such ground as will leave little or no knowledge in the world: (for these are the arguments your lordship uses against my definition of knowledge) this shakes not at all, nor in the least concerns the assurance of faith; that is quite distinct from it, neither stands nor falls with knowledge.

Faith stands by itself, and upon grounds of its own; nor can be removed from them, and placed on those of knowledge. Their grounds are so far from being the same, or having any thing common, that when it is brought to certainty, faith is destroyed; it is knowledge then, and faith no longer.

With what assurance soever of believing I assent to any article of faith, so that I stedfastly venture my all upon it, it is still but believing. Bring it to certainty, and it ceases to be faith. I believe that Jesus Christ was crucified, dead, and buried, rose again the third day from the dead, and ascended into heaven: let now such methods of knowledge or certainty be started, as leave men's minds more doubtful than before; let the grounds of knowledge be resolved into what any one pleases, it touches not my faith; the foundation of that stands as sure as before, and cannot be at all shaken by it; and one may as well say, that any thing that weakens the sight, or casts a mist before the eyes, endangers the hearing; as that any thing which alters the nature of knowledge (if that could be done) should be of dangerous consequence to an article of faith.

ſeveral places of this eſſay. I ſhould not proceed to examine the ſeveral degrees of our knowledge, but that it is neceſſary firſt to conſider the different acceptations of the word knowledge.

Knowledge actual or habitual.

§. 8. There are ſeveral ways wherein the mind is poſſeſſed of truth, each of which is called knowledge.

1. There is actual knowledge, which is the preſent view the mind has of the agreement or diſagreement of any of its ideas, or of the relation they have one to another.

2. A man is ſaid to know any propoſition, which having been once laid before his thoughts, he evidently perceived the agreement or diſagreement of the ideas whereof it conſiſts; and ſo lodged it in his memory, that whenever that propoſition comes again to be reflected on, he, without doubt or heſitation, embraces the right ſide, aſſents to, and is certain of the truth of it. This, I think, one may call habitual knowledge: and thus a man may be ſaid to know all thoſe truths which are lodged in his memory, by a foregoing clear and full perception, whereof the mind is aſſured paſt doubt, as often as it has occaſion to reflect on them. For our finite underſtandings being able to think clearly and diſtinctly but on one thing at once, if men had no knowledge of any more than what they actually thought on, they would all be very ignorant; and he that knew moſt, would know but one truth, that being all he was able to think on at one time.

Whether then I am or am not miſtaken, in the placing certainty in the perception of the agreement or diſagreement of ideas; whether this account of knowledge be true or falſe, enlarges or ſtraitens the bounds of it more than it ſhould; faith ſtill ſtands upon its own baſis, which is not at all altered by it; and every article of that has juſt the ſame unmoved foundation, and the very ſame credibility, that it had before. So that, my lord, whatever I have ſaid about certainty, and how much ſoever I may be out in it, if I am miſtaken, your lordſhip has no reaſon to apprehend any danger to any article of faith from thence; every one of them ſtands upon the ſame bottom it did before, out of the reach of what belongs to knowledge and certainty. And thus much of my way of certainty by ideas; which, I hope, will ſatisfy your lordſhip how far it is from being dangerous to any article of the chriſtian faith whatſoever.

§. 9.

§. 9. Of habitual knowledge, there are alſo, vulgarly ſpeaking, two degrees:

Habitual knowledge twofold.

Firſt, the one is of ſuch truths laid up in the memory, as whenever they occur to the mind, it actually perceives the relation is between thoſe ideas. And this is in all thoſe truths, whereof we have an intuitive knowledge; where the ideas themſelves, by an immediate view, diſcover their agreement or diſagreement one with another.

Secondly, the other is of ſuch truths, whereof the mind having been convinced, it retains the memory of the conviction, without the proofs. Thus a man that remembers certainly that he once perceived the demonſtration, that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right ones, is certain that he knows it, becauſe he cannot doubt the truth of it. In his adherence to a truth, where the demonſtration by which it was at firſt known is forgot, though a man may be thought rather to believe his memory than really to know, and this way of entertaining a truth ſeemed formerly to me like ſomething between opinion and knowledge; a ſort of aſſurance which exceeds bare belief, for that relies on the teſtimony of another: yet upon a due examination I find it comes not ſhort of perfect certainty, and is in effect true knowledge. That which is apt to miſlead our firſt thoughts into a miſtake in this matter, is, that the agreement or diſagreement of the ideas in this caſe is not perceived, as it was at firſt, by an actual view of all the intermediate ideas, whereby the agreement or diſagreement of thoſe in the propoſition was at firſt perceived; but by other intermediate ideas, that ſhow the agreement or diſagreement of the ideas contained in the propoſition whoſe certainty we remember. For example, in this propoſition, that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right ones, one who has ſeen and clearly perceived the demonſtration of this truth, knows it to be true, when that demonſtration is gone out of his mind; ſo that at preſent it is not actually in view, and poſſibly cannot be recollected: but he knows it in a different way from what he did before. The agreement of the two ideas joined in that propoſition is per-

ceived, but it is by the intervention of other ideas than those which at first produced that perception. He remembers, i. e. he knows (for remembrance is but the reviving of some past knowledge) that he was once certain of the truth of this proposition, that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right ones. The immutability of the same relations between the same immutable things, is now the idea that shows him, that if the three angles of a triangle were once equal to two right ones, they will always be equal to two right ones. And hence he comes to be certain, that what was once true in the case, is always true; what ideas once agreed, will always agree; and consequently what he once knew to be true, he will always know to be true, as long as he can remember that he once knew it. Upon this ground it is, that particular demonstrations in mathematicks afford general knowledge. If then the perception that the same ideas will eternally have the same habitudes and relations, be not a sufficient ground of knowledge, there could be no knowledge of general propositions in mathematicks; for no mathematical demonstration would be any other than particular: and when a man had demonstrated any proposition concerning one triangle or circle, his knowledge would not reach beyond that particular diagram. If he would extend it further, he must renew his demonstration in another instance, before he could know it to be true in another like triangle, and so on: by which means one could never come to the knowledge of any general propositions. Nobody, I think, can deny that Mr. Newton certainly knows any proposition, that he now at any time reads in his book, to be true; though he has not in actual view that admirable chain of intermediate ideas, whereby he at first discovered it to be true. Such a memory as that, able to retain such a train of particulars, may be well thought beyond the reach of human faculties; when the very discovery, perception, and laying together that wonderful connexion of ideas, is found to surpass most readers comprehension. But yet it is evident, the author himself knows the proposition to be true, remembering he once saw the connexion of those

ideas, as certainly as he knows ſuch a man wounded another, remembering that he ſaw him run him through. But becauſe the memory is not always ſo clear as actual perception, and does in all men more or leſs decay in length of time, this amongſt other differences is one, which ſhows that demonſtrative knowledge is much more imperfect than intuitive, as we ſhall ſee in the following chapter.

CHAP. II.

Of the Degrees of our Knowledge.

§. 1. ALL our knowledge conſiſting, as I have ſaid, in the view the mind has of its own ideas, which is the utmoſt light and greateſt certainty we, with our faculties, and in our way of knowledge, are capable of; it may not be amiſs to conſider a little the degrees of its evidence. The different clearneſs of our knowledge ſeems to me to lie in the different way of perception the mind has of the agreement or diſagreement of any of its ideas. For if we will reflect on our own ways of thinking, we ſhall find that ſometimes the mind perceives the agreement or diſagreement of two ideas immediately by themſelves, without the intervention of any other: and this, I think, we may call intuitive knowledge. For in this the mind is at no pains of proving or examining, but perceives the truth, as the eye doth light, only by being directed toward it. Thus the mind perceives, that white is not black, that a circle is not a triangle, that three are more than two, and equal to one and two. Such kind of truths the mind perceives at the firſt ſight of the ideas together, by bare intuition, without the intervention of any other idea; and this kind of knowledge is the cleareſt and moſt certain, that human frailty is capable of. This part of knowledge is irreſiſtible, and like bright ſun-ſhine forces itſelf immediately to be perceived, as ſoon as ever the mind turns its view that way; Intuitive.

and leaves no room for hesitation, doubt, or examination, but the mind is presently filled with the clear light of it. It is on this intuition that depends all the certainty and evidence of all our knowledge; which certainty every one finds to be so great, that he cannot imagine, and therefore not require a greater: for a man cannot conceive himself capable of a greater certainty, than to know that any idea in his mind is such as he perceives it to be; and that two ideas, wherein he perceives a difference, are different and not precisely the same. He that demands a greater certainty than this, demands he knows not what, and shows only that he has a mind to be a sceptick, without being able to be so. Certainty depends so wholly on this intuition, that in the next degree of knowledge, which I call demonstrative, this intuition is necessary in all the connexions of the intermediate ideas, without which we cannot attain knowledge and certainty.

Demonstrative.

§. 2. The next degree of knowledge is, where the mind perceives the agreement or disagreement of any ideas, but not immediately. Though wherever the mind perceives the agreement or disagreement of any of its ideas, there be certain knowledge; yet it does not always happen, that the mind sees that agreement or disagreement which there is between them, even where it is discoverable: and in that case remains in ignorance, and at most gets no farther than a probable conjecture. The reason why the mind cannot always perceive presently the agreement or disagreement of two ideas, is, because those ideas, concerning whose agreement or disagreement the inquiry is made, cannot by the mind be so put together as to show it. In this case then, when the mind cannot so bring its ideas together, as by their immediate comparison, and as it were juxta-position or application one to another, to perceive their agreement, or disagreement, it is fain, by the intervention of other ideas (one or more, as it happens) to discover the agreement or disagreement which it searches; and this is that which we call reasoning. Thus the mind being willing to know the agreement or disagreement in bigness, between

tween the three angles of a triangle and two right ones, cannot by an immediate view and comparing them do it: becauſe the three angles of a triangle cannot be brought at once, and be compared with any one or two angles; and ſo of this the mind has no immediate, no intuitive knowledge. In this caſe the mind is fain to find out ſome other angles, to which the three angles of a triangle have an equality; and, finding thoſe equal to two right ones, comes to know their equality to two right ones.

Depends on proofs.

§. 3. Thoſe intervening ideas which ſerve to ſhow the agreement of any two others, are called proofs; and where the agreement and diſagreement is by this means plainly and clearly perceived, it is called demonſtration, it being ſhown to the underſtanding, and the mind made to ſee that it is ſo. A quickneſs in the mind to find out theſe intermediate ideas (that ſhall diſcover the agreement or diſagreement of any other) and to apply them right, is, I ſuppoſe, that which is called ſagacity.

But not ſo eaſy.

§. 4. This knowledge by intervening proofs, though it be certain, yet the evidence of it is not altogether ſo clear and bright, nor the aſſent ſo ready, as in intuitive knowledge. For though, in demonſtration, the mind does at laſt perceive the agreement or diſagreement of the ideas it conſiders; yet it is not without pains and attention: there muſt be more than one tranſient view to find it. A ſteady application and purſuit are required to this diſcovery: and there muſt be a progreſſion by ſteps and degrees, before the mind can in this way arrive at certainty, and come to perceive the agreement or repugnancy between two ideas that need proofs and the uſe of reaſon to ſhow it.

Not without precedent doubt.

§. 5. Another difference between intuitive and demonſtrative knowledge, is, that though in the latter all doubt be removed, when by the intervention of the intermediate ideas the agreement or diſagreement is perceived; yet before the demonſtration there was a doubt, which in intuitive knowledge cannot happen to the mind, that has its fa-

culty of perception left to a degree capable of diſtinct ideas, no more than it can be a doubt to the eye (that can diſtinctly ſee white and black) whether this ink and this paper be all of a colour. If there be ſight in the eyes, it will at firſt glimpſe, without heſitation, perceive the words printed on this paper different from the colour of the paper: and ſo if the mind have the faculty of diſtinct perceptions, it will perceive the agreement or diſagreement of thoſe ideas that produce intuitive knowledge. If the eyes have loſt the faculty of ſeeing, or the mind of perceiving, we in vain inquire after the quickneſs of ſight in one, or clearneſs of perception in the other.

Not ſo clear.

§. 6. It is true, the perception produced by demonſtration is alſo very clear, yet it is often with a great abatement of that evident luſtre and full aſſurance, that always accompany that which I call intuitive; like a face reflected by ſeveral mirrors one to another, where as long as it retains the ſimilitude and agreement with the object, it produces a knowledge; but it is ſtill in every ſucceſſive reflection with a leſſening of that perfect clearneſs and diſtinctneſs, which is in the firſt, till at laſt, after many removes, it has a great mixture of dimneſs, and is not at firſt ſight ſo knowable, eſpecially to weak eyes. Thus it is with knowledge made out by a long train of proof.

Each ſtep muſt have intuitive evidence.

§. 7. Now, in every ſtep reaſon makes in demonſtrative knowledge, there is an intuitive knowledge of that agreement or diſagreement it ſeeks with the next intermediate idea, which it uſes as a proof: for if it were not ſo, that yet would need a proof; ſince without the perception of ſuch agreement or diſagreement, there is no knowledge produced. If it be perceived by itſelf, it is intuitive knowledge: if it cannot be perceived by itſelf, there is need of ſome intervening idea, as a common meaſure to ſhow their agreement or diſagreement. By which it is plain, that every ſtep in reaſoning that produces knowledge, has intuitive certainty; which when the mind perceives, there is no more required, but to remember it to make the agreement or diſagreement of the

the ideas, concerning which we inquire, visible and certain. So that to make any thing a demonstration, it is necessary to perceive the immediate agreement of the intervening ideas, whereby the agreement or disagreement of the two ideas under examination (whereof the one is always the first, and the other the last in the account) is found. This intuitive perception of the agreement or disagreement of the intermediate ideas, in each step and progression of the demonstration, must also be carried exactly in the mind, and a man must be sure that no part is left out: which because in long deductions, and the use of many proofs, the memory does not always so readily and exactly retain; therefore it comes to pass, that this is more imperfect than intuitive knowledge, and men embrace often falshood for demonstrations.

Hence the mistake "ex præcognitis & præconcessis."

§. 8. The necessity of this intuitive knowledge, in each step of scientifical or demonstrative reasoning, gave occasion, I imagine, to that mistaken axiom, that all reasoning was "ex præcognitis & præconcessis;" which how far it is mistaken, I shall have occasion to show more at large, when I come to consider propositions, and particularly those propositions which are called maxims; and to show that it is by a mistake, that they are supposed to be the foundations of all our knowledge and reasonings.

Demonstration not limited to quantity.

§. 9. It has been generally taken for granted, that mathematicks alone are capable of demonstrative certainty: but to have such an agreement or disagreement, as may intuitively be perceived, being, as I imagine, not the privilege of the ideas of number, extension, and figure alone, it may possibly be the want of due method and application in us, and not of sufficient evidence in things, that demonstration has been thought to have so little to do in other parts of knowledge, and been scarce so much as aimed at by any but mathematicians. For whatever ideas we have, wherein the mind can perceive the immediate agreement or disagreement that is between them, there the mind is capable of intuitive knowledge; and where it can perceive the agreement or disagreement

ment of any two ideas, by an intuitive perception of the agreement or disagreement they have with any intermediate ideas, there the mind is capable of demonstration, which is not limited to ideas of extension, figure, number, and their modes.

Why it has been so thought.

§. 10. The reason why it has been generally sought for, and supposed to be only in those, I imagine has been not only the general usefulness of those sciences; but because, in comparing their equality or excess, the modes of numbers have every the least difference very clear and perceivable: and though in extension, every the least excess is not so perceptible, yet the mind has found out ways to examine and discover demonstratively the just equality of two angles, or extensions, or figures: and both these, i. e. numbers and figures, can be set down by visible and lasting marks, wherein the ideas under consideration are perfectly determined; which for the most part they are not, where they are marked only by names and words.

§. 11. But in other simple ideas, whose modes and differences are made and counted by degrees, and not quantity, we have not so nice and accurate a distinction of their differences, as to perceive and find ways to measure their just equality, or the least differences. For those other simple ideas, being appearances of sensations, produced in us by the size, figure, number, and motion of minute corpuscles singly insensible; their different degrees also depend upon the variation of some, or of all those causes: which since it cannot be observed by us in particles of matter, whereof each is too subtile to be perceived, it is impossible for us to have any exact measures of the different degrees of these simple ideas. For supposing the sensation or idea we name whiteness be produced in us by a certain number of globules, which, having a verticity about their own centres, strike upon the retina of the eye, with a certain degree of rotation, as well as progressive swiftness; it will hence easily follow, that the more the superficial parts of any body are so ordered, as to reflect the greater number of globules of light, and to give them the proper rotation, which

which is fit to produce this ſenſation of white in us, the more white will that body appear, that from an equal ſpace ſends to the retina the greater number of ſuch corpuſcles, with that peculiar ſort of motion. I do not ſay, that the nature of light conſiſts in very ſmall round globules, nor of whiteneſs in ſuch a texture of parts, as gives a certain rotation to theſe globules, when it reflects them; for I am not now treating phyſically of light or colours. But this, I think, I may ſay, that I cannot (and I would be glad any one would make intelligible that he did) conceive how bodies without us can any ways affect our ſenſes, but by the immediate contact of the ſenſible bodies themſelves, as in taſting and feeling, or the impulſe of ſome inſenſible particles coming from them, as in ſeeing, hearing, and ſmelling; by the different impulſe of which parts, cauſed by their different ſize, figure, and motion, the variety of ſenſations is produced in us.

§. 12. Whether then they be globules, or no; or whether they have a verticity about their own centres that produces the idea of whiteneſs in us; this is certain, that the more particles of light are reflected from a body, fitted to give them that peculiar motion, which produces the ſenſation of whiteneſs in us; and poſſibly too, the quicker that peculiar motion is; the whiter does the body appear, from which the greater number are reflected, as is evident in the ſame piece of paper put in the ſun-beams, in the ſhade, and in a dark hole; in each of which it will produce in us the idea of whiteneſs in far different degrees.

§. 13. Not knowing therefore what number of particles, nor what motion of them is fit to produce any preciſe degree of whiteneſs, we cannot demonſtrate the certain equality of any two degrees of whiteneſs, becauſe we have no certain ſtandard to meaſure them by, nor means to diſtinguiſh every the leaſt real difference, the only help we have being from our ſenſes, which in this point fail us. But where the difference is ſo great, as to produce in the mind clearly diſtinct ideas, whoſe differences can be perfectly retained, there theſe ideas or colours, as we ſee in different kinds, as blue and red, are

are as capable of demonſtration, as ideas of number and extenſion. What I have here ſaid of whiteneſs and colours, I think, holds true in all ſecondary qualities, and their modes.

Senſitive knowledge of particular exiſtence.

§. 14. Theſe two, viz. intuition and demonſtration, are the degrees of our knowledge; whatever comes ſhort of one of theſe, with what aſſurance ſoever embraced, is but faith, or opinion, but not knowledge, at leaſt in all general truths. There is, indeed, another perception of the mind, employed about the particular exiſtence of finite beings without us; which going beyond bare probability, and yet not reaching perfectly to either of the foregoing degrees of certainty, paſſes under the name of knowledge. There can be nothing more certain, than that the idea we receive from an external object is in our minds; this is intuitive knowledge. But whether there be any thing more than barely that idea in our minds, whether we can thence certainly infer the exiſtence of any thing without us, which correſponds to that idea, is that whereof ſome men think there may be a queſtion made; becauſe men may have ſuch ideas in their minds, when no ſuch thing exiſts, no ſuch object affects their ſenſes. But yet here, I think, we are provided with an evidence, that puts us paſt doubting: for I aſk any one, whether he be not invincibly conſcious to himſelf of a different perception, when he looks on the ſun by day, and thinks on it by night; when he actually taſtes wormwood, or ſmells a roſe, or only thinks on that ſavour or odour? We as plainly find the difference there is between an idea revived in our minds by our own memory, and actually coming into our minds by our ſenſes, as we do between any two diſtinct ideas. If any one ſay, a dream may do the ſame thing, and all theſe ideas may be produced in us without any external objects; he may pleaſe to dream that I make him this anſwer; 1. That it is no great matter, whether I remove this ſcruple, or no: where all is but dream, reaſoning and arguments are of no uſe, truth and knowledge nothing. 2. That I believe he will allow a very manifeſt difference between dreaming of being in the fire, and being

being actually in it. But yet if he be resolved to appear so sceptical, as to maintain, that what I call being actually in the fire is nothing but a dream; and we cannot thereby certainly know, that any such thing as fire actually exists without us: I answer, that we certainly finding that pleasure or pain follows upon the application of certain objects to us, whose existence we perceive, or dream that we perceive, by our senses; this certainty is as great as our happiness or misery, beyond which we have no concernment to know, or to be. So that, I think, we may add to the two former sorts of knowledge this also of the existence of particular external objects, by that perception and consciousness we have of the actual entrance of ideas from them, and allow these three degrees of knowledge, viz. intuitive, demonstrative, and sensitive: in each of which there are different degrees and ways of evidence and certainty.

Knowledge not always clear, where the ideas are so.

§. 15. But since our knowledge is founded on, and employed about, our ideas only, will it not follow from thence, that it is conformable to our ideas; and that where our ideas are clear and distinct, or obscure and confused, our knowledge will be so too? To which I answer, no: for our knowledge consisting in the perception of the agreement or disagreement of any two ideas, its clearness or obscurity consists in the clearness or obscurity of that perception, and not in the clearness or obscurity of the ideas themselves; v. g. a man that has as clear ideas of the angles of a triangle, and of equality to two right ones, as any mathematician in the world, may yet have but a very obscure perception of their agreement, and so have but a very obscure knowledge of it. But ideas, which by reason of their obscurity or otherwise, are confused, cannot produce any clear or distinct knowledge; because as far as any ideas are confused, so far the mind cannot perceive clearly, whether they agree or disagree. Or to express the same thing in a way less apt to be misunderstood; he that hath not determined ideas to the words he uses, cannot make propositions of them, of whose truth he can be certain.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Of the Extent of Human Knowledge.

§. 1. KNOWLEDGE, as has been ſaid, lying in the perception of the agreement or diſagreement of any of our ideas, it follows from hence, that,

1. No farther than we have ideas.

First, we can have knowledge no farther than we have ideas.

2. No farther than we can perceive their agreement or diſagreement.

§. 2. Secondly, that we have no knowledge farther than we can have perception of their agreement or diſagreement. Which perception being, 1. Either by intuition, or the immediate comparing any two ideas; or, 2. By reaſon, examining the agreement or diſagreement of two ideas, by the intervention of ſome others; or, 3. By ſenſation, perceiving the exiſtence of particular things: hence it alſo follows,

3. Intuitive knowledge extends itſelf not to all the relations of all our ideas.

§. 3. Thirdly, that we cannot have an intuitive knowledge, that ſhall extend itſelf to all our ideas, and all that we would know about them; becauſe we cannot examine and perceive all the relations they have one to another by juxta-poſition, or an immediate compariſon one with another. Thus having the ideas of an obtuſe and an acute angled triangle, both drawn from equal baſes, and between parallels, I can, by intuitive knowledge, perceive the one not to be the other, but cannot that way know whether they be equal or no; becauſe their agreement or diſagreement in equality can never be perceived by an immediate comparing them: the difference of figure makes their parts incapable of an exact immediate application; and therefore there is need of ſome intervening qualities to meaſure them by, which is demonſtration, or rational knowledge.

4. Nor demonſtrative knowledge.

§. 4. Fourthly, it follows alſo, from what is above obſerved, that our rational knowledge cannot reach to the whole extent of our ideas: becauſe between two different ideas

ideas we would examine, we cannot always find ſuch mediums, as we can connect one to another with an intuitive knowledge, in all the parts of the deduction; and wherever that fails, we come ſhort of knowledge and demonſtration.

§. 5. Fifthly, ſenſitive knowledge reaching no farther than the exiſtence of things actually preſent to our ſenſes, is yet much narower than either of the former.

5. Senſitive knowledge narrower than either.

§. 6. From all which it is evident, that the extent of our knowledge comes not only ſhort of the reality of things, but even of the extent of our own ideas. Though our knowledge be limited to our ideas, and cannot exceed them either in extent or perfection; and though theſe be very narrow bounds, in reſpect of the extent of all being, and far ſhort of what we may juſtly imagine to be in ſome even created underſtandings, not tied down to the dull and narrow information which is to be received from ſome few, and not very acute ways of perception, ſuch as are our ſenſes; yet it would be well with us if our knowledge were but as large as our ideas, and there were not many doubts and inquiries concerning the ideas we have, whereof we are not, nor I believe ever ſhall be in this world reſolved. Nevertheleſs I do not queſtion but that human knowledge, under the preſent circumſtances of our beings and conſtitutions, may be carried much farther than it has hitherto been, if men would ſincerely, and with freedom of mind, employ all that induſtry and labour of thought, in improving the means of diſcovering truth, which they do for the colouring or ſupport of falſhood, to maintain a ſyſtem, intereſt, or party, they are once engaged in. But yet after all, I think I may, without injury to human perfection, be confident, that our knowledge would never reach to all we might deſire to know concerning thoſe ideas we have; nor be able to ſurmount all the difficulties, and reſolve all the queſtions that might ariſe concerning any of them. We have the ideas of a ſquare, a circle, and equality; and yet, perhaps, ſhall never be able to find a circle equal to a ſquare, and certainly

6. Our knowledge therefore narrower than our ideas.

know that it is so. We have the ideas of matter and thinking, * but possibly shall never be able to know, whether any mere material being thinks, or no; it being im-

* Against that assertion of Mr. Locke, that possibly we shall never be able to know whether any mere material being thinks or no, &c. the bishop of Worcester argues thus: if this be true, then, for all that we can know by our ideas of matter and thinking, matter may have a power of thinking: and, if this hold, then it is impossible to prove a spiritual substance in us from the idea of thinking: for how can we be assured by our ideas, that God hath not given such a power of thinking to matter so disposed as our bodies are? especially since it is said, † "That, in respect "of our notions, it is not much more remote from our comprehension to "conceive that God can, if he pleases, superadd to our idea of matter a "faculty of thinking, than that he should superadd to it another sub-"stance, with a faculty of thinking." Whoever asserts this can never prove a spiritual substance in us from a faculty of thinking, because he cannot know, from the idea of matter and thinking, that matter so disposed cannot think: and he cannot be certain, that God hath not framed the matter of our bodies so as to be capable of it.

To which Mr. Locke ‡ answers thus: here your lordship argues, that upon my principles it cannot be proved that there is a spiritual substance in us. To which, give me leave, with submission, to say, that I think it may be proved from my principles, and I think I have done it; and the proof in my book stands thus: First, we experiment in ourselves thinking. The idea of this action or mode of thinking is inconsistent with the idea of self-subsistence, and therefore has a necessary connexion with a support or subject of inhesion: the idea of that support is what we call substance; and so from thinking experimented in us, we have a proof of a thinking substance in us, which in my sense is a spirit. Against this your lordship will argue, that, by what I have said of the possibility that God may, if he pleases, superadd to matter a faculty of thinking, it can never be proved that there is a spiritual substance in us, because, upon that supposition, it is possible it may be a material substance that thinks in us. I grant it; but add, that the general idea of substance being the same every where, the modification of thinking, or the power of thinking, joined to it, makes it a spirit, without considering what other modifications it has, as, whether it has the modification of solidity, or no. As, on the other side, substance, that has the modification of solidity, is matter, whether it has the modification of thinking, or no. And therefore, if your lordship means by a spiritual, an immaterial substance, I grant I have not proved, nor upon my principles can it be proved, (your lordship meaning, as I think you do, demonstratively proved) that there is an immaterial substance in us that thinks. Though I presume, from what I have said about this supposition of a system of matter, thinking ‖ (which there demonstrates that God is immaterial) will prove it in the highest degree

† Essay of Human Understanding. B. 4. C. 3. §. 6.
‡ In his first letter to the bishop of Worcester.
‖ B. 4. C. 10. §. 16.

probable,

probable, that the thinking ſubſtance in us is immaterial. But your lordſhip thinks not probability enough, and by charging the want of demonſtration upon my principles, that the thinking thing in us is immaterial, your lordſhip ſeems to conclude it demonſtrable from principles of philoſophy. That demonſtration I ſhould with joy receive from your lordſhip, or any one. For though all the great ends of morality and religion are well enough ſecured without it, as I have ſhown*, yet it would be a great advance of our knowledge in nature and philoſophy.

To what I have ſaid in my book, to ſhow that all the great ends of religion and morality are ſecured barely by the immortality of the ſoul, without a neceſſary ſuppoſition that the ſoul is immaterial, I crave leave to add, that immortality may and ſhall be annexed to that, which in its own nature is neither immaterial nor immortal, as the apoſtle expreſly declares in theſe words, † For this corruptible muſt put on incorruption, and this mortal muſt put on immortality,

Perhaps my uſing the word ſpirit for a thinking ſubſtance, without excluding materiality out of it, will be thought too great a liberty, and ſuch as deſerves cenſure, becauſe I leave immateriality out of the idea I make it a ſign of. I readily own, that words ſhould be ſparingly ventured on in a ſenſe wholly new; and nothing but abſolute neceſſity can excuſe the boldneſs of uſing any term in a ſenſe whereof we can produce no example. But, in the preſent caſe, I think I have great authorities to juſtify me. The ſoul is agreed, on all hands, to be that in us which thinks. And he that will look into the firſt book of Cicero's Tuſculan queſtions, and into the ſixth book of Virgil's Æneid, will find, that theſe two great men, who of all the Romans beſt underſtood philoſophy, thought, or at leaſt did not deny the ſoul to be a ſubtile matter, which might come under the name of aura, or ignis, or æther, and this ſoul they both of them called ſpiritus: in the notion of which, it is plain, they included only thought and active motion, without the total excluſion of matter. Whether they thought right in this, I do not ſay; that is not the queſtion; but whether they ſpoke properly, when they called an active, thinking, ſubtile ſubſtance, out of which they excluded only groſs and palpable matter, ſpiritus, ſpirit. I think that nobody will deny, that if any among the Romans can be allowed to ſpeak properly, Tully and Virgil are the two who may moſt ſecurely be depended on for it: and one of them ſpeaking of the ſoul, ſays, Dum ſpiritus hos reget artus; and the other, Vita continetur corpore & ſpiritu. Where it is plain, by corpus, he means (as generally every where) only groſs matter that may be felt and handled, as appears by theſe words, Si cor, aut ſanguis, aut cerebrum eſt animus; certe, quoniam eſt corpus, interibit cum reliquo corpore; ſi anima eſt, fortè diſſipabitur; ſi ignis, extinguetur, Tuſc. Quæſt. l. 1. c. 11. Here Cicero oppoſes corpus to ignis and anima, i. e. aura, or breath. And the foundation of that his diſtinction of the ſoul, from that which he calls corpus or body, he gives a little lower in theſe words, Tanta ejus tenuitas ut fugiat aciem, ib. c. 22. Nor was it the heathen world alone that had this notion of ſpirit; the moſt enlightened of all the ancient people of God, Solomon himſelf, ſpeaks after the ſame manner, ‡ that which befalleth the ſons of men, befalleth beaſts, even one thing befalleth them; as the one dieth, ſo dieth the other, yea, they have all one ſpirit. So I

* B. 4. C. 3. §. 6. † 1 Cor. xv. 53. ‡ Eccl. iii. 19.

tranſlate the Hebrew word רוח here, for ſo I find it tranſlated the very next verſe but one; * who knoweth the ſpirit of man that goeth upward, and the ſpirit of the beaſt that goeth down to the earth? In which places it is plain, that Solomon applies the word רוח, and our tranſlators of him the word ſpirit, to a ſubſtance, out of which materiality was not wholly excluded, unleſs the ſpirit of a beaſt that goeth downwards to the earth be immaterial. Nor did the way of ſpeaking in our Saviour's time vary from this: St. Luke tells us †, that when our Saviour, after his reſurrection, ſtood in the midſt of them, they were affrighted, and ſuppoſed that they had ſeen πνεῦμα, the Greek word which always anſwers ſpirit in Engliſh; and ſo the tranſlators of the Bible render it here, they ſuppoſed that they had ſeen a ſpirit. But our Saviour ſays to them, behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myſelf; handle me and ſee; for a ſpirit hath not fleſh and bones, as you ſee me have. Which words of our Saviour put the ſame diſtinction between body and ſpirit, that Cicero did in the place above-cited, viz. That the one was a groſs compages that could be felt and handled; and the other ſuch as Virgil deſcribes the ghoſt or ſoul of Anchiſes.

Ter conatus ibi collo dare brachia circum,
Ter fruſtra comprenſa manus effugit imago,
Par levibus ventis volucrique ſimillima ſomno ‡.

I would not be thought hereby to ſay, that ſpirit never does ſignify a purely immaterial ſubſtance. In that ſenſe the ſcripture, I take it, ſpeaks, when it ſays God is a ſpirit; and in that ſenſe I have uſed it; and in that ſenſe I have proved from my principles that there is a ſpiritual ſubſtance; and am certain that there is a ſpiritual immaterial ſubſtance: which is, I humbly conceive, a direct anſwer to your lordſhip's queſtion in the beginning of this argument, viz. How we come to be certain that there are ſpiritual ſubſtances, ſuppoſing this principle to be true, that the ſimple ideas by ſenſation and reflection are the ſole matter and foundation of all our reaſoning? But this hinders not, but that if God, that infinite, omnipotent, and perfectly immaterial Spirit, ſhould pleaſe to give to a ſyſtem of very ſubtile matter, ſenſe and motion, it might with propriety of ſpeech be called ſpirit, though materiality were not excluded out of its complex idea. Your lordſhip proceeds, It is ſaid indeed elſewhere ‖, that it is repugnant to the idea of ſenſeleſs matter, that it ſhould put into itſelf ſenſe, perception, and knowledge. But this doth not reach the preſent caſe; which is not what matter can do of itſelf, but what matter prepared by an omnipotent hand can do. And what certainty can we have that he hath not done it? We can have none from the ideas, for thoſe are given up in this caſe, and conſequently we can have no certainty, upon theſe principles, whether we have any ſpiritual ſubſtance within us or not.

Your lordſhip in this paragraph proves, that, from what I ſay, we can have no certainty whether we have any ſpiritual ſubſtance in us or not. If by ſpiritual ſubſtance your lordſhip means an immaterial ſubſtance in us, as you ſpeak, I grant what your lordſhip ſays is true, that it cannot upon theſe principles be demonſtrated. But I muſt crave leave to ſay at the ſame time, that upon theſe principles it can be proved, to the higheſt degree of probability. If by ſpiritual ſubſtance your lordſhip means a thinking ſubſtance, I muſt diſſent from your lordſhip, and ſay,

* Eccl. iii. 21. † Ch. xxiv. 37. ‡ Lib. VI. ‖ B. 4. C. 10. §. 5.

that

that we can have a certainty, upon my principles, that there is a ſpiritual ſubſtance in us. In ſhort, my lord, upon my principles, i. e. from the idea of thinking, we can have a certainty that there is a thinking ſubſtance in us; from hence we have a certainty that there is an eternal thinking ſubſtance. This thinking ſubſtance, which has been from eternity, I have proved to be immaterial. This eternal, immaterial, thinking ſubſtance, has put into us a thinking ſubſtance, which, whether it be a material or immaterial ſubſtance, cannot be infallibly demonſtrated from our ideas; though from them it may be proved, that it is to the higheſt degree probable that it is immaterial.

Again, the biſhop of Worceſter undertakes to prove from Mr. Locke's principles, that we may be certain, "That the firſt eternal thinking Being, or omnipotent Spirit cannot, if he would, give to certain ſyſtems of created ſenſible matter, put together as he ſees fit, ſome degrees of ſenſe, perception, and thought."

To which Mr. Locke has made the following anſwer in his third letter.

Your firſt argument I take to be this; that according to me, the knowledge we have being by our ideas, and our idea of matter in general being a ſolid ſubſtance, and our idea of body a ſolid extended figured ſubſtance; if I admit matter to be capable of thinking, I confound the idea of matter with the idea of a ſpirit: to which I anſwer, No, no more than I confound the idea of matter with the idea of an horſe, when I ſay that matter in general is a ſolid extended ſubſtance; and that an horſe is a material animal, or an extended ſolid ſubſtance with ſenſe and ſpontaneous motion.

The idea of matter is an extended ſolid ſubſtance; wherever there is ſuch a ſubſtance, there is matter, and the eſſence of matter, whatever other qualities, not contained in that eſſence, it ſhall pleaſe God to ſuperadd to it. For example, God creates an extended ſolid ſubſtance, without the ſuperadding any thing elſe to it, and ſo we may conſider it at reſt: to ſome parts of it he ſuperadds motion, but it has ſtill the eſſence of matter: other parts of it he frames into plants, with all the excellencies of vegetation, life, and beauty, which is to be found in a roſe or peach-tree, &c. above the eſſence of matter, in general, but it is ſtill but matter: to other parts he adds ſenſe and ſpontaneous motion, and thoſe other properties that are to be found in an elephant. Hitherto it is not doubted but the power of God may go, and that the properties of a roſe, a peach or an elephant, ſuperadded to matter, change not the properties of matter; but matter is in theſe things matter ſtill. But if one venture to go one ſtep farther and ſay, God may give to matter thought, reaſon, and volition, as well as ſenſe and ſpontaneous motion, there are men ready preſently to limit the power of the omnipotent Creator, and tell us he cannot do it; becauſe it deſtroys the eſſence, or changes the eſſential properties of matter. To make good which aſſertion, they have no more to ſay, but that thought and reaſon are not included in the eſſence of matter. I grant it; but whatever excellency, not contained in its eſſence, be ſuperadded to matter, it does not deſtroy the eſſence of matter, if it leaves it an extended ſolid ſubſtance; wherever that is, there is the eſſence of matter: and if every thing of greater perfection, ſuperadded to ſuch a ſubſtance, deſtroys the eſſence of matter, what will become of the eſſence of matter in a plant or an animal, whoſe properties far exceed thoſe of a mere extended ſolid ſubſtance?

But it is farther urged, that we cannot conceive how matter can think. I grant it; but to argue from thence, that God therefore cannot give to

matter a faculty of thinking, is to say God's omnipotency is limited to a narrow compass, because man's understanding is so; and brings down God's infinite power to the size of our capacities. If God can give no power to any parts of matter, but what men can account for from the essence of matter in general; if all such qualities and properties must destroy the essence, or change the essential properties of matter, which are to our conceptions above it, and we cannot conceive to be the natural consequence of that essence; it is plain, that the essence of matter is destroyed, and its essential properties changed, in most of the sensible parts of this our system. For it is visible, that all the planets have revolutions about certain remote centres, which I would have any one explain, or make conceivable by the bare essence, or natural powers depending on the essence of matter in general, without something added to that essence, which we cannot conceive; for the moving of matter in a crooked line, or the attraction of matter by matter, is all that can be said in the case; either of which it is above our reach to derive from the essence of matter or body in general; though one of these two must unavoidably be allowed to be superadded in this instance to the essence of matter in general. The omnipotent Creator advised not with us in the making of the world, and his ways are not the less excellent, because they are past finding out.

In the next place, the vegetable part of the creation is not doubted to be wholly material; and yet he that will look into it, will observe excellencies and operations in this part of matter, which he will not find contained in the essence of matter in general, nor be able to conceive how they can be produced by it. And will he therefore say, that the essence of matter is destroyed in them, because they have properties and operations not contained in the essential properties of matter as matter, nor explicable by the essence of matter in general?

Let us advance one step farther, and we shall in the animal world meet with yet greater perfections and properties, no ways explicable by the essence of matter in general. If the omnipotent Creator had not superadded to the earth, which produced the irrational animals, qualities for surpassing those of the dull dead earth, out of which they were made, life, sense, and spontaneous motion, nobler qualities than were before in it, it had still remained rude senseless matter; and if to the individuals of each species he had not superadded a power of propagation, the species had perished with those individuals: but by these essences or properties of each species, superadded to the matter which they were made of, the essence or properties of matter in general were not destroyed or changed, any more than any thing that was in the individuals before was destroyed or changed by the power of generation, superadded to them by the first benediction of the Almighty.

In all such cases, the superinducement of greater perfections and nobler qualities destroys nothing of the essence or perfections that were there before; unless there can be showed a manifest repugnancy between them: but all the proof offered for that, is only, that we cannot conceive how matter, without such superadded perfections, can produce such effects; which is, in truth, no more than to say, matter in general, or every part of matter, as matter, has them not; but is no reason to prove, that God, if he pleases, cannot superadd them to some parts of matter, unless it can be proved to be a contradiction, that God should give to some parts of matter qualities and perfections, which matter in general has not; though we cannot conceive how matter is invested with them, or how it operates,

by

by virtue of those new endowments; nor is it to be wondered that we cannot, whilst we limit all its operations to those qualities it had before, and would explain them by the known properties of matter in general, without any such induced perfections. For, if this be a right rule of reasoning, to deny a thing to be, because we cannot conceive the manner how it comes to be; I shall desire them who use it to stick to this rule, and see what work it will make both in divinity as well as philosophy: and whether they can advance any thing more in favour of scepticism.

For to keep within the present subject of the power of thinking and self-motion, bestowed by omnipotent power in some parts of matter: the objection to this is, I cannot conceive how matter should think. What is the consequence? Ergo, God cannot give it a power to think. Let this stand for a good reason, and then proceed in other cases by the same. You cannot conceive how matter can attract matter at any distance, much less at the distance of 1,000,000 miles; ergo, God cannot give it such a power: you cannot conceive how matter should feel, or move itself, or affect an immaterial being, or be moved by it; ergo, God cannot give it such powers: which is in effect to deny gravity, and the revolution of the planets about the sun; to make brutes mere machines, without sense or spontaneous motion; and to allow man neither sense nor voluntary motion.

Let us apply this rule one degree farther. You cannot conceive how an extended solid substance should think, therefore God cannot make it think: can you conceive how your own soul, or any substance, thinks? You find indeed that you do think, and so do I; but I want to be told how the action of thinking is performed: this, I confess, is beyond my conception; and I would be glad any one, who conceives it, would explain it to me. God, I find, has given me this faculty; and since I cannot but be convinced of his power in this instance, which though I every moment experiment in myself, yet I cannot conceive the manner of; what would it be less than an insolent absurdity, to deny his power in other like cases, only for this reason, because I cannot conceive the manner how?

To explain this matter a little farther: God has created a substance; let it be, for example, a solid extended substance. Is God bound to give it, besides being, a power of action? that, I think, nobody will say: he therefore may leave it in a state of inactivity, and it will be nevertheless a substance; for action is not necessary to the being of any substance that God does create. God has likewise created and made to exist, de novo, an immaterial substance, which will not lose its being of a substance, though God should bestow on it nothing more but this bare being, without giving it any activity at all. Here are now two distinct substances, the one material, the other immaterial, both in a state of perfect inactivity. Now I ask, what power God can give to one of these substances (supposing them to retain the same distinct natures that they had as substances in their state of inactivity) which he cannot give to the other? In that state, it is plain, neither of them thinks; for thinking being an action, it cannot be denied, that God can put an end to any action of any created substance, without annihilating of the substance whereof it is an action; and if it be so, he can also create or give existence to such a substance, without giving that substance any action at all. By the same reason it is plain, that neither of them can move itself: now, I would ask, why Omnipotency cannot give to either of these substances, which are equally in a state of perfect inactivity, the same power that it can give to the other? Let it be, for example, that of spontaneous or self-motion, which is a power that it

is ſuppoſed God can give to an unſolid ſubſtance, but denied that he can give to ſolid ſubſtance.

If it be aſked, why they limit the omnipotency of God, in reference to the one rather than the other of theſe ſubſtances? all that can be ſaid to it is, that they cannot conceive, how the ſolid ſubſtance ſhould ever be able to move itſelf. And as little, ſay I, are they able to conceive, how a created unſolid ſubſtance ſhould move itſelf. But there may be ſomething in an immaterial ſubſtance, that you do not know. I grant it; and in a material one too: for example, gravitation of matter towards matter, and in the ſeveral proportions obſervable, inevitably ſhows, that there is ſomething in matter that we do not underſtand, unleſs we can conceive ſelf-motion in matter; or an inexplicable and inconceivable attraction in matter, at immenſe, almoſt incomprehenſible diſtances: it muſt therefore be confeſſed, that there is ſomething in ſolid, as well as unſolid ſubſtances, that we do not underſtand. But this we know, that they may each of them have their diſtinct beings, without any activity ſuperadded to them, unleſs you will deny, that God can take from any being its power of acting, which it is probable will be thought too preſumptuous for any one to do; and I ſay, it is as hard to conceive ſelf-motion in a created immaterial, as in a material being, conſider it how you will: and therefore this is no reaſon to deny Omnipotency to be able to give a power of ſelf-motion to a material ſubſtance, if he pleaſes, as well as to an immaterial; ſince neither of them can have it from themſelves, nor can we conceive how it can be in either of them.

The ſame is viſible in the other operation of thinking; both theſe ſubſtances may be made, and exiſt without thought; neither of them has, or can have the power of thinking from itſelf: God may give it to either of them, according to the good pleaſure of his omnipotency; and in which ever of them it is, it is equally beyond our capacity to conceive, how either of theſe ſubſtances thinks. But for that reaſon, to deny that God, who had power enough to give them both a being out of nothing, can by the ſame omnipotency, give them what other powers and perfections he pleaſes, has no better foundation than to deny his power of creation, becauſe we cannot conceive how it is performed: and there, at laſt, this way of reaſoning muſt terminate.

That Omnipotency cannot make a ſubſtance to be ſolid and not ſolid at the ſame time, I think with due reverence we may ſay; but that a ſolid ſubſtance may not have qualities, perfections, and powers, which have no natural or viſibly neceſſary connexion with ſolidity and extenſion, is too much for us (who are but of yeſterday, and know nothing) to be poſitive in. If God cannot join things together by connexions inconceivable to us, we muſt deny even the conſiſtency and being of matter itſelf; ſince every particle of it having ſome bulk, has its parts connected by ways inconceivable to us. So that all the difficulties that are raiſed againſt the thinking of matter, from our ignorance, or narrow conceptions, ſtand not at all in the way of the power of God, if he pleaſes to ordain it ſo; nor prove any thing againſt his having actually endued ſome parcels of matter, ſo diſpoſed as he thinks fit, with a faculty of thinking, till it can be ſhown, that it contains a contradiction to ſuppoſe it.

Though to me ſenſation be comprehended under thinking in general, yet, in the foregoing diſcourſe, I have ſpoke of ſenſe in brutes, as diſtinct from thinking; becauſe your lordſhip, as I remember, ſpeaks of ſenſe in brutes. But here I take liberty to obſerve, that if your lordſhip allows

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brutes to have ſenſation, it will follow, either that God can and doth give to ſome parcels of matter a power of perception and thinking; or that all animals have immaterial, and conſequently, according to your lordſhip, immortal ſouls, as well as men; and to ſay that fleas and mites, &c. have immortal ſouls as well as men, will poſſibly be looked on as going a great way to ſerve an hypotheſis.

I have been pretty large in making this matter plain, that they who are ſo forward to beſtow hard cenſures or names on the opinions of thoſe who differ from them, may conſider whether ſometimes they are not more due to their own; and that they may be perſuaded a little to temper that heat, which, ſuppoſing the truth in their current opinions, gives them (as they think) a right to lay what imputations they pleaſe on thoſe who would fairly examine the grounds they ſtand upon. For talking with a ſuppoſition and inſinuations, that truth and knowledge, nay, and religion too, ſtand and fall with their ſyſtems, is at beſt but an imperious way of begging the queſtion, and aſſuming to themſelves, under the pretence of zeal for the cauſe of God, a title to infallibility. It is very becoming that men's zeal for truth ſhould go as far as their proofs, but not go for proofs themſelves. He that attacks received opinions with any thing but fair arguments, may, I own, be juſtly ſuſpected not to mean well, nor to be led by the love of truth; but the ſame may be ſaid of him too, who ſo defends them. An error is not the better for being common, nor truth the worſe for having lain neglected: and if it were put to the vote any where in the world, I doubt, as things are managed, whether truth would have the majority, at leaſt whilſt the authority of men, and not the examination of things, muſt be its meaſure. The imputation of ſcepticiſm, and thoſe broad inſinuations to render what I have writ ſuſpected, ſo frequent, as if that were the great buſineſs of all this pains you have been at about me, has made me ſay thus much, my lord, rather as my ſenſe of the way to eſtabliſh truth in its full force and beauty, than that I think the world will need to have any thing ſaid to it, to make it diſtinguiſh between your lordſhip's and my deſign in writing, which therefore I ſecurely leave to the judgment of the reader, and return to the argument in hand.

What I have above ſaid, I take to be a full anſwer to all that your lordſhip would infer from my idea of matter, of liberty, of identity, and from the power of abſtracting. You aſk, * How can my idea of liberty agree with the idea that bodies can operate only by motion and impulſe? Anſ. By the omnipotency of God, who can make all things agree, that involve not a contradiction. It is true, I ſay, "† That bodies operate by impulſe, and nothing elſe." And ſo I thought when I writ it, and can yet conceive no other way of their operation. But I am ſince convinced by the judicious Mr. Newton's incomparable book, that it is too bold a preſumption to limit God's power in this point by my narrow conceptions. The gravitation of matter towards matter, by ways unconceivable to me, is not only a demonſtration that God can, if he pleaſes, put into bodies powers, and ways of operation, above what can be derived from our idea of body, or can be explained by what we know of matter, but alſo an unqueſtionable, and every where viſible inſtance, that he has done ſo. And therefore in the next edition of my book, I will take care to have that paſſage rectified.

* 1ſt Anſwer. † Eſſay, B. 2. Ch. 8. §. 11.

As to self-consciousness, your lordship asks, * What is there like self-consciousness in matter? Nothing at all in matter as matter. But that God cannot bestow on some parcels of matter a power of thinking, and with it self-consciousness, will never be proved by asking, † How is it possible to apprehend that mere body should perceive that it doth perceive? The weakness of our apprehension I grant in the case: I confess as much as you please, that we cannot conceive how a solid, no, nor how an unsolid created substance thinks; but this weakness of our apprehensions reaches not the power of God, whose weakness is stronger than any thing in men.

Your argument from abstraction we have in this question, ‡ If it may be in the power of matter to think, how comes it to be so impossible for such organized bodies as the brutes have, to enlarge their ideas by abstraction? Ans. This seems to suppose, that I place thinking within the natural power of matter. If that be your meaning, my lord, I never say, nor suppose, that all matter has naturally in it a faculty of thinking, but the direct contrary. But if you mean that certain parcels of matter, ordered by the Divine power, as seems fit to him, may be made capable of receiving from his omnipotency the faculty of thinking; that, indeed, I say; and that being granted, the answer to your question is easy; since, if Omnipotency can give thought to any solid substance, it is not hard to conceive, that God may give that faculty in a higher or lower degree, as it pleases him, who knows what disposition of the subject is suited to such a particular way or degree of thinking.

Another argument to prove, that God cannot endue any parcel of matter with the faculty of thinking, is taken from those words of mine, ‖ where I show, by what connexion of ideas we may come to know, that God is an immaterial substance. They are these, "The idea of an eternal "actual knowing being, with the idea of immateriality, by the inter-"vention of the idea of matter, and of its actual division, divisibility, "and want of perception," &c. From whence your lordship thus argues, ** Here the want of perception is owned to be so essential to matter, that God is therefore concluded to be immaterial. Answ. Perception and knowledge in that one eternal being, where it has its source, it is visible must be essentially inseparable from it; therefore the actual want of perception in so great part of the particular parcels of matter, is a demonstration, that the first being, from whom perception and knowledge are inseparable, is not matter: how far this makes the want of perception an essential property of matter, I will not dispute; it suffices that it shows, that perception is not an essential property of matter; and therefore matter cannot be that eternal original being to which perception and knowledge are essential. Matter, I say, naturally is without perception: ergo, says your lordship, want of perception is an essential property of matter, and God does not change the essential properties of things, their nature remaining. From whence you infer, that God cannot bestow on any parcel of matter (the nature of matter remaining) a faculty of thinking. If the rules of logic, since my days, be not changed, I may safely deny this consequence. For an argument that runs thus, God does not; ergo, he cannot, I was taught when I first came to the university, would not hold. For I never said God did; but, †† "That I see no contradiction in it,

* 1st Ans. † Ibid. ‡ Ibid. ‖ 1st Letter. ** 1st Ans.
†† B. 4. C. 3. §. 6.

"that

" that he ſhould, if he pleaſed, give to ſome ſyſtems of ſenſeleſs matter a " faculty of thinking;" and I know nobody, before Des Cartes, that ever pretended to ſhow that there was any contradiction in it. So that at worſt, my not being able to ſee in matter any ſuch incapacity, as makes it impoſſible for Omnipotency to beſtow on it a faculty of thinking, makes me oppoſite only to the Carteſians. For, as far as I have ſeen or heard, the fathers of the chriſtian church never pretended to demonſtrate that matter was incapable to receive a power of ſenſation, perception and thinking, from the hand of the omnipotent Creator. Let us therefore, if you pleaſe, ſuppoſe the form of your argumentation right, and that your lordſhip means, God cannot: and then, if your argument be good, it proves, that God could not give to Balaam's aſs a power to ſpeak to his maſter as he did; for the want of rational diſcourſe being natural to that ſpecies, it is but for your lordſhip to call it an eſſential property, and then God cannot change the eſſential properties of things, their nature remaining: whereby it is proved, that God cannot, with all his omnipotency, give to an aſs a power to ſpeak as Balaam's did.

You ſay, * my lord, You do not ſet bounds to God's omnipotency: for he may, if he pleaſe, change a body into an immaterial ſubſtance, i. e. take away from a ſubſtance the ſolidity which it had before, and which made it matter, and then give it a faculty of thinking, which it had not before, and which makes it a ſpirit, the ſame ſubſtance remaining. For if the ſubſtance remains not, body is not changed into an immaterial ſubſtance, but the ſolid ſubſtance, and all belonging to it, is annihilated, and an immaterial ſubſtance created, which is not a change of one thing into another, but the deſtroying of one, and making another de novo. In this change therefore of a body or material ſubſtance into an immaterial, let us obſerve theſe diſtinct conſiderations.

Firſt, you ſay, God may, if he pleaſes, take away from a ſolid ſubſtance ſolidity, which is that which makes it a material ſubſtance or body; and may make it an immaterial ſubſtance, i. e. a ſubſtance without ſolidity. But this privation of one quality gives it not another; the bare taking away a lower or leſs noble quality does not give it an higher or nobler; that muſt be the gift of God. For the bare privation of one, and a meaner quality, cannot be the poſition of an higher and better; unleſs any one will ſay, that cogitation, or the power of thinking, reſults from the nature of ſubſtance itſelf; which if it do, then wherever there is ſubſtance, there muſt be cogitation, or a power of thinking. Here then, upon your lordſhip's own principles, is an immaterial ſubſtance without the faculty of thinking.

In the next place, you will not deny, but God may give to this ſubſtance, thus deprived of ſolidity, a faculty of thinking; for you ſuppoſe it made capable of that, by being made immaterial; whereby you allow, that the ſame numerical ſubſtance may be ſometimes wholly incogitative, or without a power of thinking, and at other times perfectly cogitative, or endued with a power of thinking.

Further, you will not deny, but God can give it ſolidity and make it material again. For, I conclude, it will not be denied, that God can make it again what it was before. Now I crave leave to aſk your lordſhip, why God, having given to this ſubſtance the faculty of thinking after ſolidity was taken from it, cannot reſtore to it ſolidity again, with-

* 1ſt Anſwer,

out

out taking away the faculty of thinking? When you have resolved this, my lord, you will have proved it impossible for God's omnipotence to give a solid substance a faculty of thinking; but till then, not having proved it impossible, and yet denying that God can do it, is to deny that he can do what is in itself possible; which, as I humbly conceive, is visibly to set bounds to God's omnipotency, though you say here * you do not set bounds to God's omnipotency.

If I should imitate your lordship's way of writing, I should not omit to bring in Epicurus here, and take notice that this was his way, Deum verbis ponere, re tollere: and then add, that I am certain you do not think he promoted the great ends of religion and morality. For it is with such candid and kind insinuations as these, that you bring in both † Hobbes and ‡ Spinosa into your discourse here about God's being able, if he please, to give to some parcels of matter, ordered as he thinks fit, a faculty of thinking: neither of those authors having, as appears by any passages you bring out of them, said any thing to this question, nor having, as it seems, any other business here, but by their names skilfully to give that character to my book, with which you would recommend it to the world.

I pretend not to inquire what measure of zeal, nor for what, guides your lordship's pen in such a way of writing, as your's has all along been with me: only I cannot but consider, what reputation it would give to the writings of the fathers of the church, if they should think truth required, or religion allowed them to imitate such patterns. But God be thanked, there be those amongst them who do not admire such ways of managing the cause of truth or religion; they being sensible that if every one, who believes or can pretend he hath truth on his side, is thereby authorized, without proof, to insinuate whatever may serve to prejudice men's minds against the other side, there will be great ravage made on charity and practice, without any gain to truth or knowledge: and that the liberties frequently taken by disputants to do so, may have been the cause that the world in all ages has received so much harm, and so little advantage from controversies in religion.

These are the arguments which your lordship has brought to confute one saying in my book, by other passages in it; which therefore being all but argumenta ad hominem, if they did prove what they do not, are of no other use, than to gain a victory over me: a thing methinks, so much beneath your lordship, that it does not deserve one of your pages. The question is, whether God can, if he pleases, bestow on any parcel of matter, ordered as he thinks fit, a faculty of perception and thinking. You say, ‖ you look upon a mistake herein to be of dangerous consequence, as to the great ends of religion and morality. If this be so, my lord, I think one may well wonder, why your lordship has brought no arguments to establish the truth itself which you look on to be of such dangerous consequence to be mistaken in; but have spent so many pages only in a personal matter, in endeavouring to show, that I had inconsistencies in my book; which if any such thing had been showed, the question would be still as far from being decided, and the danger of mistaking about it as little prevented, as if nothing of all this had been said. If therefore your lordship's care of the great ends of religion and morality have made

* 1st Answer. † Ibid. ‡ Ibid. ‖ Ibid.

you

you think it neceſſary to clear this queſtion, the world has reaſon to conclude there is little to be ſaid againſt that propoſition which is to be found in my book, concerning the poſſibility, that ſome parcels of matter might be ſo ordered by Omnipotence, as to be endued with a faculty of thinking, if God ſo pleaſed; ſince your lordſhip's concern for the promoting the great ends of religion and morality, has not enabled you to produce one argument againſt a propoſition that you think of ſo dangerous conſequence to them.

And here I crave leave to obſerve, that though in your title page you promiſe to prove, that my notion of ideas is inconſiſtent with itſelf, (which if it were, it could hardly be proved to be inconſiſtent with any thing elſe) and with the articles of the chriſtian faith; yet your attempts all along have been to prove me, in ſome paſſages of my book, inconſiſtent with myſelf, without having ſhown any propoſition in my book inconſiſtent with any article of the chriſtian faith.

I think your lordſhip has indeed made uſe of one argument of your own: but it is ſuch an one, that I confeſs I do not ſee how it is apt much to promote religion, eſpecially the chriſtian religion, founded on revelation. I ſhall ſet down your lordſhip's words, that they may be conſidered: you ſay, * that you are of opinion, that the great ends of religion and morality are beſt ſecured by the proofs of the immortality of the ſoul from its nature and properties; and which you think prove it immaterial. Your lordſhip does not queſtion whether God can give immortality to a material ſubſtance; but you ſay it takes off very much from the evidence of immortality, if it depend wholly upon God's giving that, which of its own nature it is not capable of, &c. So likewiſe you ſay, † If a man cannot be certain, but that matter may think, (as I affirm) then what becomes of the ſoul's immateriality (and conſequently immortality) from its operations? But for all this, ſay I, his aſſurance of faith remains on its own baſis. Now you appeal to any man of ſenſe, whether the finding the uncertainty of his own principles, which he went upon, in point of reaſon, doth not weaken the credibility of theſe fundamental articles, when they are conſidered purely as matters of faith? For before, there was a natural credibility in them on account of reaſon; but by going on wrong grounds of certainty, all that is loſt, and inſtead of being certain, he is more doubtful than ever. And if the evidence of faith fall ſo much ſhort of that of reaſon, it muſt needs have leſs effect upon men's minds, when the ſubſerviency of reaſon is taken away; as it muſt be when the grounds of certainty by reaſon are vaniſhed. Is it at all probable, that he who finds his reaſon deceive him in ſuch fundamental points, ſhall have his faith ſtand firm and unmoveable on the account of revelation? For in matters of revelation there muſt be ſome antecedent principles ſuppoſed, before we can believe any thing on the account of it.

More to the ſame purpoſe we have ſome pages farther, where, from ſome of my words your lordſhip ſays, ‡ you cannot but obſerve, that we have no certainty upon my grounds, that ſelf-conſciouſneſs depends upon an individual immaterial ſubſtance, and conſequently that a material ſubſtance may, according to my principles, have ſelf-conſciouſneſs in it; at leaſt, that I am not certain of the contrary. Whereupon your lordſhip bids me conſider, whether this doth not a little affect the whole article of the reſurrection. What does all this tend to, but to make the world

* 1ſt Anſwer. † 2d Anſwer. ‡ Ibid.

believe

believe that I have lessened the credibility of the immortality of the soul, and the resurrection, by saying, that though it be most highly probable, that the soul is immaterial, yet upon my principles it cannot be demonstrated; because it is not impossible to God's omnipotency, if he pleases, to bestow upon some parcels of matter, disposed as he sees fit, a faculty of thinking?

This your accusation of my lessening the credibility of these articles of faith, is founded on this, that the article of the immortality of the soul abates of its credibility, if it be allowed, that its immateriality (which is the supposed proof from reason and philosophy of its immortality) cannot be demonstrated from natural reason: which argument of your lordship's, bottoms, as I humbly conceive, on this, that divine revelation abates of its credibility in all those articles it proposes, proportionably as human reason fails to support the testimony of God. And all that your lordship in those passages has said, when examined, will, I suppose, be found to import thus much, viz. Does God propose any thing to mankind to be believed? It is very fit and credible to be believed, if reason can demonstrate it to be true. But if human reason come short in the case, and cannot make it out, its credibility is thereby lessened; which is in effect to say, that the veracity of God is not a firm and sure foundation of faith to rely upon, without the concurrent testimony of reason; i. e. with reverence be it spoken, God is not to be believed on his own word, unless what he reveals be in itself credible, and might be believed without him.

If this be a way to promote religion, the christian religion, in all its articles, I am not sorry that it is not a way to be found in any of my writings; for I imagine any thing like this would (and I should think deserved to) have other titles than bare scepticism bestowed upon it, and would have raised no small outcry against any one, who is not to be supposed to be in the right in all that he says, and so may securely say what he pleases. Such as I, the profanum vulgus, who take too much upon us, if we would examine, have nothing to do but to hearken and believe, though what he said should subvert the very foundations of the christian faith.

What I have above observed, is so visibly contained in your lordship's argument, that when I met with it in your answer to my first letter, it seemed so strange for a man of your lordship's character, and in a dispute in defence of the doctrine of the Trinity, that I could hardly persuade myself, but it was a slip of your pen: but when I found it in your second letter * made use of again, and seriously enlarged as an argument of weight to be insisted upon, I was convinced, that it was a principle that you heartily embraced, how little favourable soever it was to the articles of the christian religion, and particularly those which you undertook to defend.

I desire my reader to peruse the passages as they stand in your letters themselves, and see whether what you say in them does not amount to this: that a revelation from God is more or less credible, according as it has a stronger or weaker confirmation from human reason. For,

1. Your lordship says, † you do not question whether God can give immortality to a material substance; but you say it takes off very much from the evidence of immortality, if it depends wholly upon God's giving that, which of its own nature it is not capable of.

* 2d Answer. † 1st Answer.

To

To which I reply, any one's not being able to demonstrate the soul to be immaterial, takes off not very much, nor at all, from the evidence of its immortality, if God has revealed that it shall be immortal; because the veracity of God is a demonstration of the truth of what he has revealed, and the want of another demonstration of a proposition, that is demonstratively true, takes not off from the evidence of it. For where there is a clear demonstration, there is as much evidence as any truth can have, that is not self-evident. God has revealed that the souls of men should live for ever. But, says your lordship, from this evidence it takes off very much, if it depends wholly upon God's giving that, which of its own nature it is not capable of, i. e. The revelation and testimony of God loses much of its evidence, if this depends wholly upon the good pleasure of God, and cannot be demonstratively made out by natural reason, that the soul is immaterial, and consequently in its own nature immortal. For that is all that here is or can be meant by these words, which of its own nature it is not capable of, to make them to the purpose. For the whole of your lordship's discourse here, is to prove, that the soul cannot be material, because then the evidence of its being immortal would be very much lessened. Which is to say, that it is not as credible upon divine revelation, that a material substance should be immortal, as an immaterial; or which is all one, that God is not equally to be believed, when he declares, that a material substance shall be immortal, as when he declares, that an immaterial shall be so; because the immortality of a material substance cannot be demonstrated from natural reason.

Let us try this rule of your lordship's a little farther. God hath revealed, that the bodies men shall have after the resurrection, as well as their souls, shall live to eternity. Does your lordship believe the eternal life of the one of these more than of the other, because you think you can prove it of one of them by natural reason, and of the other not? Or can any one, who admits of divine revelation in the case, doubt of one of them more than the other? Or think this proposition less credible, that the bodies of men, after the resurrection, shall live for ever; than this, That the souls of men shall, after the resurrection, live for ever? For that he must do, if he thinks either of them is less credible than the other. If this be so, reason is to be consulted how far God is to be believed, and the credit of divine testimony must receive its force from the evidence of reason; which is evidently to take away the credibility of divine revelation in all supernatural truths, wherein the evidence of reason fails. And how much such a principle as this tends to the support of the doctrine of the Trinity, or the promoting the christian religion, I shall leave it to your lordship to consider.

I am not so well read in Hobbes or Spinosa, as to be able to say, what were their opinions in this matter. But possibly there be those, who will think your lordship's authority of more use to them in the case, than those justly decried names; and be glad to find your lordship a patron of the oracles of reason, so little to the advantage of the oracles of divine revelation. This at least, I think, may be subjoined to the words at the bottom of the next page*, That those who have gone about to lessen the credibility of the articles of faith, which evidently they do, who say they are less credible, because they cannot be made out demonstratively by natural reason, have not been thought to secure several of the articles

* 1st Answer.

of

of the christian faith, especially those of the trinity, incarnation, and resurrection of the body, which are those upon the account of which I am brought by your lordship into this dispute.

I shall not trouble the reader with your lordship's endeavours, in the following words, to prove, that if the soul be not an immaterial substance, it can be nothing but life; your very first words visibly confuting all that you alledge to that purpose, they are, * If the soul be a material substance, it is really nothing but life; which is to say, That if the soul be really a substance, it is not really a substance, but really nothing else but an affection of a substance; for the life, whether of a material or immaterial substance, is not the substance itself, but an affection of it.

2. You say, † Although we think the separate state of the soul after death, is sufficiently revealed in the scripture; yet it creates a great difficulty in understanding it, if the soul be nothing but life, or a material substance, which must be dissolved when life is ended. For, if the soul be a material substance, it must be made up, as others are, of the cohesion of solid and separate parts, how minute and invisible soever they be. And what is it which should keep them together, when life is gone? So that it is no easy matter to give an account how the soul should be capable of immortality, unless it be an immaterial substance; and then we know the solution and texture of bodies cannot reach the soul, being of a different nature.

Let it be as hard a matter as it will, to give an account what it is that should keep the parts of a material soul together, after it is separated from the body; yet it will be always as easy to give an account of it, as to give an account what it is which shall keep together a material and immaterial substance. And yet the difficulty that there is to give an account of that, I hope, does not, with your lordship, weaken the credibility of the inseparable union of soul and body to eternity: and I persuade myself, that the men of sense, to whom your lordship appeals in the case, do not find their belief of this fundamental point much weakened by that difficulty. I thought heretofore (and by your lordship's permission would think so still) that the union of the parts of matter, one with another, is as much in the hands of God, as the union of a material and immaterial substance; and that it does not take off very much, or at all, from the evidence of immortality, which depends on that union, that it is no easy matter to give an account what it is that should keep them together: though its depending wholly upon the gift and good pleasure of God, where the manner creates great difficulty in the understanding, and our reason cannot discover in the nature of things how it is, be that which, your lordship so positively says, lessens the credibility of the fundamental articles of the resurrection and immortality.

But, my lord, to remove this objection a little, and to show of how small force it is even with yourself; give me leave to presume, that your lordship as firmly believes the immortality of the body after the resurrection, as any other article of faith; if so, then it being no easy matter to give an account what it is that shall keep together the parts of a material soul, to one that believes it is material, can no more weaken the credibility of its immortality, than the like difficulty weakens the credibility of the immortality of the body. For, when your lordship shall find it an easy matter to give an account what it is, besides the good pleasure of

* 1st Answer. † Ibid.

God,

God, which ſhall keep together the parts of our material bodies to eternity, or even ſoul and body, I doubt not but any one who ſhall think the ſoul material, will alſo find it as eaſy to give an account what it is that ſhall keep thoſe parts of matter alſo together to eternity.

Were it not that the warmth of controverſy is apt to make men ſo far forget, as to take up thoſe principles themſelves (when they will ſerve their turn) which they have highly condemned in others, I ſhould wonder to find your lordſhip to argue, that becauſe it is a difficulty to underſtand what ſhall keep together the minute parts of a material ſoul, when life is gone; and becauſe it is not an eaſy matter to give an account how the ſoul ſhall be capable of immortality, unleſs it be an immaterial ſubſtance: therefore it is not ſo credible, as if it were eaſy to give an account by natural reaſon, how it could be. For to this it is that all this your diſcourſe tends, as is evident by what is already ſet down; and will be more fully made out by what your lordſhip ſays in other places, though there needs no ſuch proof, ſince it would all be nothing againſt me in any other ſenſe.

I thought your lordſhip had in other places aſſerted, and inſiſted on this truth, that no part of divine revelation was the leſs to be believed, becauſe the thing itſelf created great difficulty in the underſtanding, and the manner of it was hard to be explained, and it was no eaſy matter to give an account how it was. This, as I take it, your lordſhip condemned in others as a very unreaſonable principle, and ſuch as would ſubvert all the articles of the chriſtian religion, that were mere matters of faith, as I think it will: and is it poſſible, that you ſhould make uſe of it here yourſelf, againſt the article of life and immortality, that Chriſt hath brought to light through the goſpel, and neither was, nor could be made out by natural reaſon without revelation? But you will ſay, you ſpeak only of the ſoul; and your words are, 'That it is no eaſy matter to give an account how the ſoul ſhould be capable of immortality, unleſs it be an immaterial ſubſtance. I grant it; but crave leave to ſay, that there is not any one of thoſe difficulties, that are or can be raiſed about the manner how a material ſoul can be immortal, which do not as well reach the immortality of the body.

But, if it were not ſo, I am ſure this principle of your lordſhip's would reach other articles of faith, wherein our natural reaſon finds it not ſo eaſy to give an account how thoſe myſteries are; and which therefore, according to your principles, muſt be leſs credible than other articles, that create leſs difficulty to the underſtanding. For your lordſhip ſays, * that you appeal to any man of ſenſe, whether to a man, who thought by his principles he could from natural grounds demonſtrate the immortality of the ſoul, the finding the uncertainty of thoſe principles he went upon in point of reaſon, i. e. the finding he could not certainly prove it by natural reaſon, doth not weaken the credibility of that fundamental article, when it is conſidered purely as a matter of faith? which, in effect, I humbly conceive, amounts to this, that a propoſition divinely revealed, that cannot be proved by natural reaſon, is leſs credible than one that can: which ſeems to me to come very little ſhort of this, with due reverence be it ſpoken, that God is leſs to be believed when he affirms a propoſition that cannot be proved by natural reaſon, than when he propoſes what can be proved by it. The direct contrary to which is my opinion,

* 2d Anſwer.

though

though you endeavour to make it good by these following words; * If the evidence of faith fall so much short of that of reason it must needs have less effect upon men's minds, when the subserviency of reason is taken away; as it must be when the grounds of certainty by reason are vanished. Is it at all probable, that he who finds his reason deceive him in such fundamental points, should have his faith stand firm and unmoveable on the account of revelation? Than which I think there are hardly plainer words to be found out to declare, that the credibility of God's testimony depends on the natural evidence of probability of the things we receive from revelation, and rises and falls with it; and that the truths of God, or the articles of mere faith, lose so much of their credibility, as they want proof from reason: which if true, revelation may come to have no credibility at all. For if, in this present case, the credibility of this proposition, the souls of men shall live for ever, revealed in the scripture, be lessened by confessing it cannot be demonstratively proved from reason; though it be asserted to be most highly probable: must not, by the same rule, its credibility dwindle away to nothing, if natural reason should not be able to make it out to be so much as probable, or should place the probability from natural principles on the other side? For, if mere want of demonstration lessens the credibility of any proposition divinely revealed, must not want of probability, or contrary probability from natural reason, quite take away its credibility? Here at last it must end, if in any one case the veracity of God, and the credibility of the truths we receive from him by revelation, be subjected to the verdicts of human reason, and be allowed to receive any accession or diminution from other proofs, or want of other proofs of its certainty or probability.

If this be your lordship's way to promote religion, or defend its articles, I know not what argument the greatest enemies of it could use more effectual for the subversion of those you have undertaken to defend; this being to resolve all revelation perfectly and purely into natural reason, to bound its credibility by that, and leave no room for faith in other things, than what can be accounted for by natural reason without revelation.

Your lordship † insists much upon it, as if I had contradicted what I have said in my essay, by saying ‡ that upon my principles it cannot be demonstratively proved, that it is an immaterial substance in us that thinks, however probable it be. He that will be at the pains to read that chapter of mine, and consider it, will find, that my business there was to show, that it was no harder to conceive an immaterial than a material substance; and that from the ideas of thought, and a power of moving of matter, which we experienced in ourselves, (ideas originally not belonging to matter as matter) there was no more difficulty to conclude there was an immaterial substance in us, than that we had material parts. These ideas of thinking, and power of moving of matter, I in another place showed, did demonstratively lead us to the certain knowledge of the existence of an immaterial thinking being, in whom we have the idea of spirit in the strictest sense; in which sense I also applied it to the soul, in the 23d ch. of my essay; the easily conceivable possibility, nay great probability, that the thinking substance in us is immaterial, giving me sufficient ground for it: in which sense I shall think I may safely attribute it to the thinking substance in us, till your lordship shall have better proved from my words, that it is impossible it should be immaterial. For I only say, that

* 2d Answer. † 1st Answer. ‡ B. 2. C. 23.

it is possible, i. e. involves no contradiction, that God, the omnipotent immaterial spirit, should, if he pleases, give to some parcels of matter, disposed as he thinks fit, a power of thinking and moving; which parcels of matter, so endued with a power of thinking and motion, might properly be called spirits, in contradistinction to unthinking matter. In all which, I presume, there is no manner of contradiction.

I justified my use of the word spirit, in that sense, from the authorities of Cicero and Virgil, applying the Latin word spiritus, from whence spirit is derived, to the soul as a thinking thing, without excluding materiality out of it. To which your lordship replies, * That Cicero, in his Tusculan Questions, supposes the soul not to be a finer sort of body, but of a different nature from the body——That he calls the body the prison of the soul.——And says, that a wise man's business is to draw off his soul from his body. And then your lordship concludes, as is usual, with a question, Is it possible now to think so great a man looked on the soul but as a modification of the body, which must be at an end with life? Ans. No; it is impossible that a man of so good sense as Tully, when he uses the word corpus or body for the gross and visible parts of a man, which he acknowledges to be mortal, should look on the soul to be a modification of that body; in a discourse wherein he was endeavouring to persuade another, that it was immortal. It is to be acknowledged that truly great men, such as he was, are not wont so manifestly to contradict themselves. He had therefore no thought concerning the modification of the body of a man in the case: he was not such a trifler as to examine, whether the modification of the body of a man was immortal, when that body itself was mortal: and therefore, that which he reports as Dicæarchus's opinion, he dismisses in the beginning without any more ado, c. 11. But Cicero's was a direct, plain, and sensible inquiry, viz. What the soul was? to see whether from thence he could discover its immortality. But in all that discourse in his first book of Tusculan Questions, where he lays out so much of his reading and reason, there is not one syllable showing the least thought that the soul was an immaterial substance; but many things directly to the contrary.

Indeed (1) he shuts out the body, taken in the senses he uses † corpus all along, for the sensible organical parts of a man; and is positive that is not the soul: and body in this sense, taken for the human body, he calls the prison of the soul: and says a wise man, instancing in Socrates and Cato, is glad of a fair opportunity to get out of it. But he no where says any such thing of matter: he calls not matter in general the prison of the soul, nor talks a word of being separate from it.

2. He concludes, that the soul is not, like other things here below, made up of a composition of the elements, ch. 27.

3. He excludes the two gross elements, earth and water, from being the soul, ch. 26.

So far he is clear and positive: but beyond this he is uncertain; beyond this he could not get: for in some places he speaks doubtfully, whether the soul be not air or fire. Anima sit animus, ignisve, nescio, c. 25. And therefore he agrees with Panætius, that, if it be at all elementary, it is, as he calls it, inflammata anima, inflamed air; and for this he gives several reasons, c. 18, 19. And though he thinks it to be of a peculiar nature

* 1st Answer. † Ch. 19, 22, 30, 31, &c.

of its own, yet he is so far from thinking it immaterial, that he says, c. 19. that the admitting it to be of an aerial or ingneous nature, will not be inconsistent with any thing he had said.

That which he seems most to incline to is, that the soul was not at all elementary, but was of the same substance with the heavens; which Aristotle, to distinguish from the four elements, and the changeable bodies here below, which he supposed made up of them, called quinta essentia. That this was Tully's opinion is plain from these words, Ergo animus (qui, ut ego dico, divinus) est, ut Euripides audet dicere, Deus; & quidem, si Deus aut anima aut ignis est, idem est animus hominis. Nam ut illa natura cœlestis et terrâ vacat & humore; sic utriusque harum rerum humanus animus est expers. Sin autem est quinta quædam natura ab Aristotele inducta; primum hæc & deorum est & animorum. Hanc nos sententiam secuti, his ipsis verbis in consolatione hæc expressimus, ch. 29. And then he goes on, c. 27. to repeat those his own words, which your lordship has quoted out of him, wherein he had affirmed, in his treatise De Consolatione, the soul not to have its original from the earth, or to be mixed or made of any thing earthly; but had said, singularis est igitur quædam natura & vis animi, sejuncta ab his usitatis notisque naturis: whereby he tells us, he meant nothing but Aristotle's quinta essentia: which being unmixed, being that of which the gods and souls consisted, he calls it divinum cœleste, and concludes it eternal; it being, as he speaks, sejuncta ab omni mortali concretione. From which it is clear, that in all his inquiry about the substance of the soul, his thoughts went not beyond the four elements, or Aristotle's quinta essentia, to look for it. In all which there is nothing of immateriality, but quite the contrary.

He was willing to believe (as good and wise men have always been) that the soul was immortal; but for that, it is plain, he never thought of its immateriality, but as the eastern people do, who believe the soul to be immortal, but have nevertheless no thought, no conception of its immateriality. It is remarkable what a very considerable and judicious author says * in the case. No opinion, says he, has been so universally received as that of the immortality of the soul; but its immateriality is a truth, the knowledge whereof has not spread so far. And indeed it is extremely difficult to let into the mind of a Siamite the idea of a pure spirit. This the missionaries who have been longest among them, are positive in. All the pagans of the east do truly believe, that there remains something of a man after his death, which subsists independently and separately from his body. But they give extension and figure to that which remains, and attribute to it all the same members, all the same substances, both solid and liquid, which our bodies are composed of. They only suppose that the souls are of a matter subtile enough to escape being seen or handled.—Such were the shades and manes of the Greeks and the Romans. And it is by these figures of the souls, answerable to those of the bodies, that Virgil supposed Æneas knew Palinurus, Dido, and Anchises, in the other world.

This gentleman was not a man that travelled into those parts for his pleasure, and to have the opportunity to tell strange stories, collected by chance, when he returned: but one chosen on purpose (and he seems well chosen for the purpose) to inquire into the singularities of Siam. And he has so well acquitted himself of the commission, which his epistle dedica-

* Loubere du Royaume de Siam, T. 1. c. 19. §. 4.

tory

tory tells us he had, to inform himself exactly of what was most remarkable there, that had we but such an account of other countries of the east, as he has given us of this kingdom, which he was an envoy to, we should be much better acquainted than we are, with the manners, notions, and religions of that part of the world inhabited by civilized nations, who want neither good sense nor acuteness of reason, though not cast into the mould of the logick and philosophy of our schools.

But to return to Cicero: it is plain, that in his inquiries about the soul, his thoughts went not at all beyond matter. This the expressions that drop from him in several places of this book evidently show. For example, that the souls of excellent men and women ascended into heaven; of others, that they remained here on earth, c. 12. That the soul is hot, and warms the body: that, at its leaving the body, it penetrates, and divides, and breaks through our thick, cloudy, moist air: that it stops in the region of fire, and ascends no farther, the equality of warmth and weight making that its proper place, where it is nourished and sustained, with the same things wherewith the stars are nourished and sustained, and that by the convenience of its neighbourhood it shall there have a clearer view and fuller knowledge of the heavenly bodies, c. 19. That the soul also from this height shall have a pleasant and fairer prospect of the globe of the earth, the disposition of whose parts will then lie before it in one view, c. 20. That it is hard to determine what conformation, size, and place, the soul has in the body: that it is too subtile to be seen: that it is in the human body as in a house, or a vessel, or a receptacle, c. 22. All which are expressions that sufficiently evidence, that he who used them had not in his mind separated materiality from the idea of the soul.

It may perhaps be replied, that a great part of this which we find in chap. 19. is said upon the principles of those who would have the soul to be anima inflammata, inflamed air. I grant it. But it is also to be observed, that in this 19th, and the two following chapters, he does not only not deny, but even admits, that so material a thing as inflamed air may think.

The truth of the case in short is this: Cicero was willing to believe the soul immortal; but, when he sought in the nature of the soul itself something to establish this his belief into a certainty of it, he found himself at a loss. He confessed he knew not what the soul was; but the not knowing what it was, he argues, c. 22. was no reason to conclude it was not. And thereupon he proceeds to the repetition of what he had said in his 6th book, De Repub. concerning the soul. The argument, which, borrowed from Plato, he there makes use of, if it have any force in it, not only proves the soul to be immortal, but more than, I think, your lordship will allow to be true: for it proves it to be eternal, and without beginning, as well as without end: Neque nata certe est, & æterna est, says he.

Indeed from the faculties of the soul he concludes right, that it is of divine original: but as to the substance of the soul, he at the end of this discourse concerning its faculties, c. 25. as well as at this beginning of it, c. 22. is not ashamed to own his ignorance of what it is; Anima sit animus, ignisve, nescio; nec me pudet, ut istos, fateri nescire quod nesciam. Illud si ulla alia de re obscura affirmare possem, sive anima, sive ignis sit animus, eum jurarem esse divinum, c. 25. So that all the certainty he could attain to about the soul, was, that he was confident there

was something divine in it, i. e. there were faculties in the soul that could not result from the nature of matter, but must have their original from a divine power; but yet those qualities, as divine as they were, he acknowledged might be placed in breath or fire, which, I think, your lordship will not deny to be material substances. So that all those divine qualities, which he so much and so justly extols in the soul, led him not, as appears, so much as to any the least thought of immateriality. This is demonstration, that he built them not upon an exclusion of materiality out of the soul; for he avowedly professes he does not know, but breath or fire might be this thinking thing in us: and in all his considerations about the subsistance of the soul itself, he stuck in air, or fire, or Aristotle's quinta essentia; for beyond those it is evident he went not.

But with all his proofs out of Plato, to whose authority he defers so much, with all the arguments his vast reading and great parts could furnish him with for the immortality of the soul, he was so little satisfied, so far from being certain, so far from any thought that he had, or could prove it, that he over and over again professes his ignorance and doubt of it, In the beginning he enumerates the several opinions of the philosophers, which he had well studied, about it: and then, full of uncertainty, says, Harum sententiarum quæ vera sit, Deus aliquis viderit; quæ verisimillima, magna quæstio, c. 11. And towards the latter end, having gone them all over again, and one after another examined them, he professes himself still at a loss, not knowing on which to pitch, nor what to determine. Mentis acies, says he, seipsam intuens, nonnunquam hebescit, ob eamque causam contemplandi diligentiam amittimus. Itaque dubitans, circumspectans, hæsitans, multa adversa revertens, tanquam in rate in mari immenso, nostra vehitur oratio, c. 30. And to conclude this argument, when the person he introduces as discoursing with him, tells him he is resolved to keep firm to the belief of immortality; Tully answers, c. 32. Laudo id quidem, etsi nihil animis oportet confidere: movemur enim sæpe aliquo acute concluso; labamus, mutamusque sententiam clarioribus etiam in rebus; in his est enim aliqua obscuritas.

So unmoveable is that truth delivered by the spirit of truth, that though the light of nature gave some obscure glimmering, some uncertain hopes of a future state; yet human reason could attain to no clearness, no certainty about it, but that it was JESUS CHRIST alone, who had brought life and immortality to light through the gospel *. Though we are now told, that to own the inability of natural reason to bring immortality to light, or, which passes for the same, to own principles upon which the immateriality of the soul (and, as it is urged, consequently its immortality) cannot be demonstratively proved, does lessen the belief of this article of revelation, which JESUS CHRIST alone has brought to light, and which consequently the scripture assures us is established and made certain only by revelation. This would not perhaps have seemed strange, from those who are justly complained of for slighting the revelation of the gospel, and therefore would not be much regarded, if they should contradict so plain a text of scripture, in favour of their all-sufficient reason: but what use the promoters of scepticism and infidelity, in an age so much suspected by your lordship, may make of what comes from one of your great authority and learning, may deserve your consideration.

* 2 Tim. i. 10.

And

And thus, my lord, I hope, I have satisfied you concerning Cicero's opinion about the soul, in his first book of Tusculan questions; which, though I easily believe, as your lordship says, you are no stranger to, yet I humbly conceive you have not shown (and, upon a careful perusal of that treatise again, I think I may boldly say you cannot show) one word in it, that expresses any thing like a notion in Tully of the soul's immateriality, or its being an immaterial substance.

From what you bring out of Virgil, your lordship concludes, * That he, no more than Cicero, does me any kindness in this matter, being both assertors of the soul's immortality. My lord, were not the question of the soul's immateriality, according to custom, changed here into that of its immortality, which I am no less an assertor of than either of them, Cicero and Virgil do me all the kindness I desired of them in this matter; and that was to show, that they attributed the word spiritus to the soul of man, without any thought of its immateriality; and this the verses you yourself bring out of Virgil †,

Et cum frigida mors animâ seduxerit artus,
Omnibus umbra locis adero; dabis, improbe, pœnas;

confirm, as well as those I quoted out of his 6th book: and for this monsieur de la Loubere shall be my witness in the words above set down out of him; where he shows, that there be those amongst the heathens of our days, as well as Virgil and others amongst the antient Greeks and Romans, who thought the souls or ghosts of men departed did not die with the body, without thinking them to be perfectly immaterial; the latter being much more incomprehensible to them than the former. And what Virgil's notion of the soul is, and that corpus, when put in contradistinction to the soul, signifies nothing but the gross tenement of flesh and bones, is evident from this verse of his Æneid 6. where he calls the souls which yet were visible,

———Tenues sine corpore vitas.

Your lordship's ‡ answer concerning what is said Eccles. xii. turns wholly upon Solomon's taking the soul to be immortal, which was not what I questioned: all that I quoted that place for, was to show, that spirit in English might properly be applied to the soul, without any notion of its immateriality, as רוח was by Solomon, which, whether he thought the souls of men to be immaterial, does little appear in that passage, where he speaks of the souls of men and beasts together, as he does. But farther, what I contended for is evident from that place, in that the word spirit is there applied by our translators, to the souls of beasts, which your lordship, I think, does not rank amongst the immaterial, and consequently immortal spirits, though they have sense and spontaneous motion.

But you say, ‖ If the soul be not of itself a free thinking substance, you do not see what foundation there is in nature for a day of judgment. Ans. Though the heathen world did not of old, nor do to this day, see a foundation in nature for a day of judgment; yet in revelation, if that will satisfy your lordship, every one may see a foundation for a day of judgment, because God has positively declared it; though God has not by that revelation taught us, what the substance of the soul is; nor has any where said, that the soul of itself is a free agent. Whatsoever any created substance is, it is not of itself, but is by the good pleasure of its

* 1st Answer. † Æneid. 4. 385. ‡ 1st Answer. ‖ Ibid.

Creator: whatever degrees of perfection it has, it has from the bountiful hand of its maker. For it is true in a natural, as well as a spiritual sense, what St. Paul says, * Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God.

But your lordship, as I guess by your following words, would argue, that a material substance cannot be a free agent; whereby I suppose you only mean, that you cannot see or conceive how a solid substance should begin, stop, or change its own motion. To which give me leave to answer, that when you can make it conceivable, how any created, finite, dependant substance can move itself, or alter or stop its own motion, which it must to be a free agent; I suppose you will find it no harder for God to bestow this power on a solid than an unsolid created substance. Tully, in the place above quoted, † could not conceive this power to be in any thing but what was from eternity; Cum pateat igitur æternum id esse quod seipsum moveat, quis est qui hanc naturam animis esse tributam neget? But though you cannot see how any created substance, solid or not solid, can be a free agent, (pardon me, my lord, if I put in both, till your lordship please to explain it of either, and show the manner how either of them can, of itself, move itself or any thing else) yet I do not think you will so far deny men to be free agents, from the difficulty there is to see how they are free agents, as to doubt whether there be foundation enough for a day of judgment.

It is not for me to judge how far your lordship's speculations reach: but finding in myself nothing to be truer than what the wise Solomon tells me, ‡ As thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child; even so thou knowest not the works of God, who maketh all things; I gratefully receive and rejoice in the light of revelation, which sets me at rest in many things, the manner whereof my poor reason can by no means make out to me: Omnipotency, I know, can do any thing that contains in it no contradiction; so that I readily believe whatever God has declared, though my reason find difficulties in it, which it cannot master. As in the present case, God having revealed that there shall be a day of judgment, I think that foundation enough to conclude men are free enough to be made answerable for their actions, and to receive according to what they have done; though how man is a free agent, surpass my explication or comprehension.

In answer to the place I brought out of St. Luke ‖, your lordship asks, ** Whether from these words of our Saviour it follows, that a spirit is only an appearance? I answer, No; nor do I know who drew such an inference from them: but it follows, that in apparitions there is something that appears, and that which appears is not wholly immaterial; and yet this was properly called πνεῦμα, and was often looked upon, by those who called it πνεῦμα in Greek, and now call it spirit in English, to be the ghost or soul of one departed; which I humbly conceive justifies my use of the word spirit, for a thinking voluntary agent, whether material or immaterial.

Your lordship says, †† That I grant, that it cannot upon these principles be demonstrated, that the spiritual substance in us is immaterial; from whence you conclude, That then my grounds of certainty from ideas are plainly given up. This being a way of arguing that you often

* 2 Cor. iii. 5. † Tusculan. Quæst. L. 1. c. 23. ‡ Eccl. xi. 5.
‖ C. xxiv. v. 39. ** 1st Answer. †† Ibid.

make

impoſſible for us, by the contemplation of our own ideas, without revelation, to diſcover, whether omnipotency has not given to ſome ſyſtems of matter fitly diſpoſed a power to perceive and think, or elſe joined and fixed to matter ſo diſpoſed a thinking immaterial ſubſtance: it being, in reſpect of our notions, not much more remote from our comprehenſion to conceive, that God can, if he pleaſes, ſuperadd to matter a faculty of thinking, than that he ſhould ſuperadd to it another ſubſtance, with a faculty of thinking; ſince we know not wherein thinking conſiſts, nor to what ſort of ſubſtances the Almighty has been pleaſed to give that power, which cannot be in any created being, but merely by the good pleaſure and bounty of the Creator. For I ſee no contradiction in it, that the firſt eternal thinking being ſhould, if he pleaſed, give to certain ſyſtems of created ſenſeleſs matter, put together as he thinks fit, ſome degrees of ſenſe, perception, and thought: though, as I think, I have proved, lib. iv. ch. 10. §. 14, &c. it is no leſs than a contradiction to ſuppoſe matter (which is evidently in its own nature void of ſenſe and thought) ſhould be that eternal firſt-thinking being. What certainty of knowledge can any one have that ſome perceptions, ſuch as, v. g. pleaſure and pain, ſhould not be in ſome bodies themſelves, after a certain manner modified and moved, as well as that they ſhould be in an immaterial ſubſtance, upon the motion of the parts of body? Body, as far as we can conceive, being able only to ſtrike and affect body; and motion, according to the utmoſt reach of our ideas, being able to produce nothing but motion: ſo that when we allow it to produce pleaſure or pain, or the idea of a colour or ſound, we are fain to quit our reaſon, go beyond our ideas, and attribute it wholly to the good pleaſure of

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make uſe of, I have often had occaſion to conſider it, and cannot after all ſee the force of this argument. I acknowledge that this or that propoſition cannot upon my principles be demonſtrated; ergo, I grant this propoſition to be falſe, that certainty conſiſts in the perception of the agreement or diſagreement of ideas. For that is my ground of certainty, and till that be given up, my grounds of certainty are not given up.

our Maker. For ſince we muſt allow he has annexed effects to motion, which we can no way conceive motion able to produce, what reaſon have we to conclude, that he could not order them as well to be produced in a ſubject we cannot conceive capable of them, as well as in a ſubject we cannot conceive the motion of matter can any way operate upon? I ſay not this, that I would any way leſſen the belief of the ſoul's immateriality: I am not here ſpeaking of probability, but knowledge; and I think not only, that it becomes the modeſty of philoſophy not to pronounce magiſterially, where we want that evidence that can produce knowledge; but alſo, that it is of uſe to us to diſcern how far our knowledge does reach: for the ſtate we are at preſent in, not being that of viſion, we muſt, in many things, content ourſelves with faith and probability; and in the preſent queſtion, about the immateriality of the ſoul, if our faculties cannot arrive at demonſtrative certainty, we need not think it ſtrange. All the great ends of morality and religion are well enough ſecured, without philoſophical proofs of the ſoul's immateriality; ſince it is evident, that he who made us at the beginning to ſubſiſt here, ſenſible intelligent beings, and for ſeveral years continued us in ſuch a ſtate, can and will restore us to the like ſtate of ſenſibility in another world, and make us capable there to receive the retribution he has deſigned to men, according to their doings in this life. And therefore it is not of ſuch mighty neceſſity to determine one way or the other, as ſome, over-zealous for or againſt the immateriality of the ſoul, have been forward to make the world believe. Who, either on the one ſide, indulging too much their thoughts immerſed altogether in matter, can allow no exiſtence to what is not material: or who, on the other ſide, finding not cogitation within the natural powers of matter, examined over and over again by the utmoſt intention of mind, have the confidence to conclude, that omnipotency itſelf cannot give perception and thought to a ſubſtance which has the modification of ſolidity. He that conſiders how hardly ſenſation is, in our thoughts, reconcileable to extended matter; or exiſtence to any thing that

that has no existence at all; will confess, that he is very far from certainly knowing what his soul is. It is a point which seems to me to be put out of the reach of our knowledge: and he who will give himself leave to consider freely, and look into the dark and intricate part of each hypothesis, will scarce find his reason able to determine him fixedly for or against the soul's materiality. Since on which side soever he views it, either as an unextended substance, or as a thinking extended matter; the difficulty to conceive either will, whilst either alone is in his thoughts, still drive him to the contrary side. An unfair way which some men take with themselves; who, because of the inconceiveableness of something they find in one, throw themselves violently into the contrary hypothesis, though altogether as unintelligible to an unbiassed understanding. This serves not only to show the weakness and the scantiness of our knowledge, but the insignificant triumph of such sort of arguments, which, drawn from our own views, may satisfy us that we can find no certainty on one side of the question; but do not at all thereby help us to truth by running into the opposite opinion, which, on examination, will be found clogged with equal difficulties. For what safety, what advantage to any one is it, for the avoiding the seeming absurdities, and to him unsurmountable rubs he meets with in one opinion, to take refuge in the contrary, which is built on something altogether as inexplicable, and as far remote from his comprehension? It is past controversy, that we have in us something that thinks; our very doubts about what it is confirm the certainty of its being, though we must content ourselves in the ignorance of what kind of being it is: and it is in vain to go about to be sceptical in this, as it is unreasonable in most other cases to be positive against the being of any thing, because we cannot comprehend its nature. For I would fain know what substance exists, that has not something in it which manifestly baffles our understandings. Other spirits, who see and know the nature and inward constitution of things, how much must they exceed us in knowledge? To which if we add larger comprehension, which enables

bles them at one glance to ſee the connexion and agreement of very many ideas, and readily ſupplies to them the intermediate proofs, which we by ſingle and ſlow ſteps, and long poring in the dark, hardly at laſt find out, and are often ready to forget one before we have hunted out another; we may gueſs at ſome part of the happineſs of ſuperior ranks of ſpirits, who have a quicker and more penetrating ſight, as well as a larger field of knowledge. But to return to the argument in hand; our knowledge, I ſay, is not only limited to the paucity and imperfections of the ideas we have, and which we employ it about, but even comes ſhort of that too. But how far it reaches, let us now inquire.

How far our knowledge reaches.

§. 7. The affirmations or negations we make concerning the ideas we have, may, as I have before intimated in general, be reduced to theſe four ſorts, viz. identity, co-exiſtence, relation, and real exiſtence. I ſhall examine how far our knowledge extends in each of theſe.

1. Our knowledge of identity and diverſity, as far as our ideas.

§. 8. Firſt, as to identity and diverſity, in this way of agreement or diſagreement of our ideas, our intuitive knowledge is as far extended as our ideas themſelves: and there can be no idea in the mind, which it does not preſently, by an intuitive knowledge, perceive to be what it is, and to be different from any other.

2. Of co-exiſtence, a very little way.

§. 9. Secondly, as to the ſecond ſort, which is the agreement or diſagreement of our ideas in co-exiſtence; in this our knowledge is very ſhort, though in this conſiſts the greateſt and moſt material part of our knowledge concerning ſubſtances. For our ideas of the ſpecies of ſubſtances being, as I have ſhowed, nothing but certain collections of ſimple ideas united in one ſubject, and ſo co-exiſting together; v. g. our idea of flame is a body hot, luminous, and moving upward; of gold, a body heavy to a certain degree, yellow, malleable, and fuſible: theſe, or ſome ſuch complex ideas as theſe in men's minds, do theſe two names of the different ſubſtances, flame and gold, ſtand for. When we would know any thing

thing farther concerning these, or any other sort of substances, what do we inquire, but what other qualities or power these substances have or have not? Which is nothing else but to know what other simple ideas do or do not co-exist with those that make up that complex idea.

Because the connexion between most simple ideas is unknown.

§. 10. This, how weighty and considerable a part soever of human science, is yet very narrow, and scarce any at all. The reason whereof is, that the simple ideas, whereof our complex ideas of substances are made up, are, for the most part, such as carry with them, in their own nature, no visible necessary connexion or inconsistency with any other simple ideas, whose co-existence with them we would inform ourselves about.

Especially of secondary qualities.

§. 11. The ideas that our complex ones of substances are made up of, and about which our knowledge concerning substances is most employed, are those of their secondary qualities: which depending all (as has been shown) upon the primary qualities of their minute and insensible parts; or if not upon them, upon something yet more remote from our comprehension; it is impossible we should know which have a necessary union or inconsistency one with another: for not knowing the root they spring from, not knowing what size, figure, and texture of parts they are, on which depend, and from which result, those qualities which make our complex idea of gold; it is impossible we should know what other qualities result from, or are incompatible with, the same constitution of the insensible parts of gold, and so consequently must always co-exist with that complex idea we have of it, or else are inconsistent with it.

Because all connexion between any secondary and primary qualities is undiscoverable.

§. 12. Besides this ignorance of the primary qualities of the insensible parts of bodies, on which depend all their secondary qualities, there is yet another and more incurable part of ignorance, which sets us more remote from a certain knowledge of the co-existence or in-co-existence (if I may

so

ſo ſay) of different ideas in the ſame ſubject; and that is, that there is no diſcoverable connexion between any ſecondary quality and thoſe primary qualities which it depends on.

§. 13. That the ſize, figure, and motion of one body ſhould cauſe a change in the ſize, figure, and motion of another body, is not beyond our conception: the ſepa-ration of the parts of one body upon the intruſion of another; and the change from reſt to motion upon im-pulſe; theſe and the like ſeem to have ſome connexion one with another. And if we knew theſe primary qua-lities of bodies, we might have reaſon to hope we might be able to know a great deal more of theſe operations of them one with another: but our minds not being able to diſcover any connexion betwixt theſe primary quali-ties of bodies and the ſenſations that are produced in us by them, we can never be able to eſtabliſh certain and undoubted rules of the conſequences or co-exiſtence of any ſecondary qualities, though we could diſcover the ſize, figure, or motion of thoſe inviſible parts which immediately produce them. We are ſo far from know-ing what figure, ſize, or motion of parts produce a yel-low colour, a ſweet taſte, or a ſharp ſound, that we can by no means conceive how any ſize, figure, or motion of any particles, can poſſibly produce in us the idea of any colour, taſte, or ſound whatſoever; there is no con-ceivable connexion betwixt the one and the other.

§. 14. In vain therefore ſhall we endeavour to diſ-cover by our ideas (the only true way of certain and univerſal knowledge) what other ideas are to be found conſtantly joined with that of our complex idea of any ſubſtance: ſince we neither know the real conſtitution of the minute parts on which their qualities do depend; nor, did we know them, could we diſcover any neceſ-ſary connexion between them and any of the ſecondary qualities: which is neceſſary to be done before we can certainly know their neceſſary co-exiſtence. So that let our complex idea of any ſpecies of ſubſtances be what it will, we can hardly, from the ſimple ideas con-tained in it, certainly determine the neceſſary co-exiſt-ence of any other quality whatſoever. Our knowledge

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in all these inquiries reaches very little farther than our experience. Indeed, some few of the primary qualities have a necessary dependence and visible connexion one with another, as figure necessarily supposes extension; receiving or communicating motion by impulse, supposes solidity. But though these and perhaps some other of our ideas have, yet there are so few of them, that have a visible connexion one with another, that we can by intuition or demonstration discover the co-existence of very few of the qualities are to be found united in substances: and we are left only to the assistance of our senses, to make known to us what qualities they contain. For of all the qualities that are co-existent in any subject, without this dependence and evident connexion of their ideas one with another, we cannot know certainly any two to co-exist any farther than experience, by our senses, informs us. Thus though we see the yellow colour, and upon trial find the weight, malleableness, fusibility, and fixedness, that are united in a piece of gold; yet because no one of these ideas has any evident dependence, or necessary connexion with the other, we cannot certainly know, that where any four of these are, the fifth will be there also, how highly probable soever it may be; because the highest probability amounts not to certainty, without which there can be no true knowledge. For this co-existence can be no farther known than it is perceived; and it cannot be perceived but either in particular subjects, by the observation of our senses, or, in general, by the necessary connexion of the ideas themselves.

Of repugnancy to co-exist, larger.

§. 15. As to the incompatibility or repugnancy to co-existence, we may know, that any subject may have of each sort of primary qualities but one particular at once; v. g. each particular extension, figure, number of parts, motion, excludes all other of each kind. The like also is certain of all sensible ideas peculiar to each sense; for whatever of each kind is present in any subject, excludes all other of that sort; v. g. no one subject can have two smells or two colours at the same time. To this perhaps will be said, Has not an opal, or the infusion of

lignum

lignum nephriticum, two colours at the ſame time? To which I anſwer, that theſe bodies, to eyes differently placed, may at the ſame time afford different colours: but I take liberty alſo to ſay, that, to eyes differently placed, it is different parts of the object that reflect the particles of light: and therefore it is not the ſame part of the object, and ſo not the very ſame ſubject, which at the ſame time appears both yellow and azure. For it is as impoſſible that the very ſame particle of any body ſhould at the ſame time differently modify or reflect the rays of light, as that it ſhould have two different figures and textures at the ſame time.

Of the co-exiſtence of powers, a very little way.

§. 16. But as to the powers of ſubſtances to change the ſenſible qualities of other bodies, which make a great part of our inquiries about them, and is no inconſiderable branch of our knowledge; I doubt, as to theſe, whether our knowledge reaches much farther than our experience; or whether we can come to the diſcovery of moſt of theſe powers, and be certain that they are in any ſubject, by the connexion with any of thoſe ideas which to us make its eſſence. Becauſe the active and paſſive powers of bodies, and their ways of operating, conſiſting in a texture and motion of parts, which we cannot by any means come to diſcover; it is but in very few caſes, we can be able to perceive their dependence on, or repugnance to, any of thoſe ideas which make our complex one of that ſort of things. I have here inſtanced in the corpuſcularian hypotheſis, as that which is thought to go fartheſt in an intelligible explication of thoſe qualities of bodies; and I fear the weakneſs of human underſtanding is ſcarce able to ſubſtitute another, which will afford us a fuller and clearer diſcovery of the neceſſary connexion and co-exiſtence of the powers which are to be obſerved united in ſeveral ſorts of them. This at leaſt is certain, that which-ever hypotheſis be clereſt and trueſt, (for of that it is not my buſineſs to determine) our knowledge concerning corporeal ſubſtances will be very little advanced by any of them, till we are made to ſee what qualities and powers of bodies have a neceſſary connexion or repugnancy

nancy one with another; which in the present state of philosophy, I think, we know but to a very small degree: and I doubt whether, with those faculties we have, we shall ever be able to carry our general knowledge (I say not particular experience) in this part much farther. Experience is that which in this part we must depend on. And it were to be wished that it were more improved. We find the advantages some men's generous pains have this way brought to the stock of natural knowledge. And if others, especially the philosophers by fire, who pretend to it, had been so wary in their observations, and sincere in their reports, as those who call themselves philosophers ought to have been; our acquaintance with the bodies here about us, and our insight into their powers and operations, had been yet much greater.

Of spirits, yet narrower.

§. 17. If we are at a loss in respect of the powers and operations of bodies, I think it is easy to conclude, we are much more in the dark in reference to the spirits; whereof we naturally have no ideas, but what we draw from that of our own, by reflecting on the operations of our own souls within us, as far as they can come within our observation. But how inconsiderable a rank the spirits that inhabit our bodies hold amongst those various and possibly innumerable kinds of nobler beings; and how far short they come of the endowments and perfections of cherubims and seraphims, and infinite sorts of spirits above us; is what by a transient hint, in another place, I have offered to my reader's consideration.

3. Of other relations, it is not easy to say how far.

§. 18. As to the third sort of our knowledge, viz. the agreement or disagreement of any of our ideas in any other relation: this, as it is the largest field of our knowledge, so it is hard to determine how far it may extend; because the advances that are made in this part of knowledge, depending on our sagacity in finding intermediate ideas, that may show the relations and habitudes of ideas, whose co-existence is not considered, it is a hard matter to tell when we are at an end of such discoveries; and when reason has all the helps it is

capable of, for the finding of proofs, or examining the agreement or disagreement of remote ideas. They that are ignorant of algebra cannot imagine the wonders in this kind are to be done by it: and what farther improvements and helps, advantageous to other parts of knowledge, the sagacious mind of man may yet find out, it is not easy to determine. This at least I believe, that the ideas of quantity are not those alone that are capable of demonstration and knowledge; and that other, and perhaps more useful parts of contemplation, would afford us certainty, if vices, passions, and domineering interest did not oppose or menace such endeavours.

Morality capable of demonstration.

The idea of a supreme being, infinite in power, goodness, and wisdom, whose workmanship we are, and on whom we depend; and the idea of ourselves, as understanding rational beings; being such as are clear in us, would, I suppose, if duly considered and pursued, afford such foundations of our duty and rules of action, as might place morality amongst the sciences capable of demonstration: wherein I doubt not but from self-evident propositions, by necessary consequences, as incontestable as those in mathematicks, the measures of right and wrong might be made out to any one that will apply himself with the same indifferency and attention to the one, as he does to the other of these sciences. The relation of other modes may certainly be perceived, as well as those of number and extension: and I cannot see why they should not also be capable of demonstration, if due methods were thought on to examine or pursue their agreement or disagreement. Where there is no property, there is no injustice, is a proposition as certain as any demonstration in Euclid: for the idea of property being a right to any thing; and the idea to which the name injustice is given, being the invasion or violation of that right; it is evident, that these ideas being thus established, and these names annexed to them, I can as certainly know this proposition to be true, as that a triangle has three angles equal to two right ones. Again, "no government allows absolute liberty:" The idea of government being the establishment of society upon

upon certain rules or laws which require conformity to them; and the idea of absolute liberty being for any one to do whatever he pleases; I am as capable of being certain of the truth of this proposition, as of any in the mathematicks.

Two things have made moral ideas thought incapable of demonstration: their complexedness, and want of sensible representations.

§. 19. That which in this respect has given the advantage to the ideas of quantity, and made them thought more capable of certainty and demonstration, is,

First, that they can be set down and represented by sensible marks, which have a greater and nearer correspondence with them than any words or sounds whatsoever. Diagrams drawn on paper are copies of the ideas in the mind, and not liable to the uncertainty that words carry in their signification. An angle, circle, or square, drawn in lines, lies open to the view, and cannot be mistaken: it remains unchangeable, and may at leisure be considered and examined, and the demonstration be revised, and all the parts of it may be gone over more than once without any danger of the least change in the ideas. This cannot be thus done in moral ideas, we have no sensible marks that resemble them, whereby we can set them down; we have nothing but words to express them by: which though, when written, they remain the same, yet the ideas they stand for may change in the same man; and it is very seldom that they are not different in different persons.

Secondly, another thing that makes the greater difficulty in ethicks, is, that moral ideas are commonly more complex than those of the figures ordinarily considered in mathematicks. From whence these two inconveniencies follow: First, that their names are of more uncertain signification, the precise collection of simple ideas they stand for not being so easily agreed on, and so the sign that is used for them in communication always, and in thinking often, does not steadily carry with it the same idea. Upon which the same disorder, confusion, and error follow, as would if a man, going to demonstrate something of an heptagon, should, in the diagram he took to do it, leave out one of the angles,

or by overſight make the figure with one angle more than the name ordinarily imported, or he intended it ſhould, when at firſt he thought of his demonſtration. This often happens, and is hardly avoidable in very complex moral ideas, where the ſame name being retained, one angle, i. e. one ſimple idea is left out or put in the complex one, (ſtill called by the ſame name) more at one time than another. Secondly, from the complexedneſs of theſe moral ideas, there follows another inconvenience, viz. that the mind cannot eaſily retain thoſe preciſe combinations, ſo exactly and perfectly as is neceſſary in the examination of the habitudes and correſpondencies, agreements or diſagreements, of ſeveral of them one with another; eſpecially where it is to be judged of by long deductions, and the intervention of ſeveral other complex ideas, to ſhow the agreement or diſagreement of two remote ones.

The great help againſt this which mathematicians find in diagrams and figures, which remain unalterable in their draughts, is very apparent, and the memory would often have great difficulty otherwiſe to retain them ſo exactly, whilſt the mind went over the parts of them ſtep by ſtep, to examine their ſeveral correſpondencies. And though in caſting up a long ſum either in addition, multiplication, or diviſion, every part be only a progreſſion of the mind, taking a view of its own ideas, and conſidering their agreement or diſagreement; and the reſolution of the queſtion be nothing but the reſult of the whole, made up of ſuch particulars, whereof the mind has a clear perception: yet without ſetting down the ſeveral parts by marks, whoſe preciſe ſignifications are known, and by marks that laſt and remain in view when the memory had let them go, it would be almoſt impoſſible to carry ſo many different ideas in the mind, without confounding or letting ſlip ſome parts of the reckoning, and thereby making all our reaſonings about it uſeleſs. In which caſe, the cyphers or marks help not the mind at all to perceive the agreement of any two or more numbers, their equalities or proportions: that the mind has only by intuition of its own ideas of the numbers themſelves. But the numerical

rical characters are helps to the memory, to record and retain the several ideas about which the demonstration is made, whereby a man may know how far his intuitive knowledge, in surveying several of the particulars, has proceeded; that so he may without confusion go on to what is yet unknown, and at last have in one view before him the result of all his perceptions and reasonings.

Remedies of those difficulties.

§. 20. One part of these disadvantages in moral ideas, which has made them be thought not capable of demonstration, may in a good measure be remedied by definitions, setting down that collection of simple ideas, which every term shall stand for, and then using the terms steadily and constantly for that precise collection. And what methods algebra, or something of that kind, may hereafter suggest, to remove the other difficulties, it is not easy to foretel. Confident I am, that if men would in the same method, and with the same indifferency, search afte · moral, as they do mathematical truths, they would find them have a stronger connexion one with another, and a more necessary consequence from our clear and distinct ideas, and to come nearer perfect demonstration than is commonly imagined. But much of this is not to be expected, whilst the desire of esteem, riches, or power, makes men espouse the well-endowed opinions in fashion, and then seek arguments either to make good their beauty, or varnish over and cover their deformity: nothing being so beautiful to the eye, as truth is to the mind; nothing so deformed and irreconcileable to the understanding as a lye. For though many a man can with satisfaction enough own a no very handsome wife in his bosom; yet who is bold enough openly to avow, that he has espoused a falsehood, and received into his breast so ugly a thing as a lye? Whilst the parties of men cram their tenets down all men's throats, whom they can get into their power, without permitting them to examine their truth or falsehood, and will not let truth have fair play in the world, nor men the liberty to search after it; what improvements can be expected of this kind? What greater light can be hoped

for in the moral ſciences? The ſubject part of mankind in moſt places might, inſtead thereof, with Egyptian bondage expect Egyptian darkneſs, were not the candle of the Lord ſet up by himſelf in men's minds, which it is impoſſible for the breath or power of man wholly to extinguiſh.

4. Of real exiſtence: we have an intuitive knowledge of our own; demonſtrative, of God's; ſenſitive, of ſome few other things.

§. 21. As to the fourth ſort of our knowledge, viz. of the real actual exiſtence of things, we have an intuitive knowledge of our own exiſtence; and a demonſtrative knowledge of the exiſtence of a God; of the exiſtence of any thing elſe, we have no other but a ſenſitive knowledge, which extends not beyond the objects preſent to our ſenſes.

Our ignorance great.

§. 22. Our knowledge being ſo narrow, as I have ſhowed, it will perhaps give us ſome light into the preſent ſtate of our minds, if we look a little into the dark ſide, and take a view of our ignorance: which, being infinitely larger than our knowledge, may ſerve much to the quieting of diſputes, and improvement of uſeful knowledge; if diſcovering how far we have clear and diſtinct ideas, we confine our thoughts within the contemplation of thoſe things that are within the reach of our underſtandings, and launch not out into that abyſs of darkneſs (where we have not eyes to ſee, nor faculties to perceive any thing) out of a preſumption, that nothing is beyond our comprehenſion. But to be ſatisfied of the folly of ſuch a conceit, we need not go far. He that knows any thing, knows this in the firſt place, that he need not ſeek long for inſtances of his ignorance. The meaneſt and moſt obvious things that come in our way, have dark ſides, that the quickeſt ſight cannot penetrate into. The cleareſt and moſt enlarged underſtandings of thinking men find themſelves puzzled, and at a loſs, in every particle of matter. We ſhall the leſs wonder to find it ſo, when we conſider the cauſes of our ignorance; which, from what has been ſaid, I ſuppoſe, will be found to be theſe three:

Firſt, want of ideas.

Secondly, want of a discoverable connexion between the ideas we have.

Thirdly, want of tracing and examining our ideas.

§. 23. First, there are some things, and those not a few, that we are ignorant of, for want of ideas.

First, one cause of it want of ideas, either such as we have no conception of, or such as particularly we have not.

First; all the simple ideas we have, are confined (as I have shown) to those we receive from corporeal objects by sensation, and from the operations of our own minds as the objects of reflection. But how much these few and narrow inlets are disproportionate to the vast whole extent of all beings, will not be hard to persuade those, who are not so foolish as to think their span the measure of all things. What other simple ideas it is possible the creatures in other parts of the universe may have, by the assistance of senses and faculties more, or perfecter, than we have, or different from ours, it is not for us to determine. But to say, or think there are no such, because we conceive nothing of them, is no better an argument, than if a blind man should be positive in it, that there was no such thing as sight and colours, because he had no manner of idea of any such thing, nor could by any means frame to himself any notions about seeing. The ignorance and darkness that is in us, no more hinders nor confines the knowledge that is in others, than the blindness of a mole is an argument against the quicksightedness of an eagle. He that will consider the infinite power, wisdom, and goodness of the Creator of all things, will find reason to think, it was not all laid out upon so inconsiderable, mean, and impotent a creature, as he will find man to be; who, in all probability, is one of the lowest of all intellectual beings. What faculties therefore other species of creatures have, to penetrate into the nature and inmost constitutions of things; what ideas they may receive of them, far different from ours; we know not. This we know, and certainly find, that we want several other views of them, besides those we have, to make discoveries of them more perfect. And we may be convinced that the ideas we can attain to by our faculties,

are very disproportionate to things themselves, when a positive, clear, distinct one of substance itself, which is the foundation of all the rest, is concealed from us. But want of ideas of this kind being a part, as well as cause of our ignorance, cannot be described. Only this, I think, I may confidently say of it, that the intellectual and sensible world are in this perfectly alike; that that part, which we see of either of them, holds no proportion with what we see not; and whatsoever we can reach with our eyes, or our thoughts, of either of them, is but a point, almost nothing in comparison of the rest.

Because of their remoteness; or,

§. 24. Secondly, another great cause of ignorance is the want of ideas we are capable of. As the want of ideas, which our faculties are not able to give us, shuts us wholly from those views of things, which it is reasonable to think other beings, perfecter than we, have, of which we know nothing; so the want of ideas I now speak of keeps us in ignorance of things we conceive capable of being known to us. Bulk, figure, and motion, we have ideas of. But though we are not without ideas of these primary qualities of bodies in general, yet not knowing what is the particular bulk, figure, and motion, of the greatest part of the bodies of the universe; we are ignorant of the several powers, efficacies, and ways of operation, whereby the effects, which we daily see, are produced. These are hid from us in some things, by being too remote; and in others, by being too minute. When we consider the vast distance of the known and visible parts of the world, and the reasons we have to think, that what lies within our ken is but a small part of the universe, we shall then discover an huge abyss of ignorance. What are the particular fabricks of the great masses of matter, which make up the whole stupendous frame of corporeal beings, how far they are extended, what is their motion, and how continued or communicated, and what influence they have one upon another, are contemplations that at first glimpse our thoughts lose themselves in. If we narrow our contemplations, and confine our thoughts to this little canton, I mean this system of our sun, and the

grosser

groſſer maſſes of matter, that viſibly move about it; what ſeveral ſorts of vegetables, animals, and intellectual corporeal beings, infinitely different from thoſe of our little ſpot of earth, may there probably be in the other planets, to the knowledge of which, even of their outward figures and parts, we can no way attain, whilſt we are confined to this earth; there being no natural means, either by ſenſation or reflection, to convey their certain ideas into our minds? They are out of the reach of thoſe inlets of all our knowledge: and what ſorts of furniture and inhabitants thoſe manſions contain in them, we cannot ſo much as gueſs, much leſs have clear and diſtinct ideas of them.

Becauſe of their minuteneſs.

§. 25. If a great, nay, far the greateſt part of the ſeveral ranks of bodies in the univerſe, eſcape our notice by their remoteneſs, there are others that are no leſs concealed from us by their minuteneſs. Theſe inſenſible corpuſcles being the active parts of matter, and the great inſtruments of nature, on which depend not only all their ſecondary qualities, but alſo moſt of their natural operations; our want of preciſe diſtinct ideas of their primary qualities, keeps us in an incurable ignorance of what we deſire to know about them. I doubt not but if we could diſcover the figure, ſize, texture, and motion of the minute conſtituent parts of any two bodies, we ſhould know without trial ſeveral of their operations one upon another, as we do now the properties of a ſquare or a triangle. Did we know the mechanical affections of the particles of rhubarb, hemlock, opium, and a man; as a watch-maker does thoſe of a watch, whereby it performs its operations, and of a file which by rubbing on them will alter the figure of any of the wheels; we ſhould be able to tell before-hand, that rhubarb will purge, hemlock kill, and opium make a man ſleep; as well as a watch-maker can, that a little piece of paper laid on the balance will keep the watch from going, till it be removed; or that, ſome ſmall part of it being rubbed by a file, the machine would quite loſe its motion, and the watch go no more. The diſſolving of ſilver in aqua fortis, and gold in aqua regia, and not vice verſa,

would be then perhaps no more difficult to know, than it is to a ſmith to underſtand why the turning of one key will open a lock, and not the turning of another. But whilſt we are deſtitute of ſenſes acute enough to diſcover the minute particles of bodies, and to give us ideas of their mechanical affections, we muſt be content to be ignorant of their properties and ways of operation; nor can we be aſſured about them any farther, than ſome few trials we make are able to reach. But whether they will ſucceed again another time, we cannot be certain. This hinders our certain knowledge of univerſal truths concerning natural bodies: and our reaſon carries us herein very little beyond particular matter of fact.

Hence no ſcience of bodies.

§. 26. And therefore I am apt to doubt, that how far ſoever human induſtry may advance uſeful and experimental philoſophy in phyſical things, ſcientifical will ſtill be out of our reach; becauſe we want perfect and adequate ideas of thoſe very bodies which are neareſt to us, and moſt under our command. Thoſe which we have ranked into claſſes under names, and we think ourſelves beſt acquainted with, we have but very imperfect and incomplete ideas of. Diſtinct ideas of the ſeveral ſorts of bodies that fall under the examination of our ſenſes perhaps we may have: but adequate ideas, I ſuſpect, we have not of any one amongſt them. And though the former of theſe will ſerve us for common uſe and diſcourſe, yet whilſt we want the latter, we are not capable of ſcientifical knowledge; nor ſhall ever be able to diſcover general, inſtructive, unqueſtionable truths concerning them. Certainty and demonſtration are things we muſt not, in theſe matters, pretend to. By the colour, figure, taſte, and ſmell, and other ſenſible qualities, we have as clear and diſtinct ideas of ſage and hemlock, as we have of a circle and a triangle: but having no ideas of the particular primary qualities of the minute parts of either of theſe plants, nor of other bodies which we would apply them to, we cannot tell what effects they will produce; nor when we ſee thoſe effects, can we ſo much as gueſs, much leſs know, their manner of pro-

production. Thus having no ideas of the particular mechanical affections of the minute parts of bodies that are within our view and reach, we are ignorant of their conſtitutions, powers, and operations: and of bodies more remote we are yet more ignorant, not knowing ſo much as their very outward ſhapes, or the ſenſible and groſſer parts of their conſtitutions.

Much leſs of ſpirits.

§. 27. This, at firſt, will ſhow us how diſproportionate our knowledge is to the whole extent even of material beings; to which if we add the conſideration of that infinite number of ſpirits that may be, and probably are, which are yet more remote from our knowledge, whereof we have no cognizance, nor can frame to ourſelves any diſtinct ideas of their ſeveral ranks and ſorts, we ſhall find this cauſe of ignorance conceal from us, in an impenetrable obſcurity, almoſt the whole intellectual world; a greater certainly, and more beautiful world than the material. For bating ſome very few, and thoſe, if I may ſo call them, ſuperficial ideas of ſpirit, which by reflection we get of our own, and from thence the beſt we can collect of the father of all ſpirits, the eternal independent author of them and us and all things; we have no certain information, ſo much as of the exiſtence of other ſpirits, but by revelation. Angels of all ſorts are naturally beyond our diſcovery: and all thoſe intelligences whereof it is likely there are more orders than of corporeal ſubſtances, are things whereof our natural faculties give us no certain account at all. That there are minds and thinking beings in other men as well as himſelf, every man has a reaſon, from their words and actions, to be ſatisfied: and the knowledge of his own mind cannot ſuffer a man, that conſiders, to be ignorant, that there is a God. But that there are degrees of ſpiritual beings between us and the great God, who is there that by his own ſearch and ability can come to know? Much leſs have we diſtinct ideas of their different natures, conditions, ſtates, powers, and ſeveral conſtitutions, wherein they agree or differ from one another, and from us. And therefore in what concerns their different ſpecies and properties, we are under an abſolute ignorance.

§. 28.

Secondly, want of a discoverable connexion between ideas we have.

§. 28. Secondly, what a small part of the substantial beings that are in the universe, the want of ideas leaves open to our knowledge, we have seen. In the next place, another cause of ignorance, of no less moment, is a want of a discoverable connexion between those ideas we have. For wherever we want that, we are utterly incapable of universal and certain knowledge; and are, in the former case, left only to observation and experiment: which, how narrow and confined it is, how far from general knowledge, we need not be told. I shall give some few instances of this cause of our ignorance, and so leave it. It is evident that the bulk, figure, and motion of several bodies about us, produce in us several sensations, as of colours, sounds, tastes, smells, pleasure and pain, &c. These mechanical affections of bodies having no affinity at all with those ideas they produce in us (there being no conceivable connexion between any impulse of any sort of body and any perception of a colour or smell, which we find in our minds) we can have no distinct knowledge of such operations beyond our experience; and can reason no otherwise about them, than as effects produced by the appointment of an infinitely wise agent, which perfectly surpass our comprehensions. As the ideas of sensible secondary qualities which we have in our minds, can by us be no way deduced from bodily causes, nor any correspondence or connexion be found between them and those primary qualities which (experience shows us) produce them in us; so on the other side, the operation of our minds upon our bodies is as inconceivable. How any thought should produce a motion in body is as remote from the nature of our ideas, as how any body should produce any thought in the mind. That it is so, if experience did not convince us, the consideration of the things themselves would never be able in the least to discover to us. These, and the like, though they have a constant and regular connexion, in the ordinary course of things; yet that connexion being not discoverable in the ideas themselves, which appearing to have no necessary dependence one on another, we can

can attribute their connexion to nothing elſe but the arbitrary determination of that all-wiſe agent, who has made them to be, and to operate as they do, in a way wholly above our weak underſtandings to conceive.

§. 29. In ſome of our ideas there are certain relations, habitudes, and connexions, ſo viſibly included in the nature of the ideas themſelves, that we cannot conceive them ſeparable from them by any power whatſoever. And in theſe only we are capable of certain and univerſal knowledge. Thus the idea of a right-lined triangle neceſſarily carries with it an equality of its angles to two right ones. Nor can we conceive this relation, this connexion of theſe two ideas, to be poſſibly mutable, or to depend on any arbitrary power, which of choice made it thus, or could make it otherwiſe. But the coherence and continuity of the parts of matter; the production of ſenſation in us of colours and ſounds, &c. by impulſe and motion; nay, the original rules and communication of motion being ſuch, wherein we can diſcover no natural connexion with any ideas we have; we cannot but aſcribe them to the arbitrary will and good pleaſure of the wiſe architect. I need not, I think, here mention the reſurrection of the dead, the future ſtate of this globe of earth, and ſuch other things, which are by every one acknowledged to depend wholly on the determination of a free agent. The things that, as far as our obſervation reaches, we conſtantly find to proceed regularly, we may conclude do act by a law ſet them; but yet by a law, that we know not: whereby, though cauſes work ſteadily, and effects conſtantly flow from them, yet their connexions and dependencies being not diſcoverable in our ideas, we can have but an experimental knowledge of them. From all which it is eaſy to perceive what a darkneſs we are involved in, how little it is of being, and the things that are, that we are capable to know. And therefore we ſhall do no injury to our knowledge, when we modeſtly think with ourſelves, that we are ſo far from being able to comprehend the whole nature of the univerſe, and all the things contained in it, that we are not capable of a philoſophical knowledge of the bodies

Inſtances.

bodies that are about us, and make a part of us: concerning their ſecondary qualities, powers, and operations, we can have no univerſal certainty. Several effects come every day within the notice of our ſenſes, of which we have ſo far ſenſitive knowledge; but the cauſes, manner, and certainty of their production, for the two foregoing reaſons, we muſt be content to be very ignorant of. In theſe we can go no farther than particular experience informs us of matter of fact, and by analogy to gueſs what effects the like bodies are, upon other trials, like to produce. But as to a perfect ſcience of natural bodies (not to mention ſpiritual beings) we are, I think, ſo far from being capable of any ſuch thing, that I conclude it loſt labour to ſeek after it.

Thirdly, want of tracing our ideas.

§. 30. Thirdly, where we have adequate ideas, and where there is a certain and diſcoverable connexion between them, yet we are often ignorant, for want of tracing thoſe ideas which we have, or may have; and for want of finding out thoſe intermediate ideas, which may ſhow us what habitude of agreement or diſagreement they have one with another. And thus many are ignorant of mathematical truths, not out of any imperfection of their faculties, or uncertainty in the things themſelves; but for want of application in acquiring, examining, and by due ways comparing thoſe ideas. That which has moſt contributed to hinder the due tracing of our ideas, and finding out their relations, and agreements or diſagreements one with another, has been, I ſuppoſe, the ill uſe of words. It is impoſſible that men ſhould ever truly ſeek, or certainly diſcover the agreement or diſagreement of ideas themſelves, whilſt their thoughts flutter about, or ſtick only in ſounds of doubtful and uncertain ſignifications. Mathematicians abſtracting their thoughts from names, and accuſtoming themſelves to ſet before their minds the ideas themſelves that they would conſider, and not ſounds inſtead of them, have avoided thereby a great part of that perplexity, puddering, and confuſion, which has ſo much hindered men's progreſs in other parts of knowledge. For whilſt they ſtick in words of undetermined and uncertain ſignification,

tion, they are unable to diſtinguiſh true from falſe, certain from probable, conſiſtent from inconſiſtent, in their own opinions. This having been the fate or misfortune of a great part of men of letters, the increaſe brought into the ſtock of real knowledge, has been very little, in proportion to the ſchools, diſputes, and writings, the world has been filled with; whilſt ſtudents being loſt in the great wood of words, knew not whereabout they were, how far their diſcoveries were advanced, or what was wanting in their own or the general ſtock of knowledge. Had men, in the diſcoveries of the material, done as they have in thoſe of the intellectual world, involved all in the obſcurity of uncertain and doubtful ways of talking, volumes writ of navigation and voyages, theories and ſtories of zones and tides, multiplied and diſputed; nay, ſhips built, and fleets ſent out, would never have taught us the way beyond the line; and the Antipodes would be ſtill as much unknown, as when it was declared hereſy to hold there were any. But having ſpoken ſufficiently of words, and the ill or careleſs uſe that is commonly made of them, I ſhall not ſay any thing more of it here.

Extent in reſpect to univerſality.

§. 31. Hitherto we have examined the extent of our knowledge, in reſpect of the ſeveral ſorts of beings that are. There is another extent of it, in reſpect of univerſality, which will alſo deſerve to be conſidered; and in this regard, our knowledge follows the nature of our ideas. If the ideas are abſtract, whoſe agreement or diſagreement we perceive, our knowledge is univerſal. For what is known of ſuch general ideas, will be true of every particular thing, in whom that eſſence, i. e. that abſtract idea is to be found; and what is once known of ſuch ideas, will be perpetually and for ever true. So that as to all general knowledge, we muſt ſearch and find it only in our minds, and it is only the examining of our own ideas, that furniſheth us with that. Truths belonging to eſſences of things, (that is, to abſtract ideas) are eternal, and are to be found out by the contemplation only of thoſe eſſences: as the exiſtences of things are to be known only from experience. But having

more

more to ſay of this in the chapters where I ſhall ſpeak of general and real knowledge, this may here ſuffice as to the univerſality of our knowledge in general.

CHAP. IV.

Of the Reality of Knowledge.

Objection. Knowledge placed in ideas may be all bare viſion.

§. 1. I DOUBT not but my reader by this time may be apt to think, that I have been all this while only building a caſtle in the air; and be ready to ſay to me, "To what purpoſe all this ſtir? Knowledge, ſay you, is only the perception of "the agreement or diſagreement of our own ideas: but "who knows what thoſe ideas may be? Is there any "thing ſo extravagant, as the imaginations of men's "brains? Where is the head that has no chimeras in "it? Or if there be a ſober and a wiſe man, what difference will there be, by your rules, between his "knowledge and that of the moſt extravagant fancy in "the world? They both have their ideas, and perceive "their agreement and diſagreement one with another. "If there be any difference between them, the advantage will be on the warm-headed man's ſide, as having the more ideas, and the more lively: and ſo, by "your rules, he will be the more knowing. If it be "true, that all knowledge lies only in the perception "of the agreement or diſagreement of our own ideas, "the viſions of an enthuſiaſt, and the reaſonings of a "ſober man, will be equally certain. It is no matter "how things are; ſo a man obſerve but the agreement "of his own imaginations, and talk conformably, it is "all truth, all certainty. Such caſtles in the air will "be as ſtrong holds of truth, as the demonſtrations of "Euclid. That an harpy is not a centaur is by this "way as certain knowledge, and as much a truth, as "that a ſquare is not a circle.

"But of what use is all this fine knowledge of men's "own imaginations, to a man that inquires after the "reality of things? It matters not what men's fancies "are, it is the knowledge of things that is only to be "prized; it is this alone gives a value to our reason-"ings, and preference to one man's knowledge over "another's, that it is of things as they really are, and "not of dreams and fancies."

Answ. Not so, where ideas agree with things.

§. 2. To which I answer, that if our knowledge of our ideas terminate in them, and reach no farther, where there is something farther intended, our most serious thoughts will be of little more use, than the reveries of a crazy brain; and the truths built thereon of no more weight, than the discourses of a man, who sees things clearly in a dream, and with great assurance utters them. But, I hope, before I have done, to make it evident, that this way of certainty, by the knowledge of our own ideas, goes a little farther than bare imagination: and I believe it will appear, that all the certainty of general truths a man has, lies in nothing else.

§. 3. It is evident, the mind knows not things immediately, but only by the intervention of the ideas it has of them. Our knowledge therefore is real, only so far as there is a conformity between our ideas and the reality of things. But what shall be here the criterion? How shall the mind, when it perceives nothing but its own ideas, know that they agree with things themselves? This, though it seems not to want difficulty, yet, I think, there be two sorts of ideas, that, we may be assured, agree with things.

As, 1. All simple ideas do.

§. 4. First, the first are simple ideas, which since the mind, as has been showed, can by no means make to itself, must necessarily be the product of things operating on the mind in a natural way, and producing therein those perceptions which by the wisdom and will of our maker they are ordained and adapted to. From whence it follows, that simple ideas are not fictions of our fancies, but the natural and regular productions of things without us, really operating upon us, and so carry with them all the con-

conformity which is intended, or which our ſtate requires: for they repreſent to us things under thoſe appearances which they are fitted to produce in us, whereby we are enabled to diſtinguiſh the ſorts of particular ſubſtances, to diſcern the ſtates they are in, and ſo to take them for our neceſſities, and to apply them to our uſes. Thus the idea of whiteneſs, or bitterneſs, as it is in the mind, exactly anſwering that power which is in any body to produce it there, has all the real conformity it can, or ought to have, with things without us. And this conformity between our ſimple ideas, and the exiſtence of things, is ſufficient for real knowledge.

2. All complex ideas, except of ſubſtances.

§. 5. Secondly, all our complex ideas, except thoſe of ſubſtances, being archetypes of the mind's own making, not intended to be the copies of any thing, nor referred to the exiſtence of any thing, as to their originals; cannot want any conformity neceſſary to real knowledge. For that which is not deſigned to repreſent any thing but itſelf, can never be capable of a wrong repreſentation, nor miſlead us from the true apprehenſion of any thing, by its diſlikeneſs to it; and ſuch, excepting thoſe of ſubſtances, are all our complex ideas: which, as I have ſhowed in another place, are combinations of ideas, which the mind, by its free choice, puts together, without conſidering any connexion they have in nature. And hence it is, that in all theſe ſorts the ideas themſelves are conſidered as the archetypes, and things no otherwiſe regarded, but as they are conformable to them. So that we cannot but be infallibly certain, that all the knowledge we attain concerning theſe ideas is real, and reaches things themſelves; becauſe in all our thoughts, reaſonings, and diſcourſes of this kind, we intend things no farther than as they are conformable to our ideas. So that in theſe we cannot miſs of a certain and undoubted reality.

Hence the reality of mathematical knowledge

§. 6. I doubt not but it will be eaſily granted, that the knowledge we have of mathematical truths, is not only certain, but real knowledge; and not the bare empty viſion of vain inſignificant chimeras of the brain: and yet

yet, if we will consider, we shall find that it is only of our own ideas. The mathematician considers the truth and properties belonging to a rectangle, or circle, only as they are in idea in his own mind. For it is possible he never found either of them existing mathematically, i. e. precisely true, in his life. But yet the knowledge he has of any truths or properties belonging to a circle, or any other mathematical figure, are nevertheless true and certain, even of real things existing; because real things are no farther concerned, nor intended to be meant by any such propositions, than as things really agree to those archetypes in his mind. Is it true of the idea of a triangle, that its three angles are equal to two right ones? It is true also of a triangle, wherever it really exists. Whatever other figure exists, that is not exactly answerable to the idea of a triangle in his mind, is not at all concerned in that proposition: and therefore he is certain all his knowledge concerning such ideas is real knowledge; because intending things no farther than they agree with those his ideas, he is sure what he knows concerning those figures, when they have barely an ideal existence in his mind, will hold true of them also, when they have real existence in matter; his consideration being barely of those figures, which are the same, wherever or however they exist.

And of moral.

§. 7. And hence it follows, that moral knowledge is as capable of real certainty, as mathematicks. For certainty being but the perception of the agreement or disagreement of our ideas; and demonstration nothing but the perception of such agreement, by the intervention of other ideas, or mediums; our moral ideas, as well as mathematical, being archetypes themselves, and so adequate and complete ideas; all the agreement or disagreement, which we shall find in them, will produce real knowledge, as well as in mathematical figures.

Existence not required to make it real.

§. 8. For the attaining of knowledge and certainty, it is requisite that we have determined ideas; and, to make our knowledge real, it is requisite that the ideas answer their archetypes. Nor let it be wondered, that I place the

certainty of our knowledge in the consideration of our ideas, with so little care and regard (as it may seem) to the real existence of things: since most of those discourses, which take up the thoughts, and engage the disputes of those who pretend to make it their business to inquire after truth and certainty, will, I presume, upon examination be found to be general propositions, and notions in which existence is not at all concerned. All the discourses of the mathematicians about the squaring of a circle, conick sections, or any other part of mathematicks, concern not the existence of any of those figures; but their demonstrations, which depend on their ideas, are the same, whether there be any square or circle existing in the world, or no. In the same manner, the truth and certainty of moral discourses abstracts from the lives of men, and the existence of those virtues in the world whereof they treat. Nor are Tully's offices less true, because there is no-body in the world that exactly practises his rules, and lives up to that pattern of a virtuous man which he has given us, and which existed no where, when he writ, but in idea. If it be true in speculation, i. e. in idea, that murder deserves death, it will also be true in reality of any action that exists conformable to that idea of murder. As for other actions, the truth of that proposition concerns them not. And thus it is of all other species of things, which have no other essences but those ideas, which are in the minds of men.

Nor will it be less true or certain, because moral ideas are of our own making and naming.

§. 9. But it will here be said, that if moral knowledge be placed in the contemplation of our own moral ideas, and those, as other modes, be of our own making, what strange notions will there be of justice and temperance? What confusion of virtues and vices, if every one may make what ideas of them he pleases? No confusion or disorder in the things themselves, nor the reasonings about them; no more than (in mathematicks) there would be a disturbance in the demonstration, or a change in the properties of figures, and their relations one to another, if a man should make a triangle with four corners, or a

trapezium with four right angles; that is, in plain English, change the names of the figures, and call that by one name, which mathematicians call ordinarily by another. For let a man make to himself the idea of a figure with three angles, whereof one is a right one, and call it, if he please, equilaterum or trapezium, or any thing else, the properties of and demonstrations about that idea will be the same, as if he called it a rectangular triangle. I confess the change of the name, by the impropriety of speech, will at first disturb him, who knows not what idea it stands for; but as soon as the figure is drawn, the consequences and demonstration are plain and clear. Just the same is it in moral knowledge, let a man have the idea of taking from others, without their consent, what their honest industry has possessed them of, and call this justice, if he please. He that takes the name here without the idea put to it, will be mistaken, by joining another idea of his own to that name: but strip the idea of that name, or take it such as it is in the speaker's mind, and the same things will agree to it, as if you called it injustice. Indeed wrong names in moral discourses breed usually more disorder, because they are not so easily rectified as in mathematicks, where the figure, once drawn and seen, makes the name useless and of no force. For what need of a sign, when the thing signified is present and in view? But in moral names that cannot be so easily and shortly done, because of the many decompositions that go to the making up the complex ideas of those modes. But yet for all this, miscalling of any of those ideas, contrary to the usual signification of the words of that language, hinders not but that we may have certain and demonstrative knowledge of their several agreements and disagreements, if we will carefully, as in mathematicks, keep to the same precise ideas, and trace them in their several relations one to another, without being led away by their names. If we but separate the idea under consideration from the sign that stands for it, our knowledge goes equally on in the discovery of real truth and certainty, whatever sounds we make use of.

Misnaming disturbs not the certainty of the knowledge.

§. 10. One thing more we are to take notice of, that where God, or any other law-maker, hath defined any moral names, there they have made the essence of that species to which that name belongs; and there it is not safe to apply or use them otherwise: but in other cases it is bare impropriety of speech to apply them contrary to the common usage of the country. But yet even this too disturbs not the certainty of that knowledge, which is still to be had by a due contemplation, and comparing of those even nick-named ideas.

Ideas of substances have their archetypes without us.

§. 11. Thirdly, there is another sort of complex ideas, which being referred to archetypes without us, may differ from them, and so our knowledge about them may come short of being real. Such are our ideas of substances, which consisting of a collection of simple ideas, supposed taken from the works of nature, may yet vary from them, by having more or different ideas united in them, than are to be found united in the things themselves. From whence it comes to pass, that they may, and often do, fail of being exactly conformable to things themselves.

So far as they agree with those, so far our knowledge concerning them is real.

§. 12. I say then, that to have ideas of substances, which, by being conformable to things, may afford us real knowledge, it is not enough, as in modes, to put together such ideas as have no inconsistence, though they did never before so exist: v. g. the ideas of sacrilege or perjury, &c. were as real and true ideas before, as after the existence of any such fact. But our ideas of substances being supposed copies, and referred to archetypes without us, must still be taken from something that does or has existed; they must not consist of ideas put together at the pleasure of our thoughts, without any real pattern they were taken from, though we can perceive no inconsistence in such a combination. The reason whereof is, because we knowing not what real constitution it is of substances, whereon our simple ideas depend, and which really is the cause of the strict union of some of them one with another,

and

and the exclusion of others; there are very few of them, that we can be sure are, or are not, inconsistent in nature, any farther than experience and sensible observation reach. Herein therefore is founded the reality of our knowledge concerning substances, that all our complex ideas of them must be such, and such only, as are made up of such simple ones, as have been discovered to co-exist in nature. And our ideas being thus true, though not, perhaps, very exact copies, are yet the subjects of real (as far as we have any) knowledge of them. Which (as has been already shown) will not be found to reach very far: but so far as it does, it will still be real knowledge. Whatever ideas we have, the agreement we find they have with others, will still be knowledge. If those ideas be abstract, it will be general knowledge. But, to make it real concerning substances, the ideas must be taken from the real existence of things. Whatever simple ideas have been found to co-exist in any substance, these we may with confidence join together again, and so make abstract ideas of substances. For whatever have once had an union in nature, may be united again.

In our inquiries about substances, we must consider ideas, and not confine our thoughts to names, or species supposed set out by names.

§. 13. This, if we rightly consider, and confine not our thoughts and abstract ideas to names, as if there were, or could be no other sorts of things than what known names had already determined, and as it were set out; we should think of things with greater freedom and less confusion than perhaps we do. It would possibly be thought a bold paradox, if not a very dangerous falsehood, if I should say, that some changelings, who have lived forty years together without any appearance of reason, are something between a man and a beast: which prejudice is founded upon nothing else but a false supposition, that these two names, man and beast, stand for distinct species so set out by real essences, that there can come no other species between them: whereas if we will abstract from those names, and the supposition of such specifick essences made by nature, wherein all things of the same denominations did exactly and

equally partake; if we would not fancy that there were a certain number of these essences, wherein all things, as in moulds, were cast and formed; we should find that the idea of the shape, motion, and life of a man without reason, is as much a distinct idea, and makes as much a distinct sort of things from man and beast, as the idea of the shape of an ass with reason would be different from either that of man or beast, and be a species of an animal between, or distinct from both.

Objection against a changeling being something between a man and beast, answered.

§. 14. Here every body will be ready to ask, If changelings may be supposed something between man and beast, pray what are they? I answer, changelings, which is as good a word to signify something different from the signification of man or beast, as the names man and beast are to have significations different one from the other. This, well considered, would resolve this matter, and show my meaning without any more ado. But I am not so unacquainted with the zeal of some men, which enables them to spin consequences, and to see religion threatened whenever any one ventures to quit their forms of speaking; as not to foresee what names such a proposition as this is like to be charged with: and without doubt it will be asked, If changelings are something between man and beast, what will become of them in the other world? To which I answer, 1. It concerns me not to know or inquire. To their own master they stand or fall. It will make their state neither better nor worse, whether we determine any thing of it or no. They are in the hands of a faithful creator and a bountiful father, who disposes not of his creatures according to our narrow thoughts or opinions, nor distinguishes them according to names and species of our contrivance. And we that know so little of this present world we are in, may, I think, content ourselves without being peremptory in defining the different states, which creatures shall come into, when they go off this stage. It may suffice us, that he hath made known to all those, who are capable of instruction, discoursing, and reasoning,

ing, that they ſhall come to an account, and receive according to what they have done in this body.

§. 15. But, ſecondly, I anſwer, the force of theſe men's queſtion (viz. will you deprive changelings of a future ſtate?) is founded on one of theſe two ſuppoſitions, which are both falſe. The firſt is, that all things that have the outward ſhape and appearance of a man muſt neceſſarily be deſigned to an immortal future being after this life: or, ſecondly, that whatever is of human birth muſt be ſo. Take away theſe imaginations, and ſuch queſtions will be groundleſs and ridiculous. I deſire then thoſe who think there is no more but an accidental difference between themſelves and changelings, the eſſence in both being exactly the ſame, to conſider whether they can imagine immortality annexed to any outward ſhape of the body? the very propoſing it, is, I ſuppoſe, enough to make them diſown it. No one yet, that ever I heard of, how much ſoever immerſed in matter, allowed that excellency to any figure of the groſs ſenſible outward parts, as to affirm eternal life due to it, or a neceſſary conſequence of it; or that any maſs of matter ſhould, after its diſſolution here, be again reſtored hereafter to an everlaſting ſtate of ſenſe, perception, and knowledge, only becauſe it was moulded into this or that figure, and had ſuch a particular frame of its viſible parts. Such an opinion as this, placing immortality in a certain ſuperficial figure, turns out of doors all conſideration of ſoul or ſpirit, upon whoſe account alone ſome corporeal beings have hitherto been concluded immortal, and others not. This is to attribute more to the outſide than inſide of things; and to place the excellency of a man more in the external ſhape of his body, than internal perfections of his ſoul: which is but little better than to annex the great and ineſtimable advantage of immortality and life everlaſting, which he has above other material beings, to annex it, I ſay, to the cut of his beard, or the faſhion of his coat. For this or that outward mark of our bodies no more carries with it the hope of an eternal duration, than the faſhion of a man's ſuit gives him reaſonable grounds to imagine it will never wear out, or that it will make him

immortal. It will perhaps be ſaid, that no-body thinks that the ſhape makes any thing immortal, but it is the ſhape is the ſign of a rational ſoul within, which is immortal. I wonder who made it the ſign of any ſuch thing: for barely ſaying it, will not make it ſo. It would require ſome proofs to perſuade one of it. No figure that I know ſpeaks any ſuch language. For it may as rationally be concluded, that the dead body of a man, wherein there is to be found no more appearance or action of life than there is in a ſtatue, has yet nevertheleſs a living ſoul in it becauſe of its ſhape; as that there is a rational ſoul in a changeling, becauſe he has the outſide of a rational creature; when his actions carry far leſs marks of reaſon with them, in the whole courſe of his life, than what are to be found in many a beaſt.

Monſters.

§. 16. But it is the iſſue of rational parents, and muſt therefore be concluded to have a rational ſoul. I know not by what logick you muſt ſo conclude. I am ſure this is a concluſion, that men no where allow of. For if they did, they would not make bold, as every where they do, to deſtroy ill-formed and miſ-ſhaped productions. Ay, but theſe are monſters. Let them be ſo; what will your driveling, unintelligent, intractable changeling be? Shall a defect in the body make a monſter; a defect in the mind (the far more noble, and, in the common phraſe, the far more eſſential part) not? Shall the want of a noſe, or a neck, make a monſter, and put ſuch iſſue out of the rank of men; the want of reaſon and underſtanding, not? This is to bring all back again to what was exploded juſt now: this is to place all in the ſhape, and to take the meaſure of a man only by his outſide. To ſhow that, according to the ordinary way of reaſoning in this matter, people do lay the whole ſtreſs on the figure, and reſolve the whole eſſence of the ſpecies of man (as they make it) into the outward ſhape, how unreaſonable ſoever it be, and how much ſoever they diſown it; we need but trace their thoughts and practice a little farther, and then it will plainly appear. The well-ſhaped changeling is a man, has a rational ſoul, though it appear not; this is paſt doubt, ſay you. Make the

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ears a little longer, and more pointed, and the nose a little flatter than ordinary, and then you begin to boggle: make the face yet narrower, flatter, and longer, and then you are at a stand: add still more and more of the likeness of a brute to it, and let the head be perfectly that of some other animal, then presently it is a monster; and it is demonstration with you that it hath no rational soul, and must be destroyed. Where now (I ask) shall be the just measure of the utmost bounds of that shape, that carries with it a rational soul? For since there have been human fœtuses produced, half beast, and half man; and others three parts one, and one part the other; and so it is possible they may be in all the variety of approaches to the one or the other shape, and may have several degrees of mixture of the likeness of a man or a brute; I would gladly know what are those precise lineaments, which, according to this hypothesis, are, or are not capable of a rational soul to be joined to them. What sort of outside is the certain sign that there is, or is not such an inhabitant within? For till that be done, we talk at random of man: and shall always, I fear, do so, as long as we give ourselves up to certain sounds, and the imaginations of settled and fixed species in nature, we know not what. But after all, I desire it may be considered, that those who think they have answered the difficulty by telling us, that a misshaped fœtus is a monster, run into the same fault they are arguing against, by constituting a species between man and beast. For what else, I pray, is their monster in the case (if the word monster signifies any thing at all) but something neither man nor beast, but partaking somewhat of either? And just so is the changeling before-mentioned. So necessary is it to quit the common notion of species and essences, if we will truly look into the nature of things, and examine them, by what our faculties can discover in them as they exist, and not by groundless fancies, that have been taken up about them.

Words and species.

§. 17. I have mentioned this here, because I think we cannot be too cautious that words and species, in the ordinary

notions

notions which we have been uſed to of them, impoſe not on us. For I am apt to think, therein lies one great obſtacle to our clear and diſtinct knowledge, eſpecially in reference to ſubſtances; and from thence has roſe a great part of the difficulties about truth and certainty. Would we accuſtom ourſelves to ſeparate our contemplations and reaſonings from words, we might, in a great meaſure, remedy this inconvenience within our own thoughts; but yet it would ſtill diſturb us in our diſcourſe with others, as long as we retained the opinion, that ſpecies and their eſſences were any thing elſe but our abſtract ideas (ſuch as they are) with names annexed to them, to be the ſigns of them.

Recapitulation.

§. 18. Wherever we perceive the agreement or diſagreement of any of our ideas, there is certain knowledge: and wherever we are ſure thoſe ideas agree with the reality of things, there is certain real knowledge. Of which agreement of our ideas, with the reality of things, having here given the marks, I think I have ſhown wherein it is, that certainty, real certainty, conſiſts: which, whatever it was to others, was, I confeſs, to me heretofore, one of thoſe deſiderata which I found great want of.

CHAP. V.

Of Truth in General.

What truth is.

§. 1. WHAT is truth was an inquiry many ages ſince; and it being that which all mankind either do, or pretend to ſearch after, it cannot but be worth our while carefully to examine wherein it conſiſts, and ſo acquaint ourſelves with the nature of it, as to obſerve how the mind diſtinguiſhes it from falſhood.

A right joining or ſeparating of ſigns, i. e. ideas or words.

§. 2. Truth then ſeems to me, in the proper import of the word, to ſignify nothing but the joining or ſeparating of ſigns, as the things ſignified by them do agree or diſagree one with another. The joining or ſepa-

ſeparating of ſigns, here meant, is what by another name we call propoſition. So that truth properly belongs only to propoſitions: whereof there are two ſorts, viz. mental and verbal; as there are two ſorts of ſigns commonly made uſe of, viz. ideas and words.

Which make mental or verbal propoſitions.

§. 3. To form a clear notion of truth, it is very neceſſary to conſider truth of thought, and truth of words, diſtinctly one from another: but yet it is very difficult to treat of them aſunder. Becauſe it is unavoidable, in treating of mental propoſitions, to make uſe of words: and then the inſtances given of mental propoſitions ceaſe immediately to be barely mental, and become verbal. For a mental propoſition being nothing but a bare conſideration of the ideas, as they are in our minds ſtripped of names, they loſe the nature of purely mental propoſitions as ſoon as they are put into words.

Mental propoſitions are very hard to be treated of.

§. 4. And that which makes it yet harder to treat of mental and verbal propoſitions ſeparately, is, that moſt men, if not all, in their thinking and reaſonings within themſelves, make uſe of words inſtead of ideas; at leaſt when the ſubject of their meditation contains in it complex ideas. Which is a great evidence of the imperfection and uncertainty of our ideas of that kind, and may, if attentively made uſe of, ſerve for a mark to ſhow us, what are thoſe things we have clear and perfect eſtabliſhed ideas of, and what not. For if we will curiouſly obſerve the way our mind takes in thinking and reaſoning, we ſhall find, I ſuppoſe, that when we make any propoſitions within our own thoughts about white or black, ſweet or bitter, a triangle or a circle, we can and often do frame in our minds the ideas themſelves, without reflecting on the names. But when we would conſider, or make propoſitions about the more complex ideas, as of a man, vitriol, fortitude, glory, we uſually put the name for the idea: becauſe the ideas theſe names ſtand for, being for the moſt part imperfect, confuſed, and undetermined, we reflect on the names themſelves, becauſe they are more clear, certain, and diſtinct, and readier occur to our thoughts than the pure ideas: and

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ſo we make uſe of theſe words inſtead of the ideas themſelves, even when we would meditate and reaſon within ourſelves, and make tacit mental propoſitions. In ſubſtances, as has been already noticed, this is occaſioned by the imperfection of our ideas: we making the name ſtand for the real eſſence, of which we have no idea at all. In modes, it is occaſioned by the great number of ſimple ideas, that go to the making them up. For many of them being compounded, the name occurs much eaſier than the complex idea itſelf, which requires time and attention to be recollected, and exactly repreſented to the mind, even in thoſe men who have formerly been at the pains to do it; and is utterly impoſſible to be done by thoſe, who, though they have ready in their memory the greateſt part of the common words of that language, yet perhaps never troubled themſelves in all their lives to conſider what preciſe ideas the moſt of them ſtood for. Some confuſed or obſcure notions have ſerved their turns, and many who talk very much of religion and conſcience, of church and faith, of power and right, of obſtructions and humours, melancholy and choler, would perhaps have little left in their thoughts and meditations, if one ſhould deſire them to think only of the things themſelves, and lay by thoſe words, with which they ſo often confound others, and not ſeldom themſelves alſo.

Being nothing but the joining or ſeparating ideas without words.

§. 5. But to return to the conſideration of truth: we muſt, I ſay, obſerve two ſorts of propoſitions that we are capable of making.

Firſt, mental, wherein the ideas in our underſtandings are without the uſe of words put together, or ſeparated by the mind, perceiving or judging of their agreement or diſagreement.

Secondly, verbal propoſitions, which are words, the ſigns of our ideas, put together or ſeparated in affirmative or negative ſentences. By which way of affirming or denying, theſe ſigns, made by ſounds, are as it were put together or ſeparated one from another. So that propoſition conſiſts in joining or ſeparating ſigns, and truth conſiſts in the putting together or ſeparating thoſe

ſigns,

ſigns, according as the things, which they ſtand for, agree or diſagree.

§. 6. Every one's experience will ſatisfy him, that the mind, either by perceiving or ſuppoſing the agreement or diſagreement of any of its ideas, does tacitly within itſelf put them into a kind of propoſition affirmative or negative, which I have endeavoured to expreſs by the terms putting together and ſeparating. But this action of the mind, which is ſo familiar to every thinking and reaſoning man, is eaſier to be conceived by reflecting on what paſſes in us when we affirm or deny, than to be explained by words. When a man has in his head the idea of two lines, viz. the ſide and diagonal of a ſquare, whereof the diagonal is an inch long, he may have the idea alſo of the diviſion of that line into a certain number of equal parts; v. g. into five, ten, an hundred, a thouſand, or any other number, and may have the idea of that inch line being diviſible, or not diviſible, into ſuch equal parts, as a certain number of them will be equal to the ſide-line. Now whenever he perceives, believes, or ſuppoſes ſuch a kind of diviſibility to agree or diſagree to his idea of that line, he, as it were, joins or ſeparates thoſe two ideas, viz. the idea of that line, and the idea of that kind of diviſibility; and ſo makes a mental propoſition, which is true or falſe, according as ſuch a kind of diviſibility, a diviſibility into ſuch aliquot parts, does really agree to that line or no. When ideas are ſo put together, or ſeparated in the mind, as they or the things they ſtand for do agree or not, that is, as I may call it, mental truth. But truth of words is ſomething more; and that is the affirming or denying of words one of another, as the ideas they ſtand for agree or diſagree: and this again is two-fold; either purely verbal and trifling, which I ſhall ſpeak of, chap. viii. or real and inſtructive, which is the object of that real knowledge which we have ſpoken of already.

When mental propoſitions contain real truth, and when verbal.

§. 7. But here again will be apt to occur the ſame doubt about truth, that did about knowledge: and it will be objected, that

Objection againſt verbal truth,

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that thus it may all be chimerical.

if truth be nothing but the joining and separating of words in propositions, as the ideas they stand for agree or disagree in men's minds, the knowledge of truth is not so valuable a thing, as it is taken to be, nor worth the pains and time men employ in the search of it; since by this account it amounts to no more than the conformity of words to the chimeras of men's brains. Who knows not what odd notions many men's heads are filled with, and what strange ideas all men's brains are capable of? But if we rest here, we know the truth of nothing by this rule, but of the visionary words in our own imaginations; nor have other truth, but what as much concerns harpies and centaurs, as men and horses. For those, and the like, may be ideas in our heads, and have their agreement and disagreement there, as well as the ideas of real beings, and so have as true propositions made about them. And it will be altogether as true a proposition to say all centaurs are animals, as that all men are animals; and the certainty of one as great as the other. For in both the propositions, the words are put together according to the agreement of the ideas in our minds: and the agreement of the idea of animal with that of centaur is as clear and visible to the mind, as the agreement of the idea of animal with that of man; and so these two propositions are equally true, equally certain. But of what use is all such truth to us?

Answered, real truth is about ideas agreeing to things.

§. 8. Though what has been said in the foregoing chapter, to distinguish real from imaginary knowledge, might suffice here, in answer to this doubt, to distinguish real truth from chimerical, or (if you please) barely nominal, they depending both on the same foundation; yet it may not be amiss here again to consider, that though our words signify nothing but our ideas, yet being designed by them to signify things, the truth they contain, when put into propositions, will be only verbal, when they stand for ideas in the mind, that have not an agreement with the reality of things. And therefore truth, as well as knowledge, may well come under the distinction of verbal and real; that being only

only verbal truth, wherein terms are joined according to the agreement or disagreement of the ideas they stand for, without regarding whether our ideas are such as really have, or are capable of having an existence in nature. But then it is they contain real truth, when these signs are joined, as our ideas agree; and when our ideas are such as we know are capable of having an existence in nature: which in substances we cannot know, but by knowing that such have existed.

Falshood is the joining of names otherwise than their ideas agree.

§. 9. Truth is the marking down in words the agreement or disagreement of ideas as it is. Falshood is the marking down in words the agreement or disagreement of ideas otherwise than it is. And so far as these ideas, thus marked by sounds, agree to their archetypes, so far only is the truth real. The knowledge of this truth consists in knowing what ideas the words stand for, and the perception of the agreement or disagreement of those ideas, according as it is marked by those words.

General propositions to be treated of more at large.

§. 10. But because words are looked on as the great conduits of truth and knowledge, and that in conveying and receiving of truth, and commonly in reasoning about it, we make use of words and propositions; I shall more at large inquire, wherein the certainty of real truths, contained in propositions, consists, and where it is to be had; and endeavour to show in what sort of universal propositions we are capable of being certain of their real truth or falshood.

I shall begin with general propositions, as those which most employ our thoughts, and exercise our contemplation. General truths are most looked after by the mind, as those that most enlarge our knowledge; and by their comprehensiveness, satisfying us at once of many particulars, enlarge our view, and shorten our way to knowledge.

Moral and metaphysical truth.

§. 11. Besides truth taken in the strict sense before-mentioned, there are other sorts of truth; as, 1. Moral truth, which is speaking of things according to the persuasion of our own minds,

minds, though the proposition we speak agree not to the reality of things. 2. Metaphysical truth, which is nothing but the real existence of things, conformable to the ideas to which we have annexed their names. This, though it seems to consist in the very beings of things, yet, when considered a little nearly, will appear to include a tacit proposition, whereby the mind joins that particular thing to the idea it had before settled with a name to it. But these considerations of truth, either having been before taken notice of, or not being much to our present purpose, it may suffice here only to have mentioned them.

CHAP. VI.

Of Universal Propositions, their Truth and Certainty.

Treating of words necessary to knowledge.

§. 1. THOUGH the examining and judging of ideas by themselves, their names being quite laid aside, be the best and surest way to clear and distinct knowledge; yet, through the prevailing custom of using sounds for ideas, I think it is very seldom practised. Every one may observe how common it is for names to be made use of, instead of the ideas themselves, even when men think and reason within their own breasts; especially if the ideas be very complex, and made up of a great collection of simple ones. This makes the consideration of words and propositions so necessary a part of the treatise of knowledge, that it is very hard to speak intelligibly of the one, without explaining the other.

General truths hardly to be understood, but in verbal propositions.

§. 2. All the knowledge we have, being only of particular or general truths, it is evident that whatever may be done in the former of these, the latter, which is that which with reason is most sought after, can never be well made known, and is very seldom apprehended, but as conceived and expressed in words.

words. It is not therefore out of our way, in the examination of our knowledge, to inquire into the truth and certainty of universal propositions.

Certainty two-fold, of truth and of knowledge.

§. 3. But that we may not be misled in this case, by that which is the danger every where, I mean by the doubtfulness of terms, it is fit to observe, that certainty is two-fold; certainty of truth, and certainty of knowledge. Certainty of truth is, when words are so put together in propositions, as exactly to express the agreement or disagreement of the ideas they stand for, as really it is. Certainty of knowledge is to perceive the agreement or disagreement of ideas, as expressed in any proposition. This we usually call knowing, or being certain of the truth of any proposition.

No proposition can be known to be true, where the essence of each species mentioned is not known.

§. 4. Now because we cannot be certain of the truth of any general proposition, unless we know the precise bounds and extent of the species its terms stand for, it is necessary we should know the essence of each species, which is that which constitutes and bounds it. This, in all simple ideas and modes, is not hard to do. For in these, the real and nominal essence being the same; or, which is all one, the abstract idea which the general term stands for, being the sole essence and boundary that is or can be supposed of the species; there can be no doubt, how far the species extends, or what things are comprehended under each term: which, it is evident, are all that have an exact conformity with the idea it stands for, and no other. But in substances wherein a real essence distinct from the nominal is supposed to constitute, determine, and bound the species, the extent of the general word is very uncertain: because not knowing this real essence, we cannot know what is, or what is not of that species; and consequently what may, or may not with certainty be affirmed of it. And thus speaking of a man, or gold, or any other species of natural substances, as supposed constituted by a precise and real essence, which nature regularly imparts to every individual of that kind, whereby it is made to be of that species, we cannot be

certain of the truth of any affirmation or negation made of it. For man, or gold, taken in this sense, and used for species of things constituted by real essences, different from the complex idea in the mind of the speaker; stand for we know not what: and the extent of these species, with such boundaries, are so unknown and undetermined, that it is impossible with any certainty to affirm, that all men are rational, or that all gold is yellow. But where the nominal essence is kept to, as the boundary of each species, and men extend the application of any general term no farther than to the particular things, in which the complex idea it stands for is to be found, there they are in no danger to mistake the bounds of each species, nor can be in doubt, on this account, whether any propositions be true or no. I have chosen to explain this uncertainty of propositions in this scholastic way, and have made use of the terms of essences and species, on purpose to show the absurdity and inconvenience there is to think of them, as of any other sort of realities, than barely abstract ideas with names to them. To suppose that the species of things are any thing but the sorting of them under general names, according as they agree to several abstract ideas, of which we make those names the signs, is to confound truth, and introduce uncertainty into all general propositions that can be made about them. Though therefore these things might, to people not possessed with scholastic learning, be treated of in a better and clearer way; yet those wrong notions of essences or species having got root in most people's minds, who have received any tincture from the learning which has prevailed in this part of the world, are to be discovered and removed, to make way for that use of words which should convey certainty with it.

This more particularly concerns substances.

§. 5. The names of substances then, whenever made to stand for species, which are supposed to be constituted by real essences, which we know not, are not capable to convey certainty to the understanding: of the truth of general propositions made up of such terms, we cannot be sure. The reason whereof is plain: for how

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can we be ſure that this or that quality is in gold, when we know not what is or is not gold? Since in this way of ſpeaking nothing is gold, but what partakes of an eſſence, which we not knowing, cannot know where it is or is not, and ſo cannot be ſure that any parcel of matter in the world is or is not in this ſenſe gold; being incurably ignorant, whether it has or has not that which makes any thing to be called gold, i. e. that real eſſence of gold whereof we have no idea at all: this being as impoſſible for us to know, as it is for a blind man to tell in what flower the colour of a panſie is, or is not to be found, whilſt he has no idea of the colour of a panſie at all. Or if we could (which is impoſſible) certainly know where a real eſſence, which we know not, is; v. g. in what parcels of matter the real eſſence of gold is; yet could we not be ſure, that this or that quality could with truth be affirmed of gold: ſince it is impoſſible for us to know, that this or that quality or idea has a neceſſary connexion with a real eſſence, of which we have no idea at all, whatever ſpecies that ſuppoſed real eſſence may be imagined to conſtitute.

The truth of few univerſal propoſitions concerning ſubſtances is to be known.

§. 6. On the other ſide, the names of ſubſtances, when made uſe of as they ſhould be, for the ideas men have in their minds, though they carry a clear and determinate ſignification with them, will not yet ſerve us to make many univerſal propoſitions, of whoſe truth we can be certain. Not becauſe in this uſe of them we are uncertain what things are ſignified by them, but becauſe the complex ideas they ſtand for are ſuch combinations of ſimple ones, as carry not with them any diſcoverable connexion or repugnancy, but with a very few other ideas.

Becauſe co-exiſtence of ideas in few caſes is to be known.

§. 7. The complex ideas, that our names of the ſpecies of ſubſtances properly ſtand for, are collections of ſuch qualities as have been obſerved to co-exiſt in an unknown ſubſtratum, which we call ſubſtance: but what other qualities neceſſarily co-exiſt with ſuch combinations, we cannot certainly know, unleſs we can diſcover their natural dependence; which in their primary

qualities, we can go but a very little way in; and in all their secondary qualities, we can discover no connexion at all, for the reasons mentioned, chap. iii. viz. 1. Because we know not the real constitutions of substances, on which each secondary quality particularly depends. 2. Did we know that, it would serve us only for experimental (not universal) knowledge; and reach with certainty no farther, than that bare instance: because our understandings can discover no conceivable connexion between any secondary quality and any modification whatsoever of any of the primary ones. And therefore there are very few general propositions to be made concerning substances, which can carry with them undoubted certainty.

Instance in gold.

§. 8. All gold is fixed, is a proposition whose truth we cannot be certain of, how universally soever it be believed. For if, according to the useless imagination of the schools, any one supposes the term gold to stand for a species of things set out by nature, by a real essence belonging to it, it is evident he knows not what particular substances are of that species; and so cannot, with certainty, affirm any thing universally of gold. But if he makes gold stand for a species determined by its nominal essence, let the nominal essence, for example, be the complex idea of a body of a certain yellow colour, malleable, fusible, and heavier than any other known; in this proper use of the word gold, there is no difficulty to know what is or is not gold. But yet no other quality can with certainty be universally affirmed or denied of gold, but what hath a discoverable connexion or inconsistency with that nominal essence. Fixedness, for example, having no necessary connexion, that we can discover, with the colour, weight, or any other simple idea of our complex one, or with the whole combination together; it is impossible that we should certainly know the truth of this proposition, that all gold is fixed.

§. 9. As there is no discoverable connexion between fixedness and the colour, weight, and other simple ideas of that nominal essence of gold; so if we make our complex idea of gold a body yellow, fusible, ductile, weighty, and

and fixed, we ſhall be at the ſame uncertainty concerning ſolubility in aq. regia, and for the ſame reaſon: ſince we can never, from conſideration of the ideas themſelves, with certainty affirm or deny of a body, whoſe complex idea is made up of yellow, very weighty, ductile, fuſible, and fixed, that it is ſoluble in aqua regia; and ſo on, of the reſt of its qualities. I would gladly meet with one general affirmation concerning any quality of gold, that any one can certainly know is true. It will, no doubt, be preſently objected, is not this an univerſal propoſition, "all gold is malleable?" To which I anſwer, it is a very certain propoſition, if malleableneſs be a part of the complex idea the word gold ſtands for. But then here is nothing affirmed of gold, but that that ſound ſtands for an idea in which malleableneſs is contained: and ſuch a ſort of truth and certainty as this, it is to ſay a centaur is four-footed. But if malleableneſs makes not a part of the ſpecific eſſence the name of gold ſtands for, it is plain, "all gold is malleable" is not a certain propoſition. Becauſe let the complex idea of gold be made up of which ſoever of its other qualities you pleaſe, malleableneſs will not appear to depend on that complex idea, nor follow from any ſimple one contained in it: the connexion that malleableneſs has (if it has any) with thoſe other qualities, being only by the intervention of the real conſtitution of its inſenſible parts; which, ſince we know not, it is impoſſible we ſhould perceive that connexion, unleſs we could diſcover that which ties them together.

As far as any ſuch co-exiſtence can be known, ſo far univerſal propoſitions may be certain. But this will go but a little way, becauſe

§. 10. The more, indeed, of theſe co-exiſting qualities we unite into one complex idea, under one name, the more preciſe and determinate we make the ſignification of that word; but never yet make it thereby more capable of univerſal certainty, in reſpect of other qualities not contained in our complex idea; ſince we perceive not their connexion or dependence on one another, being ignorant both of that real conſtitution in which they are all founded, and alſo how they flow from it. For the chief part of our knowledge concerning

cerning substances is not, as in other things, barely of the relation of two ideas that may exist separately; but is of the necessary connexion and co-existence of several distinct ideas in the same subject, or of their repugnancy so to co-exist. Could we begin at the other end, and discover what it was, wherein that colour consisted, what made a body lighter or heavier, what texture of parts made it malleable, fusible, and fixed, and fit to be dissolved in this sort of liquor, and not in another; if (I say) we had such an idea as this of bodies, and could perceive wherein all sensible qualities originally consist, and how they are produced; we might frame such ideas of them, as would furnish us with matter of more general knowledge, and enable us to make universal propositions, that should carry general truth and certainty with them. But whilst our complex ideas of the sorts of substances are so remote from that internal real constitution, on which their sensible qualities depend, and are made up of nothing but an imperfect collection of those apparent qualities our senses can discover; there can be few general propositions concerning substances, of whose real truth we can be certainly assured: since there are but few simple ideas, of whose connexion and necessary co-existence we can have certain and undoubted knowledge. I imagine, amongst all the secondary qualities of substances, and the powers relating to them, there cannot any two be named, whose necessary co-existence, or repugnance to co-exist, can certainly be known, unless in those of the same sense, which necessarily exclude one another, as I have elsewhere showed. No one, I think, by the colour that is in any body, can certainly know what smell, taste, sound, or tangible qualities it has, nor what alterations it is capable to make or receive, on or from other bodies. The same may be said of the sound or taste, &c. Our specific names of substances standing for any collections of such ideas, it is not to be wondered, that we can with them make very few general propositions of undoubted real certainty. But yet so far as any complex idea, of any sort of substances, contains in it any simple idea, whose necessary co-existence with any other may be discovered,

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ſo far univerſal propoſitions may with certainty be made concerning it: v. g. could any one diſcover a neceſſary connexion between malleableneſs, and the colour or weight of gold, or any other part of the complex idea ſignified by that name, he might make a certain univerſal propoſition concerning gold in this reſpect; and the real truth of this propoſition, "that all gold is malleable," would be as certain as of this, "the three angles of all "right-lined triangles are all equal to two right ones."

The qualities which make our complex ideas of ſubſtances, depend moſtly on external, remote, and unperceived cauſes.

§. 11. Had we ſuch ideas of ſubſtances, as to know what real conſtitutions produce thoſe ſenſible qualities we find in them, and how thoſe qualities flowed from thence, we could, by the ſpecific ideas of their real eſſences in our own minds, more certainly find out their properties, and diſcover what qualities they had or had not, than we can now by our ſenſes: and to know the properties of gold, it would be no more neceſſary that gold ſhould exiſt, and that we ſhould make experiments upon it, than it is neceſſary for the knowing the properties of a triangle, that a triangle ſhould exiſt in any matter; the idea in our minds would ſerve for the one as well as the other. But we are ſo far from being admitted into the ſecrets of nature, that we ſcarce ſo much as ever approach the firſt entrance towards them. For we are wont to conſider the ſubſtances we meet with, each of them as an entire thing by itſelf, having all its qualities in itſelf, and independent of other things; overlooking, for the moſt part, the operations of thoſe inviſible fluids they are encompaſſed with, and upon whoſe motions and operations depend the greateſt part of thoſe qualities which are taken notice of in them, and are made by us the inherent marks of diſtinction whereby we know and denominate them. Put a piece of gold any where by itſelf, ſeparate from the reach and influence of all other bodies, it will immediately loſe all its colour and weight, and perhaps malleableneſs too; which, for aught I know, would be changed into a perfect friability. Water, in which to us fluidity is an eſſential quality, left to itſelf, would ceaſe to be fluid. But if inanimate

bodies owe so much of their present state to other bodies without them, that they would not be what they appear to us, were those bodies that environ them removed; it is yet more so in vegetables, which are nourished, grow, and produce leaves, flowers, and seeds, in a constant succession. And if we look a little nearer into the state of animals, we shall find that their dependence, as to life, motion, and the most considerable qualities to be observed in them, is so wholly on extrinsical causes and qualities of other bodies that make no part of them, that they cannot subsist a moment without them: though yet those bodies on which they depend, are little taken notice of, and make no part of the complex ideas we frame of those animals. Take the air but for a minute from the greatest part of living creatures, and they presently lose sense, life, and motion. This the necessity of breathing has forced into our knowledge. But how many other extrinsical, and possibly very remote bodies, do the springs of these admirable machines depend on, which are not vulgarly observed, or so much as thought on; and how many are there, which the severest inquiry can never discover? The inhabitants of this spot of the universe, though removed so many millions of miles from the sun, yet depend so much on the duly tempered motion of particles coming from, or agitated by it, that were this earth removed but a small part of the distance out of its present situation, and placed a little farther or nearer that source of heat, it is more than probable that the greatest part of the animals in it would immediately perish: since we find them so often destroyed by an excess or defect of the sun's warmth, which an accidental position, in some parts of this our little globe, exposes them to. The qualities observed in a loadstone must needs have their source far beyond the confines of that body; and the ravage made often on several sorts of animals by invisible causes, the certain death (as we are told) of some of them, by barely passing the line, or, as it is certain of other, by being removed into a neighbouring country; evidently show that the concurrence and operations of several bodies, with which they are seldom thought to have any thing

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to do, is abſolutely neceſſary to make them be what they appear to us, and to preſerve thoſe qualities by which we know and diſtinguiſh them. We are then quite out of the way, when we think that things contain within themſelves the qualities that appear to us in them: and we in vain ſearch for that conſtitution within the body of a fly, or an elephant, upon which depend thoſe qualities and powers we obſerve in them. For which perhaps, to underſtand them aright, we ought to look not only beyond this our earth and atmoſphere, but even beyond the ſun, or remoteſt ſtar our eyes have yet diſcovered. For how much the being and operation of particular ſubſtances in this our globe depends on cauſes utterly beyond our view, is impoſſible for us to determine. We ſee and perceive ſome of the motions and groſſer operations of things here about us; but whence the ſtreams come that keep all theſe curious machines in motion and repair, how conveyed and modified, is beyond our notice and apprehenſion: and the great parts and wheels, as I may ſo ſay, of this ſtupendous ſtructure of the univerſe, may, for aught we know, have ſuch a connexion and dependence in their influences and operations one upon another, that perhaps things in this our manſion would put on quite another face, and ceaſe to be what they are, if ſome one of the ſtars or great bodies, incomprehenſibly remote from us, ſhould ceaſe to be or move as it does. This is certain, things however abſolute and entire they ſeem in themſelves, are but retainers to other parts of nature, for that which they are moſt taken notice of by us. Their obſervable qualities, actions, and powers, are owing to ſomething without them; and there is not ſo complete and perfect a part that we know of nature, which does not owe the being it has, and the excellencies of it, to its neighbours; and we muſt not confine our thoughts within the ſurface of any body, but look a great deal farther, to comprehend perfectly thoſe qualities that are in it.

§. 12. If this be ſo, it is not to be wondered, that we have very imperfect ideas of ſubſtances; and that the real eſſences, on which depend their properties and ope-

operations, are unknown to us. We cannot discover so much as that size, figure, and texture of their minute and active parts, which is really in them; much less the different motions and impulses made in and upon them by bodies from without, upon which depends, and by which is formed, the greatest and most remarkable part of those qualities we observe in them, and of which our complex ideas of them are made up. This consideration alone is enough to put an end to all our hopes of ever having the ideas of their real essences; which whilst we want, the nominal essences we make use of instead of them will be able to furnish us but very sparingly with any general knowledge, or universal propositions capable of real certainty.

Judgment may reach farther, but that is not knowledge.

§. 13. We are not therefore to wonder, if certainty be to be found in very few general propositions made concerning substances: our knowledge of their qualities and properties goes very seldom farther than our senses reach and inform us. Possibly inquisitive and observing men may, by strength of judgment, penetrate farther, and on probabilities taken from wary observation, and hints well laid together, often guess right at what experience has not yet discovered to them. But this is but guessing still; it amounts only to opinion, and has not that certainty which is requisite to knowledge. For all general knowledge lies only in our own thoughts, and consists barely in the contemplation of our own abstract ideas. Wherever we perceive any agreement or disagreement amongst them, there we have general knowledge; and, by putting the names of those ideas together accordingly in propositions, can with certainty pronounce general truths. But because the abstract ideas of substances, for which their specific names stand, whenever they have any distinct and determinate signification, have a discoverable connexion or inconsistency with but a very few other ideas; the certainty of universal propositions concerning substances is very narrow and scanty in that part, which is our principal inquiry concerning them: and there are scarce any of the names of substances, let the idea it is applied

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to be what it will, of which we can generally and with certainty pronounce, that it has or has not this or that other quality belonging to it, and conſtantly co-exiſting or inconſiſtent with that idea, wherever it is to be found.

What is requiſite for our knowledge of ſubſtances.

§. 14. Before we can have any tolerable knowledge of this kind, we muſt firſt know what changes the primary qualities of one body do regularly produce in the primary qualities of another, and how. Secondly, we muſt know what primary qualities of any body produce certain ſenſations or ideas in us. This is in truth no leſs than to know all the effects of matter, under its divers modifications of bulk, figure, coheſion of parts, motion and reſt. Which, I think every body will allow, is utterly impoſſible to be known by us without revelation. Nor if it were revealed to us, what ſort of figure, bulk, and motion of corpuſcles, would produce in us the ſenſation of a yellow colour, and what ſort of figure, bulk, and texture of parts, in the ſuperficies of any body, were fit to give ſuch corpuſcles their due motion to produce that colour; would that be enough to make univerſal propoſitions with certainty, concerning the ſeveral ſorts of them, unleſs we had faculties acute enough to perceive the preciſe bulk, figure, texture, and motion of bodies in thoſe minute parts, by which they operate on our ſenſes, ſo that we might by thoſe frame our abſtract ideas of them. I have mentioned here only corporeal ſubſtances, whoſe operations ſeem to lie more level to our underſtandings: for as to the operations of ſpirits, both their thinking and moving of bodies, we at firſt ſight find ourſelves at a loſs; though perhaps, when we have applied our thoughts a little nearer to the conſideration of bodies, and their operations, and examined how far our notions, even in theſe, reach, with any clearneſs, beyond ſenſible matter of fact, we ſhall be bound to confeſs, that even in theſe too our diſcoveries amount to very little beyond perfect ignorance and incapacity.

Whilſt our ideas of ſubſtances con-

§. 15. This is evident, the abſtract complex ideas of ſubſtances, for which their general names ſtand, not comprehending their

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tain not their real constitutions, we can make but few general certain propositions concerning them.

real constitutions, can afford us very little universal certainty. Because our ideas of them are not made up of that, on which those qualities we observe in them, and would inform ourselves about, do depend, or with which they have any certain connexion: v. g. let the ideas to which we give the name man, be, as it commonly is, a body of the ordinary shape, with sense, voluntary motion, and reason joined to it. This being the abstract idea, and consequently the essence of our species man, we can make but very few general certain propositions concerning man, standing for such an idea. Because not knowing the real constitution on which sensation, power of motion, and reasoning, with that peculiar shape, depend, and whereby they are united together in the same subject, there are very few other qualities, with which we can perceive them to have a necessary connexion: and therefore we cannot with certainty affirm, that all men sleep by intervals; that no man can be nourished by wood or stones; that all men will be poisoned by hemlock: because these ideas have no connexion nor repugnancy with this our nominal essence of man, with this abstract idea that name stands for. We must, in these and the like, appeal to trial in particular subjects, which can reach but a little way. We must content ourselves with probability in the rest; but can have no general certainty, whilst our specific idea of man contains not that real constitution, which is the root, wherein all his inseparable qualities are united, and from whence they flow. Whilst our idea, the word man stands for, is only an imperfect collection of some sensible qualities and powers in him, there is no discernible connexion or repugnance between our specific idea, and the operation of either the parts of hemlock or stones, upon his constitution. There are animals that safely eat hemlock, and others that are nourished by wood and stones: but as long as we want ideas of those real constitutions of different sorts of animals, whereon these and the like qualities and powers depend, we must not hope to reach certainty in universal propositions

positions concerning them. Those few ideas only, which have a discernible connexion with our nominal essence, or any part of it, can afford us such propositions. But these are so few, and of so little moment, that we may justly look on our certain general knowledge of substances, as almost none at all.

Wherein lies the general certainty of propositions.

§. 16. To conclude, general propositions, of what kind soever, are then only capable of certainty, when the terms used in them stand for such ideas, whose agreement or disagreement, as there expressed, is capable to be discovered by us. And we are then certain of their truth or falshood, when we perceive the ideas the terms stand for to agree or not agree, according as they are affirmed or denied one of another. Whence we may take notice, that general certainty is never to be found but in our ideas. Whenever we go to seek it elsewhere in experiment, or observations without us, our knowledge goes not beyond particulars. It is the contemplation of our own abstract ideas that alone is able to afford us general knowledge.

CHAP. VII.

Of Maxims.

They are self-evident.

§. 1. THERE are a sort of propositions, which under the name of maxims and axioms have passed for principles of science; and because they are self-evident, have been supposed innate, although no-body (that I know) ever went about to show the reason and foundation of their clearness or cogency. It may however be worth while to inquire into the reason of their evidence, and see whether it be peculiar to them alone, and also examine how far they influence and govern our other knowledge.

Wherein that self-evidence consists.

§. 2. Knowledge, as has been shown, consists in the perception of the agreement or disagreement of ideas: now where that

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agreement or disagreement is perceived immediately by itself, without the intervention or help of any other, there our knowledge is self-evident. This will appear to be so to any one, who will but consider any of those propositions, which, without any proof, he assents to at first sight: for in all of them he will find, that the reason of his assent is from that agreement or disagreement, which the mind, by an immediate comparing them, finds in those ideas answering the affirmation or negation in the proposition.

Self-evidence not peculiar to received axioms.

§. 3. This being so, in the next place let us consider, whether this self-evidence be peculiar only to those propositions, which commonly pass under the name of maxims, and have the dignity of axioms allowed them. And here it is plain, that several other truths, not allowed to be axioms, partake equally with them in this self-evidence. This we shall see, if we go over these several sorts of agreement or disagreement of ideas, which I have above-mentioned, viz. identity, relation, co-existence, and real existence; which will discover to us, that not only those few propositions, which have had the credit of maxims, are self-evident, but a great many, even almost an infinite number of other propositions are such.

1. As to identity and diversity, all propositions are equally self-evident.

§. 4. For, first the immediate perception of the agreement or disagreement of identity, being founded in the mind's having distinct ideas, this affords us as many self-evident propositions, as we have distinct ideas. Every one that has any knowledge at all, has, as the foundation of it, various and distinct ideas: and it is the first act of the mind (without which it can never be capable of any knowledge) to know every one of its ideas by itself, and distinguish it from others. Every one finds in himself, that he knows the ideas he has; that he knows also, when any one is in his understanding, and what it is; and that when more than one are there, he knows them distinctly and unconfusedly one from another. Which always being so (it being impossible but that he should perceive what he perceives) he can never be in doubt when any idea is

is in his mind, that it is there, and is that idea it is; and that two diſtinct ideas, when they are in his mind, are there, and are not one and the ſame idea. So that all ſuch affirmations and negations are made without any poſſibility of doubt, uncertainty, or heſitation, and muſt neceſſarily be aſſented to as ſoon as underſtood; that is, as ſoon as we have in our minds determined ideas, which the terms in the propoſition ſtand for. And therefore whenever the mind with attention conſiders any propoſition, ſo as to perceive the two ideas ſignified by the terms, and affirmed or denied one of the other, to be the ſame or different; it is preſently and infallibly certain of the truth of ſuch a propoſition, and this equally, whether theſe propoſitions be in terms ſtanding for more general ideas, or ſuch as are leſs ſo, v. g. whether the general idea of being be affirmed of itſelf, as in this propoſition, whatſoever is, is; or a more particular idea be affirmed of itſelf, as a man is a man; or, whatſoever is white is white; or whether the idea of being in general be denied of not being, which is the only (if I may ſo call it) idea different from it, as in this other propoſition, it is impoſſible for the ſame thing to be, and not to be; or any idea of any particular being be denied of another different from it, as, a man is not a horſe; red is not blue. The difference of the ideas, as ſoon as the terms are underſtood, makes the truth of the propoſition preſently viſible, and that with an equal certainty and eaſineſs in the leſs as well as the more general propoſitions, and all for the ſame reaſon, viz. becauſe the mind perceives, in any ideas that it has, the ſame idea to be the ſame with itſelf; and two different ideas to be different, and not the ſame. And this it is equally certain of, whether theſe ideas be more or leſs general, abſtract, and comprehenſive. It is not therefore alone to theſe two general propoſitions, whatſoever is, is; and it is impoſſible for the ſame thing to be, and not to be; that this ſort of ſelf-evidence belongs by any peculiar right. The perception of being, or not being, belongs no more to theſe vague ideas, ſignified by the terms whatſoever and thing, than it does to any other ideas. Theſe two general maxims, amounting to no more in

ſhort but this, that the ſame is the ſame, and ſame is not different, are truths known in more particular inſtances, as well as in thoſe general maxims, and known alſo in particular inſtances, before theſe general maxims are ever thought on, and draw all their force from the diſcernment of the mind employed about particular ideas. There is nothing more viſible than that the mind, without the help of any proof, or reflection on either of theſe general propoſitions, perceives ſo clearly, and knows ſo certainly, that the idea of white is the idea of white, and not the idea of blue; and that the idea of white, when it is in the mind, is there, and is not abſent; that the conſideration of theſe axioms can add nothing to the evidence or certainty of its knowledge. Juſt ſo it is (as every one may experiment in himſelf) in all the ideas a man has in his mind: he knows each to be itſelf, and not to be another; and to be in his mind, and not away when it is there, with a certainty that cannot be greater; and therefore the truth of no general propoſition can be known with a greater certainty, nor add any thing to this. So that in reſpect of identity, our intuitive knowledge reaches as far as our ideas. And we are capable of making as many ſelf-evident propoſitions, as we have names for diſtinct ideas. And I appeal to every one's own mind, whether this propoſition, A circle is a circle, be not as ſelf-evident a propoſition, as that conſiſting of more general terms, whatſoever is, is; and again, whether this propoſition, blue is not red, be not a propoſition that the mind can no more doubt of, as ſoon as it underſtands the words, than it does of that axiom, It is impoſſible for the ſame thing to be, and not to be; and ſo of all the like.

2. In co-exiſtence we have few ſelf-evident propoſitions.

§. 5. Secondly, as to co-exiſtence, or ſuch neceſſary connexion between two ideas, that, in the ſubject where one of them is ſuppoſed, there the other muſt neceſſarily be alſo: of ſuch agreement or diſagreement as this, the mind has an immediate perception but in very few of them. And therefore in this ſort we have but very little intuitive knowledge; nor are there to be

found very many propositions that are self-evident, though some there are; v. g. the idea of filling a place equal to the contents of its superficies, being annexed to our idea of body, I think it is a self-evident proposition, that two bodies cannot be in the same place.

3. In other relations we may have.

§. 6. Thirdly, as to the relations of modes, mathematicians have framed many axioms concerning that one relation of equality. As, equals taken from equals, the remainder will be equal; which, with the rest of that kind, however they are received for maxims by the mathematicians, and are unquestionable truths; yet, I think, that any one who considers them will not find, that they have a clearer self-evidence than these, that one and one are equal to two; that if you take from the five fingers of one hand two, and from the five fingers of the other hand two, the remaining numbers will be equal. These and a thousand other such propositions may be found in numbers, which, at the very first hearing, force the assent, and carry with them an equal, if not greater clearness, than those mathematical axioms.

4. Concerning real existence we have none.

§. 7. Fourthly, as to real existence, since that has no connexion with any other of our ideas, but that of ourselves, and of a first being, we have in that, concerning the real existence of all other beings, not so much as demonstrative, much less a self-evident knowledge; and therefore concerning those there are no maxims.

These axioms do not much influence our other knowledge.

§. 8. In the next place let us consider, what influence these received maxims have upon the other parts of our knowledge. The rules established in the schools, that all reasonings are "ex præcognitis & præconcessis," seem to lay the foundation of all other knowledge in these maxims, and to suppose them to be præcognita; whereby, I think, are meant these two things: first, that these axioms are those truths that are first known to the mind. And, secondly, that upon them the other parts of our knowledge depend.

Because they are not the truths we first knew.

§. 9. First, that they are not the truths first known to the mind is evident to experience, as we have shown in another place, book i. chap. ii. Who perceives not that a child certainly knows that a stranger is not its mother; that its sucking-bottle is not the rod, long before he knows that it is impossible for the same thing to be and not to be? And how many truths are there about numbers, which it is obvious to observe, that the mind is perfectly acquainted with, and fully convinced of, before it ever thought on these general maxims, to which mathematicians, in their arguings, do sometimes refer them? Whereof the reason is very plain: for that which makes the mind assent to such propositions, being nothing else but the perception it has of the agreement or disagreement of its ideas, according as it finds them affirmed or denied one of another, in words it understands; and every idea being known to be what it is, and every two distinct ideas being known not to be the same; it must necessarily follow, that such self-evident truths must be first known, which consist of ideas that are first in the mind: and the ideas first in the mind, it is evident, are those of particular things, from whence, by slow degrees, the understanding proceeds to some few general ones; which being taken from the ordinary and familiar objects of sense, are settled in the mind, with general names to them. Thus particular ideas are first received and distinguished, and so knowledge got about them; and next to them, the less general or specific, which are next to particular: for abstract ideas are not so obvious or easy to children, or the yet unexercised mind, as particular ones. If they seem so to grown men, it is only because by constant and familiar use they are made so. For when we nicely reflect upon them, we shall find, that general ideas are fictions and contrivances of the mind, that carry difficulty with them, and do not so easily offer themselves, as we are apt to imagine. For example, does it not require some pains and skill to form the general idea of a triangle (which is yet none of the most abstract, comprehensive, and difficult), for it must be neither oblique, nor rectangle,

angle, neither equilateral, equicrural, nor ſcalenon; but all and none of theſe at once. In effect, it is ſomething imperfect, that cannot exiſt; an idea wherein ſome parts of ſeveral different and inconſiſtent ideas are put together. It is true, the mind, in this imperfect ſtate, has need of ſuch ideas, and makes all the haſte to them it can, for the conveniency of communication and enlargement of knowledge; to both which it is naturally very much inclined. But yet one has reaſon to ſuſpect ſuch ideas are marks of our imperfection; at leaſt this is enough to ſhow, that the moſt abſtract and general ideas are not thoſe that the mind is firſt and moſt eaſily acquainted with, not ſuch as its earlieſt knowledge is converſant about.

Because on them, the other parts of our knowledge do not depend.

§. 10. Secondly, from what has been ſaid it plainly follows, that theſe magnified maxims are not the principles and foundations of all our other knowledge. For if there be a great many other truths, which have as much ſelf-evidence as they, and a great many that we know before them, it is impoſſible they ſhould be the principles, from which we deduce all other truths. Is it impoſſible to know that one and two are equal to three, but by virtue of this, or ſome ſuch axiom, viz. the whole is equal to all its parts taken together? Many a one knows that one and two are equal to three, without having heard, or thought on that, or any other axiom, by which it might be proved: and knows it as certainly, as any other man knows, that the whole is equal to all its parts, or any other maxim, and all from the ſame reaſon of ſelf-evidence; the equality of thoſe ideas being as viſible and certain to him without that, or any other axiom, as with it, it needing no proof to make it perceived. Nor after the knowledge, that the whole is equal to all its parts, does he know that one and two are equal to three, better or more certainly than he did before. For if there be any odds in thoſe ideas, the whole and parts are more obſcure, or at leaſt more difficult to be ſettled in the mind, than thoſe of one, two, and three. And indeed, I think, I may aſk theſe men, who will needs have all knowledge, beſides

thoſe general principles themſelves, to depend on general, innate, and ſelf-evident principles: what principle is requiſite to prove, that one and one are two, that two and two are four, that three times two are ſix? Which being known without any proof, do evince, that either all knowledge does not depend on certain præcognita or general maxims, called principles, or elſe that theſe are principles; and if theſe are to be counted principles, a great part of numeration will be ſo. To which if we add all the ſelf-evident propoſitions, which may be made about all our diſtinct ideas, principles will be almoſt infinite, at leaſt innumerable, which men arrive to the knowledge of, at different ages; and a great many of theſe innate principles they never come to know all their lives. But whether they come in view of the mind, earlier or later, this is true of them, that they are all known by their native evidence, are wholly independent, receive no light, nor are capable of any proof one from another; much leſs the more particular, from the more general; or the more ſimple, from the more compounded: the more ſimple, and leſs abſtract, being the moſt familiar, and the eaſier and earlier apprehended. But which ever be the cleareſt ideas, the evidence and certainty of all ſuch propoſitions is in this, that a man ſees the ſame idea to be the ſame idea, and infallibly perceives two different ideas to be different ideas. For when a man has in his underſtanding the ideas of one and of two, the idea of yellow, and the idea of blue, he cannot but certainly know, that the idea of one is the idea of one, and not the idea of two; and that the idea of yellow is the idea of yellow, and not the idea of blue. For a man cannot confound the ideas in his mind, which he has diſtinct: that would be to have them confuſed and diſtinct at the ſame time, which is a contradiction: and to have none diſtinct is to have no uſe of our faculties, to have no knowledge at all. And therefore what idea ſoever is affirmed of itſelf, or whatſoever two entire diſtinct ideas are denied one of another, the mind cannot but aſſent to ſuch a propoſition as infallibly true, as ſoon as it underſtands the terms, without heſitation or

need

need of proof, or regarding those made in more general terms, and called maxims.

§. 11. What shall we then say? Are these general maxims of no use? By no means; though perhaps their use is not that, which it is commonly taken to be. But since doubting in the least of what hath been by some men ascribed to these maxims may be apt to be cried out against, as overturning the foundations of all the sciences; it may be worth while to consider them, with respect to other parts of our knowledge, and examine more particularly to what purposes they serve, and to what not.

What use these general maxims have.

1. It is evident from what has been already said, that they are of no use to prove or confirm less general self-evident propositions.

2. It is as plain that they are not, nor have been the foundations whereon any science hath been built. There is, I know, a great deal of talk, propagated from scholastic men, of sciences and the maxims on which they are built: but it has been my ill luck never to meet with any such sciences; much less any one built upon these two maxims, what is, is; and it is impossible for the same thing to be, and not to be. And I would be glad to be shown where any such science, erected upon these, or any other general axioms, is to be found: and should be obliged to any one who would lay before me the frame and system of any science so built on these or any such-like maxims, that could not be shown to stand as firm without any consideration of them. I ask, whether these general maxims have not the same use in the study of divinity, and in theological questions, that they have in other sciences? They serve here too to silence wranglers, and put an end to dispute. But I think that nobody will therefore say, that the christian religion is built upon these maxims, or that the knowledge we have of it is derived from these principles. It is from revelation we have received it, and without revelation these maxims had never been able to help us to it. When we find out an idea, by whose intervention we discover the connexion of two others, this is a revelation from

God to us, by the voice of reason. For we then come to know a truth that we did not know before. When God declares any truth to us, this is a revelation to us by the voice of his spirit, and we are advanced in our knowledge. But in neither of these do we receive our light or knowledge from maxims. But in the one the things themselves afford it, and we see the truth in them by perceiving their agreement or disagreement. In the other, God himself affords it immediately to us, and we see the truth of what he says in his unerring veracity.

3. They are not of use to help men forward in the advancement of sciences, or new discoveries of yet unknown truths. Mr. Newton, in his never enough to be admired book, has demonstrated several propositions, which are so many new truths, before unknown to the world, and are farther advances in mathematical knowledge: but, for the discovery of these, it was not the general maxims, what is, is; or, the whole is bigger than a part; or the like; that helped him. These were not the clues that led him into the discovery of the truth and certainty of those propositions. Nor was it by them that he got the knowledge of those demonstrations; but by finding out intermediate ideas, that showed the agreement or disagreement of the ideas, as expressed in the propositions he demonstrated. This is the greatest exercise and improvement of human understanding in the enlarging of knowledge, and advancing the sciences; wherein they are far enough from receiving any help from the contemplation of these, or the like magnified maxims. Would those who have this traditional admiration of these propositions, that they think no step can be made in knowledge without the support of an axiom, no stone laid in the building of the sciences without a general maxim, but distinguish between the method of acquiring knowledge, and of communicating; between the method of raising any science and that of teaching it to others as far as it is advanced; they would see that those general maxims were not the foundations on which the first discoverers raised their admirable structures, nor the keys that unlocked and opened those secrets of knowledge. Though afterwards, when schools were erected,

erected, and ſciences had their profeſſors to teach what others had found out, they often made uſe of maxims, i. e. laid down certain propoſitions which were ſelf-evident, or to be received for true; which being ſettled in the minds of their ſcholars, as unqueſtionable verities, they on occaſion made uſe of, to convince them of truths in particular inſtances that were not ſo familiar to their minds as thoſe general axioms which had before been inculcated to them, and carefully ſettled in their minds. Though theſe particular inſtances, when well reflected on, are no leſs ſelf-evident to the underſtanding than the general maxims brought to confirm them: and it was in thoſe particular inſtances that the firſt diſcoverer found the truth, without the help of the general maxims: and ſo may any one elſe do, who with attention conſiders them.

To come therefore to the uſe that is made of maxims.

1. They are of uſe, as has been obſerved, in the ordinary methods of teaching ſciences as far as they are advanced; but of little or none in advancing them farther.

2. They are of uſe in diſputes, for the ſilencing of obſtinate wranglers, and bringing thoſe conteſts to ſome concluſion. Whether a need of them to that end came not in, in the manner following, I crave leave to inquire. The ſchools having made diſputation the touchſtone of men's abilities, and the criterion of knowledge, adjudged victory to him that kept the field: and he that had the laſt word, was concluded to have the better of the argument, if not of the cauſe. But becauſe by this means there was like to be no deciſion between ſkilful combatants, whilſt one never failed of a medius terminus to prove any propoſition; and the other could as conſtantly, without, or with a diſtinction, deny the major or minor; to prevent, as much as could be, running out of diſputes into an endleſs train of ſyllogiſms, certain general propoſitions, moſt of them indeed ſelf-evident, were introduced into the ſchools; which being ſuch as all men allowed and agreed in, were looked on as general meaſures of truth, and ſerved inſtead of principles (where the diſputants had not lain down any other between

them) beyond which there was no going, and which muſt not be receded from by either ſide. And thus theſe maxims getting the name of principles, beyond which men in diſpute could not retreat, were by miſtake taken to be originals and ſources, from whence all knowledge began, and the foundations whereon the ſciences were built. Becauſe when in their diſputes they came to any of theſe, they ſtopped there, and went no farther, the matter was determined. But how much this is a miſtake, hath been already ſhown.

This method of the ſchools, which have been thought the fountains of knowledge, introduced, as I ſuppoſe, the like uſe of theſe maxims, into a great part of converſation out of the ſchools, to ſtop the mouths of cavillers, whom any one is excuſed from arguing any longer with, when they deny theſe general ſelf-evident principles received by all reaſonable men, who have once thought of them: but yet their uſe herein is but to put an end to wrangling. They in truth, when urged in ſuch caſes, teach nothing: that is already done by the intermediate ideas made uſe of in the debate, whoſe connexion may be ſeen without the help of thoſe maxims, and ſo the truth known before the maxim is produced, and the argument brought to a firſt principle. Men would give off a wrong argument before it came to that, if in their diſputes they propoſed to themſelves the finding and embracing of truth, and not a conteſt for victory. And thus maxims have their uſe to put a ſtop to their perverſeneſs, whoſe ingenuity ſhould have yielded ſooner. But the method of the ſchools having allowed and encouraged men to oppoſe and reſiſt evident truth till they are baffled, i. e. till they are reduced to contradict themſelves or ſome eſtabliſhed principle; it is no wonder that they ſhould not in civil converſation be aſhamed of that, which in the ſchools is counted a virtue and a glory; obſtinately to maintain that ſide of the queſtion they have choſen, whether true or falſe, to the laſt extremity, even after conviction. A ſtrange way to attain truth and knowledge, and that which I think the rational part of mankind, not corrupted by education, could ſcarce believe ſhould ever be admitted

amongſt

amongſt the lovers of truth, and ſtudents of religion or nature; or introduced into the ſeminaries of thoſe who are to propagate the truths of religion or philoſophy amongſt the ignorant and unconvinced. How much ſuch a way of learning is like to turn young men's minds from the ſincere ſearch and love of truth; nay, and to make them doubt whether there is any ſuch thing, or at leaſt worth the adhering to, I ſhall not now inquire. This I think, that bating thoſe places, which brought the peripatetic philoſophy into their ſchools, where it continued many ages, without teaching the world any thing but the art of wrangling; theſe maxims were no where thought the foundations on which the ſciences were built, nor the great helps to the advancement of knowledge.

As to theſe general maxims therefore, they are, as I have ſaid, of great uſe in diſputes, to ſtop the mouths of wranglers; but not of much uſe to the diſcovery of unknown truths, or to help the mind forwards in its ſearch after knowledge. For who ever began to build his knowledge on this general propoſition, what is, is; or, it is impoſſible for the ſame thing to be, and not to be: and from either of theſe, as from a principle of ſcience, deduced a ſyſtem of uſeful knowledge? Wrong opinions often involving contradictions, one of theſe maxims, as a touch-ſtone, may ſerve well to ſhow whither they lead. But yet, however fit to lay open the abſurdity or miſtake of a man's reaſoning or opinion, they are of very little uſe for enlightening the underſtanding: and it will not be found, that the mind receives much help from them in its progreſs in knowledge; which would be neither leſs, nor leſs certain, were theſe two general propoſitions never thought on. It is true, as I have ſaid, they ſometimes ſerve in argumentation to ſtop a wrangler's mouth, by ſhowing the abſurdity of what he ſaith, and by expoſing him to the ſhame of contradicting what all the world knows, and he himſelf cannot but own to be true. But it is one thing to ſhow a man that he is in an error; and another to put him in poſſeſſion of truth: and I would fain know what truths theſe two propoſitions are able to teach,

teach, and by their influence make us know, which we did not know before, or could not know without them. Let us reason from them as well as we can, they are only about identical predications, and influence, if any at all, none but such. Each particular proposition concerning identity or diversity, is as clearly and certainly known in itself, if attended to, as either of these general ones: only these general ones, as serving in all cases, are therefore more inculcated and insisted on. As to other less general maxims, many of them are no more than bare verbal propositions, and teach us nothing but the respect and import of names one to another. "The whole is equal to all its parts;" what real truth, I beseech you, does it teach us? What more is contained in that maxim than what the signification of the word totum, or the whole, does of itself import? And he that knows that the word whole stands for what is made up of all its parts, knows very little less, than that the whole is equal to all its parts. And upon the same ground, I think that this proposition, a hill is higher than a valley, and several the like, may also pass for maxims. But yet masters of mathematics, when they would, as teachers of what they know, initiate others in that science, do not without reason place this, and some other such maxims, at the entrance of their systems; that their scholars, having in the beginning perfectly acquainted their thoughts with these propositions made in such general terms, may be used to make such reflections, and have these more general propositions, as formed rules and sayings, ready to apply to all particular cases. Not that if they be equally weighed, they are more clear and evident than the particular instances they are brought to confirm; but that, being more familiar to the mind, the very naming them is enough to satisfy the understanding. But this, I say, is more from our custom of using them, and the establishment they have got in our minds, by our often thinking of them, than from the different evidence of the things. But before custom has settled methods of thinking and reasoning in our minds, I am apt to imagine it is quite otherwise; and that the child, when a part of his apple is taken away, knows it better in that particular instance, than by this general proposition,

ſition, the whole is equal to all its parts; and that if one of theſe have need to be confirmed to him by the other, the general has more need to be let into his mind by the particular, than the particular by the general. For in particulars our knowledge begins, and ſo ſpreads itſelf by degrees to generals. Though afterwards the mind takes the quite contrary courſe, and having drawn its knowledge into as general propoſitions as it can, makes thoſe familiar to its thoughts, and accuſtoms itſelf to have recourſe to them, as to the ſtandards of truth and falſhood. By which familiar uſe of them, as rules to meaſure the truth of other propoſitions, it comes in time to be thought, that more particular propoſitions have their truth and evidence from their conformity to theſe more general ones, which in diſcourſe and argumentation are ſo frequently urged, and conſtantly admitted. And this I think to be the reaſon why amongſt ſo many ſelf-evident propoſitions, the moſt general only have had the title of maxims.

Maxims, if care be not taken in the uſe of words, may prove contradictions.

§. 12. One thing farther, I think, it may not be amiſs to obſerve concerning theſe general maxims, that they are ſo far from improving or eſtabliſhing our minds in true knowledge, that if our notions be wrong, looſe or unſteady, and we reſign up our thoughts to the ſound of words, rather than fix them on ſettled determined ideas of things; I ſay, theſe general maxims will ſerve to confirm us in miſtakes; and in ſuch a way of uſe of words, which is moſt common, will ſerve to prove contradictions: v. g. he that, with Des Cartes, ſhall frame in his mind an idea of what he calls body to be nothing but extenſion, may eaſily demonſtrate that there is no vacuum, i. e. no ſpace void of body, by this maxim, what is, is. For the idea to which he annexes the name body, being bare extenſion, his knowledge, that ſpace cannot be without body, is certain. For he knows his own idea of extenſion clearly and diſtinctly, and knows that it is what it is, and not another idea, though it be called by theſe three names, extenſion, body, ſpace. Which three words, ſtanding for one and the ſame idea, may no doubt, with

the ſame evidence and certainty, be affirmed one of another, as each of itſelf: and it is as certain, that whilſt I uſe them all to ſtand for one and the ſame idea, this predication is as true and identical in its ſignification, that ſpace is body, as this predication is true and identical, that body is body, both in ſignification and ſound.

Inſtance in vacuum.

§. 13. But if another ſhould come, and make to himſelf another idea, different from Des Cartes's, of the thing, which yet, with Des Cartes, he calls by the ſame name body; and make his idea, which he expreſſes by the word body, to be of a thing that hath both extenſion and ſolidity together; he will as eaſily demonſtrate, that there may be a vacuum, or ſpace without a body, as Des Cartes demonſtrated the contrary. Becauſe the idea to which he gives the name ſpace being barely the ſimple one of extenſion; and the idea to which he gives the name body, being the complex idea of extenſion and reſiſtibility, or ſolidity, together in the ſame ſubject; theſe two ideas are not exactly one and the ſame, but in the underſtanding as diſtinct as the ideas of one and two, white and black, or as of corporeity and humanity, if I may uſe thoſe barbarous terms: and therefore the predication of them in our minds, or in words ſtanding for them, is not identical, but the negation of them one of another; viz. this propoſition, extenſion or ſpace is not body, is as true and evidently certain, as this maxim, it is impoſſible for the ſame thing to be, and not to be, can make any propoſition.

They prove not the exiſtence of things without us.

§. 14. But yet though both theſe propoſitions (as you ſee) may be equally demonſtrated, viz. that there may be a vacuum, and that there cannot be a vacuum, by theſe two certain principles, viz. what is, is; and the ſame thing cannot be, and not be: yet neither of theſe principles will ſerve to prove to us, that any, or what bodies do exiſt: for that we are left to our ſenſes, to diſcover to us as far as they can. Thoſe univerſal and ſelf-evident principles, being only our conſtant, clear, and diſtinct knowledge of our own ideas, more general or comprehenſive, can aſſure us of nothing that

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paſſes without the mind; their certainty is founded only upon the knowledge we have of each idea by itſelf, and of its diſtinction from others; about which we cannot be miſtaken whilſt they are in our minds, though we may, and often are miſtaken when we retain the names without the ideas; or uſe them confuſedly ſometimes for one, and ſometimes for another idea. In which caſes the force of theſe axioms, reaching only to the ſound, and not the ſignification of the words, ſerves only to lead us into confuſion, miſtake, and errour. It is to ſhow men, that theſe maxims, however cried up for the great guards of truth, will not ſecure them from errour in a careleſs looſe uſe of their words, that I have made this remark. In all that is here ſuggeſted concerning their little uſe for the improvement of knowledge, or dangerous uſe in undetermined ideas, I have been far enough from ſaying or intending they ſhould be laid aſide, as ſome have been too forward to charge me. I affirm them to be truths, ſelf-evident truths; and ſo cannot be laid aſide. As far as their influence will reach, it is in vain to endeavour, nor will I attempt to abridge it. But yet, without any injury to truth or knowledge, I may have reaſon to think their uſe is not anſwerable to the great ſtreſs which ſeems to be laid on them; and I may warn men not to make an ill uſe of them, for the confirming themſelves in errours.

Their application dangerous about complex ideas.

§. 15. But let them be of what uſe they will in verbal propoſitions, they cannot diſcover or prove to us the leaſt knowledge of the nature of ſubſtances, as they are found and exiſt without us, any farther than grounded on experience. And though the conſequence of theſe two propoſitions, called principles, be very clear, and their uſe not dangerous or hurtful, in the probation of ſuch things, wherein there is no need at all of them for proof, but ſuch as are clear by themſelves without them, viz. where our ideas are determined, and known by the names that ſtand for them: yet when theſe principles, viz. what is, is; and it is impoſſible for the ſame thing to be, and not to be; are made uſe of in the probation of propoſitions, wherein are words

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ſtanding for complex ideas; v. g. man, horſe, gold, virtue; there they are of infinite danger, and moſt commonly make men receive and retain falſhood for manifeſt truth, and uncertainty for demonſtration: upon which follow error, obſtinacy, and all the miſchiefs that can happen, from wrong reaſoning. The reaſon whereof is not, that theſe principles are leſs true, or of leſs force in proving propoſitions made of terms ſtanding for complex ideas, than where the propoſitions are about ſimple ideas. But becauſe men miſtake generally, thinking that where the ſame terms are preſerved, the propoſitions are about the ſame things, though the ideas they ſtand for are in truth different; therefore theſe maxims are made uſe of to ſupport thoſe, which in ſound and appearance are contradictory propoſitions; as is clear in the demonſtrations above-mentioned about a vacuum. So that whilſt men take words for things, as uſually they do, theſe maxims may and do commonly ſerve to prove contradictory propoſitions: as ſhall yet be farther made manifeſt.

Inſtance in man.

§. 16. For inſtance, let man be that concerning which you would by theſe firſt principles demonſtrate any thing, and we ſhall ſee, that ſo far as demonſtration is by theſe principles, it is only verbal, and gives us no certain univerſal true propoſition, or knowledge of any being exiſting without us. Firſt, a child having framed the idea of a man, it is probable that his idea is juſt like that picture, which the painter makes of the viſible appearances joined together; and ſuch a complication of ideas together in his underſtanding, makes up the ſingle complex idea, which he calls man, whereof white or fleſh-colour in England being one, the child can demonſtrate to you that a negroe is not a man, becauſe white colour was one of the conſtant ſimple ideas of the complex idea he calls man: and therefore he can demonſtrate by the principle, it is impoſſible for the ſame thing to be, and not to be, that a negroe is not a man; the foundation of his certainty being not that univerſal propoſition, which perhaps he never heard nor thought of, but the clear diſtinct perception he hath of his own ſimple ideas of black

and

and white, which he cannot be perſuaded to take, nor can ever miſtake one for another, whether he knows that maxim or no: and to this child, or any one who hath ſuch an idea, which he calls man, can you never demonſtrate that a man hath a ſoul, becauſe his idea of man includes no ſuch notion or idea in it. And therefore to him, the principle of what is, is, proves not this matter; but it depends upon collection and obſervation, by which he is to make his complex idea called man.

§. 17. Secondly, another that hath gone farther in framing and collecting the idea he calls man, and to the outward ſhape adds laughter and rational diſcourſe, may demonſtrate that infants and changelings are no men, by this maxim, it is impoſſible for the ſame thing to be, and not to be: and I have diſcourſed with very rational men, who have actually denied that they are men.

§. 18. Thirdly, perhaps another makes up the complex idea which he calls man, only out of the ideas of body in general, and the powers of language and reaſon, and leaves out the ſhape wholly: this man is able to demonſtrate, that a man may have no hands, but be quadrupes, neither of thoſe being included in his idea of man; and in whatever body or ſhape he found ſpeech and reaſon joined, that was a man: becauſe having a clear knowledge of ſuch a complex idea, it is certain that what is, is.

Little uſe of theſe maxims in proofs where we have clear and diſtinct ideas.

§. 19. So that, if rightly conſidered, I think we may ſay, that where our ideas are determined in our minds, and have annexed to them by us known and ſteady names under thoſe ſettled determinations, there is little need or no uſe at all of theſe maxims, to prove the agreement or diſagreement of any of them. He that cannot diſcern the truth or falſhood of ſuch propoſitions, without the help of theſe and the like maxims, will not be helped by theſe maxims to do it: ſince he cannot be ſuppoſed to know the truth of theſe maxims themſelves without proof, if he cannot know the truth of others without proof, which are as ſelf-evident as theſe. Upon this ground it is, that intuitive knowledge neither requires nor admits

any

any proof, one part of it more than another. He that will suppose it does, takes away the foundation of all knowledge and certainty: and he that needs any proof to make him certain, and give his assent to this proposition, that two are equal to two, will also have need of a proof to make him admit, that what is, is. He that needs a probation to convince him, that two are not three, that white is not black, that a triangle is not a circle, &c. or any other two determined distinct ideas are not one and the same, will need also a demonstration to convince him, that it is impossible for the same thing to be, and not to be.

Their use dangerous where our ideas are confused.

§. 20. And as these maxims are of little use, where we have determined ideas, so they are, as I have showed, of dangerous use, where our ideas are not determined; and where we use words that are not annexed to determined ideas, but such as are of a loose and wandering signification, sometimes standing for one, and sometimes for another idea: from which follow mistake and errour, which these maxims (brought as proofs to establish propositions, wherein the terms stand for undetermined ideas) do by their authority confirm and rivet.

CHAP. VIII.

Of Trifling Propositions.

Some propositions bring no increase to our knowledge.

§. 1. WHETHER the maxims treated of in the foregoing chapter be of that use to real knowledge, as is generally supposed, I leave to be considered. This, I think, may confidently be affirmed, that there are universal propositions; which though they be certainly true, yet they add no light to our understandings, bring no increase to our knowledge. Such are,

§. 2.

§. 2. First, all purely identical propositions. These obviously, and at first blush, appear to contain no instruction in them. For when we affirm the said term of itself, whether it be barely verbal, or whether it contains any clear and real idea, it shows us nothing but what we must certainly know before, whether such a proposition be either made by or proposed to us. Indeed that most general one, what is, is, may serve sometimes to show a man the absurdity he is guilty of, when by circumlocution, or equivocal terms, he would, in particular instances, deny the same thing of itself; because no-body will so openly bid defiance to common sense, as to affirm visible and direct contradictions in plain words; or if he does, a man is excused if he breaks off any farther discourse with him. But yet, I think, I may say, that neither that received maxim, nor any other identical proposition teaches us any thing: and though in such kind of propositions, this great and magnified maxim, boasted to be the foundation of demonstration, may be and often is made use of to confirm them; yet all it proves amounts to no more than this, that the same word may with great certainty be affirmed of itself, without any doubt of the truth of any such proposition; and let me add also, without any real knowledge.

As first, identical propositions.

§. 3. For at this rate, any very ignorant person, who can but make a proposition, and knows what he means when he says, ay or no, may make a million of propositions, of whose truths he may be infallibly certain, and yet not know one thing in the world thereby; v. g. what is a soul, is a soul; or a soul is a soul; a spirit is a spirit; a fetiche is a fetiche, &c. These all being equivalent to this proposition, viz. what is, is, i. e. what hath existence, hath existence; or who hath a soul, hath a soul. What is this more than trifling with words? It is but like a monkey shifting his oyster from one hand to the other; and had he but words, might, no doubt, have said, "oyster in right hand is subject, and oyster in left hand is predicate:" and so might have made a self-evident proposition of oyster, i. e. oyster is oyster; and yet, with all this, not have been one whit the wiser or

more knowing: and that way of handling the matter would much at one have satisfied the monkey's hunger, or a man's understanding; and they would have improved in knowledge and bulk together.

I know there are some who, because identical propositions are self-evident, show a great concern for them, and think they do great service to philosophy by crying them up, as if in them was contained all knowledge, and the understanding were led into all truth by them only, I grant as forwardly as any one, that they are all true and self-evident. I grant farther, that the foundation of all our knowledge lies in the faculty we have of perceiving the same idea to be the same, and of discerning it from those that are different, as I have shown in the foregoing chapter. But how that vindicates the making use of identical propositions, for the improvement of knowledge, from the imputation of trifling, I do not see. Let any one repeat, as often as he pleases, that the will is the will, or lay what stress on it he thinks fit; of what use is this, and an infinite the like propositions, for the enlarging our knowledge? Let a man abound, as much as the plenty of words which he has will permit, in such propositions as these; a law is a law, and obligation is obligation; right is right, and wrong is wrong: will these and the like ever help him to an acquaintance with ethicks? or instruct him or others in the knowledge of morality? Those who know not, nor perhaps ever will know, what is right and what is wrong, nor the measures of them; can with as much assurance make, and infallibly know the truth of, these and all such propositions, as he that is best instructed in morality can do. But what advance do such propositions give in the knowledge of any thing necessary or useful for their conduct?

He would be thought to do little less than trifle, who, for the enlightening the understanding in any part of knowledge, should be busy with identical propositions, and insist on such maxims as these: substance is substance, and body is body; a vacuum is a vacuum, and a vortex is a vortex; a centaur is a centaur, and a chimera is a chimera, &c. For these and all such are equally true,

true, equally certain, and equally self-evident. But yet they cannot but be counted trifling, when made use of as principles of instruction, and stress laid on them, as helps to knowledge: since they teach nothing but what every one, who is capable of discourse, knows without being told; viz. that the same term is the same term, and the same idea the same idea. And upon this account it was that I formerly did, and do still think, the offering and inculcating such propositions, in order to give the understanding any new light or inlet into the knowledge of things, no better than trifling.

Instruction lies in something very different; and he that would enlarge his own, or another's mind, to truths he does not yet know, must find out intermediate ideas, and then lay them in such order one by another, that the understanding may see the agreement or disagreement of those in question. Propositions that do this are instructive; but they are far from such as affirm the same term of itself: which is no way to advance one's self or others, in any sort of knowledge. It no more helps to that, than it would help any one, in his learning to read, to have such propositions as these inculcated to him. An A is an A, and a B is a B; which a man may know as well as any school-master, and yet never be able to read a word as long as he lives. Nor do these, or any such identical propositions, help him one jot forwards in the skill of reading, let him make what use of them he can.

If those who blame my calling them trifling propositions, had but read, and been at the pains to understand, what I had above writ in very plain English, they could not but have seen that by identical propositions I mean only such, wherein the same term, importing the same idea, is affirmed of itself: which I take to be the proper signification of identical propositions: and concerning all such, I think I may continue safely to say, that to propose them as instructive, is no better than trifling. For no one who has the use of reason can miss them, where it is necessary they should be taken notice of; nor doubt of their truth, when he does take notice of them.

But if men will call propositions identical, wherein the same term is not affirmed of itself, whether they

ſpeak more properly than I, others muſt judge; this is certain, all that they ſay of propoſitions that are not identical in my ſenſe, concerns not me, nor what I have ſaid; all that I have ſaid relating to thoſe propoſitions wherein the ſame term is affirmed of itſelf. And I would fain ſee an inſtance, wherein any ſuch can be made uſe of, to the advantage and improvement of any one's knowledge. Inſtances of other kinds, whatever uſe may be made of them, concern not me, as not being ſuch as I call identical.

Secondly, when a part of any complex idea is predicated of the whole.

§. 4. Secondly, another ſort of trifling propoſitions is, when a part of the complex idea is predicated of the name of the whole; a part of the definition of the word defined. Such are all propoſitions wherein the genus is predicated of the ſpecies, or more comprehenſive of leſs comprehenſive terms: for what information, what knowledge carries this propoſition in it, viz. lead is a metal, to a man who knows the complex idea the name lead ſtands for? all the ſimple ideas that go to the complex one ſignified by the term metal, being nothing but what he before comprehended, and ſignified by the name lead. Indeed, to a man that knows the ſignification of the word metal, and not of the word lead, it is a ſhorter way to explain the ſignification of the word lead, by ſaying it is a metal, which at once expreſſes ſeveral of its ſimple ideas, than to enumerate them one by one, telling him it is a body very heavy, fuſible, and malleable.

As part of the definition of the term defined.

§. 5. Alike trifling it is, to predicate any other part of the definition of the term defined, or to affirm any one of the ſimple ideas of a complex one of the name of the whole complex idea; as, all gold is fuſible. For fuſibility being one of the ſimple ideas that goes to the making up the complex one the ſound gold ſtands for, what can it be but playing with ſounds, to affirm that of the name gold, which is comprehended in its received ſignification? It would be thought little better than ridiculous, to affirm gravely as a truth of moment, that gold is yellow; and I ſee not how it is any jot more material

to

to say, it is fusible, unless that quality be left out of the complex idea, of which the sound gold is the mark in ordinary speech. What instruction can it carry with it, to tell one that which he hath been told already, or he is supposed to know before? For I am supposed to know the signification of the word another uses to me, or else he is to tell me. And if I know that the name gold stands for this complex idea of body, yellow, heavy, fusible, malleable, it will not much instruct me to put it solemnly afterwards in a proposition, and gravely say, all gold is fusible. Such propositions can only serve to show the disingenuity of one, who will go from the definition of his own terms, by reminding him sometimes of it; but carry no knowledge with them, but of the signification of words, however certain they be.

Instance, man and palfry.

§. 6. Every man is an animal, or living body, is as certain a proposition as can be; but no more conducing to the knowledge of things, than to say, a palfry is an ambling horse, or a neighing ambling animal, both being only about the signification of words, and make me know but this; that body, sense and motion, or power of sensation and moving, are three of those ideas that I always comprehend and signify by the word man; and where they are not to be found together, the name man belongs not to that thing: and so of the other, that body, sense, and a certain way of going, with a certain kind of voice, are some of those ideas which I always comprehend, and signify by the word palfry; and when they are not to be found together, the name palfry belongs not to that thing. It is just the same, and to the same purpose, when any term standing for any one or more of the simple ideas, that all together make up that complex idea which is called man, is affirmed of the term man: v. g. suppose a Roman signified by the word homo all these distinct ideas united in one subject, "corporietas, sensibilitas, potentia se movendi, rationalitas, risibilitas;" he might, no doubt, with great certainty, universally affirm one, more, or all of these together of the word homo, but did no more than say that the word homo, in his country, comprehended in its signification all these

ideas. Much like a romance knight, who by the word palfry signified these ideas; body of a certain figure, four-legged, with sense, motion, ambling, neighing, white, used to have a woman on his back; might with the same certainty universally affirm also any or all of these of the word palfry: but did thereby teach no more, but that the word palfry, in his or romance language, stood for all these, and was not to be applied to any thing, where any of these was wanting. But he that shall tell me, that in whatever thing sense, motion, reason, and laughter, were united, that thing had actually a notion of God, or would be cast into a sleep by opium, made indeed an instructive proposition: because neither having the notion of God, nor being cast into sleep by opium, being contained in the idea signified by the word man, we are by such propositions taught something more than barely what the word man stands for; and therefore the knowledge contained in it is more than verbal.

For this teaches but the signification of words.

§. 7. Before a man makes any proposition, he is supposed to understand the terms he uses in it, or else he talks like a parrot, only making a noise by imitation, and framing certain sounds, which he has learnt of others; but not as a rational creature, using them for signs of ideas which he has in his mind. The hearer also is supposed to understand the terms as the speaker uses them, or else he talks jargon, and makes an unintelligible noise. And therefore he trifles with words, who makes such a proposition, which, when it is made, contains no more than one of the terms does, and which a man was supposed to know before; v. g. a triangle hath three sides, or saffron is yellow. And this is no farther tolerable, than where a man goes to explain his terms, to one who is supposed or declares himself not to understand him: and then it teaches only the signification of that word, and the use of that sign.

But no real knowledge.

§. 8. We can know then the truth of two sorts of propositions with perfect certainty; the one is, of those trifling propositions which have a certainty in them, but it is only a verbal cer-

certainty, but not instructive. And, secondly, we can know the truth, and so may be certain in propositions, which affirm something of another, which is a necessary consequence of its precise complex idea, but not contained in it: as that the external angle of all triangles is bigger than either of the opposite internal angles; which relation of the outward angle to either of the opposite internal angles, making no part of the complex idea signified by the name triangle, this is a real truth, and conveys with it instructive real knowledge.

General propositions concerning substances are often trifling.

§. 9. We having little or no knowledge of what combinations there be of simple ideas existing together in substances, but by our senses, we cannot make any universal certain propositions concerning them, any farther than our nominal essences lead us: which being to a very few and inconsiderable truths, in respect of those which depend on their real constitutions, the general propositions that are made about substances, if they are certain, are for the most part but trifling; and if they are instructive, are uncertain, and such as we can have no knowledge of their real truth, how much soever constant observation and analogy may assist our judgment in guessing. Hence it comes to pass, that one may often meet with very clear and coherent discourses, that amount yet to nothing. For it is plain, that names of substantial beings, as well as others, as far as they have relative significations affixed to them, may, with great truth, be joined negatively and affirmatively in propositions, as their relative definitions make them fit to be so joined; and propositions consisting of such terms, may, with the same clearness, be deduced one from another, as those that convey the most real truths: and all this, without any knowledge of the nature or reality of things existing without us. By this method one may make demonstrations and undoubted propositions in words, and yet thereby advance not one jot in the knowledge of the truth of things; v. g. he that having learnt these following words, with their ordinary mutually relative acceptations annexed to them: v. g. substance, man, animal, form, soul, vegetative, sensitive,

rational, may make several undoubted propositions about the soul, without knowing at all what the soul really is: and of this sort, a man may find an infinite number of propositions, reasonings, and conclusions, in books of metaphysicks, school-divinity, and some sort of natural philosophy; and, after all, know as little of God, spirits, or bodies, as he did before he set out.

And why.

§. 10. He that hath liberty to define, i. e. to determine the signification of his names of substances (as certainly every one does in effect, who makes them stand for his own ideas) and makes their significations at a venture, taking them from his own or other men's fancies, and not from an examination or inquiry into the nature of things themselves; may, with little trouble, demonstrate them one of another, according to those several respects and mutual relations he has given them one to another; wherein, however things agree or disagree in their own nature, he needs mind nothing but his own notions, with the names he hath bestowed upon them: but thereby no more increases his own knowledge, than he does his riches, who, taking a bag of counters, calls one in a certain place a pound, another in another place a shilling, and a third in a third place a penny; and so proceeding, may undoubtedly reckon right, and cast up a great sum, according to his counters so placed, and standing for more or less as he pleases, without being one jot the richer, or without even knowing how much a pound, shilling, or penny is, but only that one is contained in the other twenty times, and contains the other twelve: which a man may also do in the signification of words, by making them, in respect of one another, more, or less, or equally comprehensive.

Thirdly, using words variously is trifling with them.

§. 11. Though yet concerning most words used in discourses, equally argumentative and controversial, there is this more to be complained of, which is the worst sort of trifling, and which sets us yet farther from the certainty of knowledge we hope to attain by them, or find in them; viz. that most writers are so far from instructing us in the nature and knowledge of things, that

that they use their words loosely and uncertainly, and do not, by using them constantly and steadily in the same significations, make plain and clear deductions of words one from another, and make their discourses coherent and clear (how little soever they were instructive) which were not difficult to do, did they not find it convenient to shelter their ignorance or obstinacy, under the obscurity and perplexedness of their terms: to which, perhaps, inadvertency and ill custom do in many men much contribute.

Marks of verbal propositions:

§. 12. To conclude; barely verbal propositions may be known by these following marks:

1. Predication in abstract.

First, all propositions, wherein two abstract terms are affirmed one of another, are barely about the signification of sounds. For since no abstract idea can be the same with any other but itself, when its abstract name is affirmed of any other term, it can signify no more but this, that it may or ought to be called by that name, or that these two names signify the same idea. Thus should any one say, that parsimony is frugality, that gratitude is justice, that this or that action is or is not temperate; however specious these and the like propositions may at first sight seem, yet when we come to press them, and examine nicely what they contain, we shall find that it all amounts to nothing but the signification of those terms.

2. A part of the definition predicated of any term.

§. 13. Secondly, all propositions wherein a part of the complex idea, which any term stands for, is predicated of that term, are only verbal; v. g. to say that gold is a metal or heavy. And thus all propositions, wherein more comprehensive words, called genera, are affirmed of subordinate or less comprehensive, called species, or individuals, are barely verbal.

When by these two rules we have examined the propositions that make up the discourses we ordinarily meet with both in and out of books, we shall, perhaps, find that a greater part of them, than is usually suspected, are purely about the signification of words, and contain nothing in them, but the use and application of these signs.

This,

This, I think, I may lay down for an infallible rule, that wherever the distinct idea any word stands for is not known and considered, and something not contained in the idea is not affirmed or denied of it; there our thoughts stick wholly in sounds, and are able to attain no real truth or falshood. This, perhaps, if well heeded, might save us a great deal of useless amusement and dispute, and very much shorten our trouble and wandering, in the search of real and true knowledge.

CHAP. IX.

Of our Knowledge of Existence.

General certain propositions concern not existence.

§. 1. HITHERTO we have only considered the essences of things, which being only abstract ideas, and thereby removed in our thoughts from particular existence (that being the proper operation of the mind, in abstraction, to consider an idea under no other existence, but what it has in the understanding) gives us no knowledge of real existence at all. Where by the way we may take notice, that universal propositions, of whose truth or falshood we can have certain knowledge, concern not existence; and farther, that all particular affirmations or negations, that would not be certain if they were made general, are only concerning existence; they declaring only the accidental union or separation of ideas in things existing, which, in their abstract natures, have no known necessary union or repugnancy.

A threefold knowledge of existence.

§. 2. But, leaving the nature of propositions and different ways of predication to be considered more at large in another place, let us proceed now to inquire concerning our knowledge of the existence of things, and how we come by it. I say then, that we have the knowledge of our own existence by intuition; of the existence of God by demonstration; and of other things by sensation.

§. 3.

§. 3. As for our own existence, we perceive it so plainly, and so certainly, that it neither needs nor is capable of any proof. For nothing can be more evident to us, than our own existence; I think, I reason, I feel pleasure and pain: can any of these be more evident to me, than my own existence? if I doubt of all other things, that very doubt makes me perceive my own existence, and will not suffer me to doubt of that. For if I know I feel pain, it is evident I have as certain perception of my own existence, as of the existence of the pain I feel: or if I know I doubt, I have as certain perception of the existence of the thing doubting, as of that thought which I call doubt. Experience then convinces us, that we have an intuitive knowledge of our own existence, and an internal infallible perception that we are. In every act of sensation, reasoning, or thinking, we are conscious to ourselves of our own being; and, in this matter, come not short of the highest degree of certainty.

Our knowledge of our own existence is intuitive.

CHAP. X.

Of our Knowledge of the Existence of a God.

§. 1. THOUGH God has given us no innate ideas of himself; though he has stamped no original characters on our minds, wherein we may read his being; yet having furnished us with those faculties our minds are endowed with, he hath not left himself without witness: since we have sense, perception, and reason, and cannot want a clear proof of him, as long as we carry ourselves about us. Nor can we justly complain of our ignorance in this great point, since he has so plentifully provided us with the means to discover and know him, so far as is necessary to the end of our being, and the great concernment of our happiness. But though this be the most obvious truth that

We are capable of knowing certainly that there is a God.

that reason discovers; and though its evidence be (if I mistake not) equal to mathematical certainty: yet it requires thought and attention, and the mind must apply itself to a regular deduction of it from some part of our intuitive knowledge, or else we shall be as uncertain and ignorant of this as of other propositions, which are in themselves capable of clear demonstration. To show therefore that we are capable of knowing, i. e. being certain that there is a God, and how we may come by this certainty, I think we need go no farther than ourselves, and that undoubted knowledge we have of our own existence.

Man knows that he himself is.

§. 2. I think it is beyond question, that man has a clear idea of his own being; he knows certainly he exists, and that he is something. He that can doubt, whether he be any thing or no, I speak not to, no more than I would argue with pure nothing, or endeavour to convince non-entity, that it were something. If any one pretends to be so sceptical, as to deny his own existence (for really to doubt of it is manifestly impossible) let him for me enjoy his beloved happiness of being nothing, until hunger, or some other pain, convince him of the contrary. This then, I think, I may take for a truth, which every one's certain knowledge assures him of, beyond the liberty of doubting, viz. that he is something that actually exists.

He knows also that nothing cannot produce a being, therefore something eternal.

§. 3. In the next place, man knows by an intuitive certainty, that bare nothing can no more produce any real being, than it can be equal to two right angles. If a man knows not that non-entity, or the absence of all being, cannot be equal to two right angles, it is impossible he should know any demonstration in Euclid. If therefore we know there is some real being, and that non-entity cannot produce any real being, it is an evident demonstration, that from eternity there has been something; since what was not from eternity had a beginning; and what had a beginning must be produced by something else.

§. 4.

§. 4. Next, it is evident, that what had its being and beginning from another, must also have all that which is in, and belongs to its being, from another too. All the powers it has must be owing to, and received from, the same source. This eternal source then of all being must also be the source and original of all power; and so this eternal being must be also the most powerful.

That eternal being must be most powerful.

§. 5. Again, a man finds in himself perception and knowledge. We have then got one step farther; and we are certain now, that there is not only some being, but some knowing intelligent being in the world.

And most knowing.

There was a time then, when there was no knowing being, and when knowledge began to be; or else there has been also a knowing being from eternity. If it be said, there was a time when no being had any knowledge, when that eternal being was void of all understanding; I reply, that then it was impossible there should ever have been any knowledge: it being as impossible that things wholly void of knowledge, and operating blindly, and without any perception, should produce a knowing being, as it is impossible that a triangle should make itself three angles bigger than two right ones. For it is as repugnant to the idea of senseless matter, that it should put into itself, sense, perception, and knowledge, as it is repugnant to the idea of a triangle, that it should put into itself greater angles than two right ones.

§. 6. Thus from the consideration of ourselves, and what we infallibly find in our own constitutions, our reason leads us to the knowledge of this certain and evident truth, that there is an eternal, most powerful, and most knowing being; which whether any one will please to call God, it matters not. The thing is evident, and from this idea duly considered, will easily be deduced all those other attributes, which we ought to ascribe to this eternal being. If nevertheless any one should be found so senselessly arrogant, as to suppose man alone knowing and wise, but yet the product of mere ignorance and chance; and that all the rest of the universe acted only

And therefore God.

only by that blind hap-hazard: I shall leave with him that very rational and emphatical rebuke of Tully, l. ii. de leg. to be considered at his leisure: "What can be "more sillily arrogant and misbecoming, than for a "man to think that he has a mind and understanding "in him, but yet in all the universe beside there is no "such thing? Or that those things, which with the "utmost stretch of his reason he can scarce comprehend, "should be moved and managed without any reason at "all? "Quid est enim verius, quam neminem esse "oportere tam stulte arrogantem, ut in se mentem & "rationem putet inesse, in cœlo mundoque non putet? "Aut ea quæ vix summa ingenii ratione comprehendat, "nulla ratione moveri putet?"

From what has been said, it is plain to me, we have a more certain knowledge of the existence of a God, than of any thing our senses have not immediately discovered to us. Nay, I presume I may say, that we more certainly know that there is a God, than that there is any thing else without us. When I say we know, I mean there is such a knowledge within our reach which we cannot miss, if we will but apply our minds to that, as we do to several other inquiries.

Our idea of a most perfect being not the sole proof of a God.

§. 7. How far the idea of a most perfect being, which a man may frame in his mind, does or does not prove the existence of a God, I will not here examine. For in the different make of men's tempers and application of their thoughts, some arguments prevail more on one, and some on another, for the confirmation of the same truth. But yet, I think, this I may say, that it is an ill way of establishing this truth, and silencing atheists, to lay the whole stress of so important a point as this upon that sole foundation; and take some men's having that idea of God in their minds (for it is evident some men have none, and some worse than none, and the most very different) for the only proof of a deity: and out of an over-fondness of that darling invention cashier, or at least endeavour to invalidate all other arguments, and forbid us to hearken to those proofs, as being weak or fallacious, which our own existence and

the sensible parts of the universe offer so clearly and cogently to our thoughts, that I deem it impossible for a considering man to withstand them. For I judge it as certain and clear a truth, as can any where be delivered, that the invisible things of God are clearly seen from the creation of the world, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and godhead. Though our own being furnishes us, as I have shown, with an evident and incontestible proof of a deity; and I believe no-body can avoid the cogency of it, who will but as carefully attend to it, as to any other demonstration of so many parts: yet this being so fundamental a truth, and of that consequence, that all religion and genuine morality depend thereon, I doubt not but I shall be forgiven by my reader, if I go over some parts of this argument again, and enlarge a little more upon them.

Something from eternity.

§. 8. There is no truth more evident, than that something must be from eternity. I never yet heard of any one so unreasonable, or that could suppose so manifest a contradiction, as a time wherein there was perfectly nothing: this being of all absurdities the greatest, to imagine that pure nothing, the perfect negation and absence of all beings, should ever produce any real existence.

It being then unavoidable for all rational creatures to conclude, that something has existed from eternity; let us next see what kind of thing that must be.

Two sorts of beings, cogitative and incogitative.

§. 9. There are but two sorts of beings in the world, that man knows or conceives.

First, such as are purely material, without sense, perception or thought, as the clippings of our beards, and parings of our nails.

Secondly, sensible, thinking, perceiving beings, such as we find ourselves to be, which, if you please, we will hereafter call cogitative and incogitative beings; which to our present purpose, if for nothing else, are, perhaps, better terms than material and immaterial.

Incogitative being cannot produce a cogitative.

§. 10. If then there must be something eternal, let us see what sort of being it must be. And to that, it is very obvious to reason, that it must necessarily be a cogitative

being.

being. For it is as impossible to conceive, that ever bare incogitative matter should produce a thinking intelligent being, as that nothing should of itself produce matter. Let us suppose any parcel of matter eternal, great or small, we shall find it, in itself, able to produce nothing. For example; let us suppose the matter of the next pebble we meet with eternal, closely united, and the parts firmly at rest together; if there were no other being in the world, must it not eternally remain so, a dead inactive lump? Is it possible to conceive it can add motion to itself, being purely matter, or produce any thing? Matter then, by its own strength, cannot produce in itself so much as motion: the motion it has must also be from eternity, or else be produced, and added to matter by some other being more powerful than matter; matter, as is evident, having not power to produce motion in itself. But let us suppose motion eternal too; yet matter, incogitative matter and motion, whatever changes it might produce of figure and bulk, could never produce thought: knowledge will still be as far beyond the power of motion and matter to produce, as matter is beyond the power of nothing or nonentity to produce. And I appeal to every one's own thoughts, whether he cannot as easily conceive matter produced by nothing, as thought to be produced by pure matter, when before there was no such thing as thought, or an intelligent being existing? Divide matter into as minute parts as you will (which we are apt to imagine a sort of spiritualizing, or making a thinking thing of it) vary the figure and motion of it as much as you please; a globe, cube, cone, prism, cylinder, &c. whose diameters are but 1000000th part of a gry *, will operate no otherwise upon other bodies of proportionable bulk, than those of an inch or foot diameter; and

* A gry is $\frac{1}{10}$ of a line, a line $\frac{1}{10}$ of an inch, an inch $\frac{1}{10}$ of a philosophical foot, a philosophical foot $\frac{1}{3}$ of a pendulum, whose diadroms, in the latitude of 45 degrees, are each equal to one second of time or $\frac{1}{60}$ of a minute. I have affectedly made use of this measure here, and the parts of it, under a decimal division, with names to them; because, I think, it would be of general convenience, that this should be the common measure, in the commonwealth of letters.

you may as rationally expect to produce sense, thought, and knowledge, by putting together, in a certain figure and motion, gross particles of matter, as by those that are the very minutest, that do any where exist. They knock, impel, and resist one another, just as the greater do, and that is all they can do. So that if we will suppose nothing first, or eternal; matter can never begin to be: if we suppose bare matter, without motion, eternal; motion can never begin to be: if we suppose only matter and motion first, or eternal; thought can never begin to be. For it is impossible to conceive that matter, either with or without motion, could have originally in and from itself sense, perception and knowledge; as is evident from hence, that then sense, perception and knowledge must be a property eternally inseparable from matter and every particle of it. Not to add, that though our general or specific conception of matter makes us speak of it as one thing, yet really all matter is not one individual thing, neither is there any such thing existing as one material being, or one single body that we know or can conceive. And therefore if matter were the eternal first cogitative being, there would not be one eternal infinite cogitative being, but an infinite number of eternal finite cogitative beings, independent one of another, of limited force and distinct thoughts, which could never produce that order, harmony and beauty which are to be found in nature. Since therefore whatsoever is the first eternal being must necessarily be cogitative; and whatsoever is first of all things, must necessarily contain in it, and actually have, at least, all the perfections that can ever after exist; nor can it ever give to another any perfection that it hath not, either actually in itself, or at least in a higher degree; it necessarily follows, that the first eternal being cannot be matter.

Therefore there has been an eternal wisdom.

§. 11. If therefore it be evident, that something necessarily must exist from eternity, it is also as evident, that that something must necessarily be a cogitative being: for it is as impossible that incogitative matter should produce a cogitative being, as that nothing, or the ne-

gation of all being, should produce a positive being or matter.

§. 12. Though this discovery of the necessary existence of an eternal mind does sufficiently lead us into the knowledge of God; since it will hence follow, that all other knowing beings that have a beginning must depend on him, and have no other ways of knowledge, or extent of power, than what he gives them; and therefore if he made those, he made also the less excellent pieces of this universe, all inanimate beings, whereby his omniscience, power, and providence will be established, and all his other attributes necessarily follow: yet to clear up this a little farther, we will see what doubts can be raised against it.

Whether material or no.

§. 13. First, perhaps it will be said, that though it be as clear as demonstration can make it, that there must be an eternal being, and that being must also be knowing; yet it does not follow, but that thinking being may also be material. Let it be so; it equally still follows, that there is a God. For if there be an eternal, omniscient, omnipotent being, it is certain that there is a God, whether you imagine that being to be material or no. But herein, I suppose, lies the danger and deceit of that supposition: there being no way to avoid the demonstration, that there is an eternal knowing being, men, devoted to matter, would willingly have it granted, that this knowing being is material; and then letting slide out of their minds, or the discourse, the demonstration whereby an eternal knowing being was proved necessarily to exist, would argue all to be matter, and so deny a God, that is, an eternal cogitative being: whereby they are so far from establishing, that they destroy their own hypothesis. For if there can be, in their opinion, eternal matter, without any eternal cogitative being, they manifestly separate matter and thinking, and suppose no necessary connexion of the one with the other, and so establish the necessity of an eternal spirit, but not of matter; since it has been proved already, that an eternal cogitative being is unavoidably to be granted. Now if thinking and matter may be separated, the eternal existence

of matter will not follow from the eternal existence of a cogitative being, and they suppose it to no purpose.

§. 14. But now let us suppose they can satisfy themselves or others, that this eternal thinking being is material.

Not material, 1. Because every particle of matter is not cogitative.

First, I would ask them, Whether they imagine, that all matter, every particle of matter, thinks? This, I suppose, they will scarce say; since then there would be as many eternal thinking beings as there are particles of matter, and so an infinity of gods. And yet if they will not allow matter as matter, that is, every particle of matter to be as well cogitative as extended, they will have as hard a task to make out to their own reasons a cogitative being out of incogitative particles, as an extended being out of unextended parts, if I may so speak.

§. 15. Secondly, if all matter does not think, I next ask, "Whether it be only one "atom that does so?" This has as many absurdities as the other; for then this atom of matter must be alone eternal or not. If this alone be eternal, then this alone, by its powerful thought or will, made all the rest of matter. And so we have the creation of matter by a powerful thought, which is that the materialists stick at. For if they suppose one single thinking atom to have produced all the rest of matter, they cannot ascribe that pre-eminency to it upon any other account than that of its thinking, the only supposed difference. But allow it to be by some other way, which is above our conception, it must still be creation, and these men must give up their great maxim, "ex nihilo nil fit." If it be said, that all the rest of matter is equally eternal, as that thinking atom, it will be to say any thing at pleasure, though ever so absurd: for to suppose all matter eternal, and yet one small particle in knowledge and power infinitely above all the rest, is without any the least appearance of reason to frame an hypothesis. Every particle of matter, as matter, is capable of all the same figures and motions of any other; and I challenge any one, in his thoughts, to add any thing else to one above another.

2. One particle alone of matter cannot be cogitative.

3. A system of incogitative matter cannot be cogitative.

§. 16. If then neither one peculiar atom alone can be this eternal thinking being; nor all matter as matter, i. e. every particle of matter, can be it; it only remains, that it is some certain system of matter duly put together, that is this thinking eternal being. This is that, which, I imagine, is that notion which men are aptest to have of God; who would have him a material being, as most readily suggested to them, by the ordinary conceit they have of themselves, and other men, which they take to be material thinking beings. But this imagination, however more natural, is no less absurd than the other: for to suppose the eternal thinking being to be nothing else but a composition of particles of matter each whereof is incogitative, is to ascribe all the wisdom and knowledge of that eternal being only to the juxta-position of parts; than which nothing can be more absurd. For unthinking particles of matter, however put together, can have nothing thereby added to them, but a new relation of position, which it is impossible should give thought and knowledge to them.

Whether in motion or at rest.

§. 17. But farther, this corporeal system either has all its parts at rest, or it is a certain motion of the parts wherein its thinking consists. If it be perfectly at rest, it is but one lump, and so can have no privileges above one atom.

If it be the motion of its parts, on which its thinking depends, all the thoughts there must be unavoidably accidental and limited; since all the particles that by motion cause thought, being each of them in itself without any thought, cannot regulate its own motions, much less be regulated by the thought of the whole; since that thought is not the cause of motion (for then it must be antecedent to it, and so without it) but the consequence of it, whereby freedom, power, choice, and all rational and wise thinking or acting, will be quite taken away: so that such a thinking being will be no better nor wiser than pure blind matter; since to resolve all into the accidental unguided motions of blind matter, or into thought depending on unguided motions of blind matter,

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is the same thing; not to mention the narrowness of such thoughts and knowledge that must depend on the motion of such parts. But there needs no enumeration of any more absurdities and impossibilities in this hypothesis (however full of them it be) than that beforementioned; since let this thinking system be all, or a part of the matter of the universe, it is impossible that any one particle should either know its own, or the motion of any other particle, or the whole know the motion of every particle; and so regulate its own thoughts or motions, or indeed have any thought resulting from such motion.

Matter not co-eternal with an eternal mind.

§. 18. Others would have matter to be eternal, notwithstanding that they allow an eternal, cogitative, immaterial being. This, though it take not away the being of a God, yet since it denies one and the first great piece of his workmanship, the creation, let us consider it a little. Matter must be allowed eternal: Why? because you cannot conceive how it can be made out of nothing; why do you not also think yourself eternal? You will answer perhaps, because about twenty or forty years since you began to be. But if I ask you what that you is, which began then to be, you can scarce tell me. The matter, whereof you are made, began not then to be; for if it did, then it is not eternal: but it began to be put together in such a fashion and frame as makes up your body; but yet that frame of particles is not you, it makes not that thinking thing you are; (for I have now to do with one who allows an eternal, immaterial, thinking being, but would have unthinking matter eternal too) therefore when did that thinking thing begin to be? If it did never begin to be, then have you always been a thinking thing from eternity; the absurdity whereof I need not confute, till I meet with one who is so void of understanding as to own it. If therefore you can allow a thinking thing to be made out of nothing (as all things that are not eternal must be) why also can you not allow it possible, for a material being to be made out of nothing, by an equal power, but that you have the experience of the one in view, and not of

the other? Though, when well considered, creation of a spirit will be found to require no less power than the creation of matter. Nay possibly, if we would emancipate ourselves from vulgar notions, and raise our thoughts as far as they would reach, to a closer contemplation of things, we might be able to aim at some dim and seeming conception how matter might at first be made, and begin to exist by the power of that eternal first being: but to give beginning and being to a spirit, would be found a more inconceivable effect of omnipotent power. But, this being what would perhaps lead us too far from the notions on which the philosophy now in the world is built, it would not be pardonable to deviate so far from them; or to inquire, so far as grammar itself would authorize, if the common settled opinion opposes it: especially in this place, where the received doctrine serves well enough to our present purpose, and leaves this past doubt, that the creation or beginning of any one substance out of nothing, being once admitted, the creation of all other, but the Creator himself, may, with the same ease, be supposed.

§. 19. But you will say, is it not impossible to admit of the making any thing out of nothing, since we cannot possibly conceive it? I answer, No: 1. Because it is not reasonable to deny the power of an infinite being, because we cannot comprehend its operations. We do not deny other effects upon this ground, because we cannot possibly conceive the manner of their production. We cannot conceive how any thing but impulse of body can move body; and yet that is not a reason sufficient to make us deny it impossible, against the constant experience we have of it in ourselves, in all our voluntary motions, which are produced in us only by the free action or thought of our own minds; and are not, nor can be the effects of the impulse or determination of the motion of blind matter in or upon our own bodies; for then it could not be in our power or choice to alter it. For example: my right hand writes, whilst my left hand is still: what causes rest in one, and motion in the other? Nothing but my will, a thought of my mind; my thought only changing, the right hand rests, and the left hand moves.

moves. This is matter of fact, which cannot be denied: explain this and make it intelligible, and then the next step will be to understand creation. For the giving a new determination to the motion of the animal spirits (which some make use of to explain voluntary motion) clears not the difficulty one jot: to alter the determination of motion, being in this case no easier nor less, than to give motion itself; since the new determination given to the animal spirits must be either immediately by thought, or by some other body put in their way by thought, which was not in their way before, and so must owe its motion to thought; either of which leaves voluntary motion as unintelligible as it was before. In the mean time it is an overvaluing ourselves to reduce all to the narrow measure of our capacities; and to conclude all things impossible to be done, whose manner of doing exceeds our comprehension. This is to make our comprehension infinite, or God finite, when what we can do is limited to what we can conceive of it. If you do not understand the operations of your own finite mind, that thinking thing within you, do not deem it strange, that you cannot comprehend the operations of that eternal infinite mind, who made and governs all things, and whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain.

CHAP. XI.

Of our Knowledge of the Existence of other Things.

It is to be had only by sensation.

§. 1. THE knowledge of our own being we have by intuition. The existence of a God reason clearly makes known to us, as has been shown.

The knowledge of the existence of any other thing, we can have only by sensation: for there being no necessary connexion of real existence with any idea a man hath in his memory, nor of any other existence but that of God, with the existence of any particular man; no particular man can know the existence of any other being,

ing, but only when by actual operating upon him, it makes itself perceived by him. For the having the idea of any thing in our mind, no more proves the existence of that thing, than the picture of a man evidences his being in the world, or the visions of a dream make thereby a true history.

Instance, whiteness of this paper.

§. 2. It is therefore the actual receiving of ideas from without, that gives us notice of the existence of other things, and makes us know that something doth exist at that time without us, which causes that idea in us, though perhaps we neither know nor consider how it does it: for it takes not from the certainty of our senses, and the ideas we receive by them, that we know not the manner wherein they are produced: v. g. whilst I write this, I have, by the paper affecting my eyes, that idea produced in my mind, which whatever object causes, I call white; by which I know that that quality or accident (i. e. whose appearance before my eyes always causes that idea) doth really exist, and hath a being without me. And of this, the greatest assurance I can possibly have, and to which my faculties can attain, is the testimony of my eyes, which are the proper and sole judges of this thing, whose testimony I have reason to rely on as so certain, that I can no more doubt, whilst I write this, that I see white and black, and that something really exists, that causes that sensation in me, than that I write or move my hand: which is a certainty as great as human nature is capable of, concerning the existence of any thing, but a man's self alone, and of God.

This though not so certain as demonstration, yet may be called knowledge, and proves the existence of things without us.

§. 3. The notice we have by our senses, of the existing of things without us, though it be not altogether so certain as our intuitive knowledge, or the deductions of our reason, employed about the clear abstract ideas of our own minds; yet it is an assurance that deserves the name of knowledge. If we persuade ourselves, that our faculties act and inform us right, concerning the existence of those objects that affect them, it cannot pass for an ill-grounded confidence: for I think nobody can,

can, in earnest, be so sceptical, as to be uncertain of the existence of those things which he sees and feels. At least, he that can doubt so far (whatever he may have with his own thoughts) will never have any controversy with me; since he can never be sure I say any thing contrary to his own opinion. As to myself, I think God has given me assurance enough of the existence of things without me; since by their different application I can produce in myself both pleasure and pain, which is one great concernment of my present state. This is certain, the confidence that our faculties do not herein deceive us is the greatest assurance we are capable of, concerning the existence of material beings. For we cannot act any thing, but by our faculties; nor talk of knowledge itself, but by the helps of those faculties, which are fitted to apprehend even what knowledge is. But besides the assurance we have from our senses themselves, that they do not err in the information they give us, of the existence of things without us, when they are affected by them, we are farther confirmed in this assurance by other concurrent reasons.

1. Because we cannot have them but by the inlet of the senses.

§. 4. First, it is plain those perceptions are produced in us by exterior causes affecting our senses; because those that want the organs of any sense, never can have the ideas belonging to that sense produced in their minds. This is too evident to be doubted: and therefore we cannot but be assured, that they come in by the organs of that sense, and no other way. The organs themselves, it is plain, do not produce them; for then the eyes of a man in the dark would produce colours, and his nose smell roses in the winter: but we see nobody gets the relish of a pine-apple, till he goes to the Indies, where it is, and tastes it.

2. Because an idea from actual sensation, and another from memory, are very distinct perceptions.

§. 5. Secondly, because sometimes I find, that I cannot avoid the having those ideas produced in my mind. For though when my eyes are shut, or windows fast, I can at pleasure recal to my mind the ideas of light, or the sun, which former sensations had lodged in my memory; so I can at pleasure

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lay by that idea, and take into my view that of the ſmell of a roſe, or taſte of ſugar. But, if I turn my eyes at noon towards the ſun, I cannot avoid the ideas, which the light, or ſun, then produces in me. So that there is a manifeſt difference between the ideas laid up in my memory, (over which, if they were there only, I ſhould have conſtantly the ſame power to diſpoſe of them, and lay them by at pleaſure) and thoſe which force themſelves upon me, and I cannot avoid having. And therefore it muſt needs be ſome exterior cauſe, and the briſk acting of ſome objects without me, whoſe efficacy I cannot reſiſt, that produces thoſe ideas in my mind, whether I will or no. Beſides, there is no-body who doth not perceive the difference in himſelf between contemplating the ſun, as he hath the idea of it in his memory, and actually looking upon it: of which two, his perception is ſo diſtinct, that few of his ideas are more diſtinguiſhable one from another. And therefore he hath certain knowledge, that they are not both memory, or the actions of his mind, and fancies only within him; but that actual ſeeing hath a cauſe without.

3. Pleaſure or pain which accompanies actual ſenſation, accompanies not the returning of thoſe ideas without the external objects.

§. 6. Thirdly, add to this, that many of thoſe ideas are produced in us with pain, which afterwards we remember without the leaſt offence. Thus the pain of heat or cold, when the idea of it is revived in our minds, gives us no diſturbance; which, when felt, was very troubleſome, and is again, when actually repeated; which is occaſioned by the diſorder the external object cauſes in our bodies when applied to it. And we remember the pains of hunger, thirſt, or the head-ach, without any pain at all; which would either never diſturb us, or elſe conſtantly do it, as often as we thought of it, were there nothing more but ideas floating in our minds, and appearances entertaining our fancies, without the real exiſtence of things affecting us from abroad. The ſame may be ſaid of pleaſure, accompanying ſeveral actual ſenſations: and though mathematical demonſtrations depend not upon ſenſe, yet the examining them by diagrams gives great credit to the

the evidence of our sight, and seems to give it a certainty approaching to that of demonstration itself. For it would be very strange, that a man should allow it for an undeniable truth, that two angles of a figure, which he measures by lines and angles of a diagram, should be bigger one than the other; and yet doubt of the existence of those lines and angles, which by looking on he makes use of to measure that by.

4. Our senses assist one another's testimony of the existence of outward things.

§. 7. Fourthly, our senses in many cases bear witness to the truth of each other's report, concerning the existence of sensible things without us. He that sees a fire, may, if he doubt whether it be any thing more than a bare fancy, feel it too; and be convinced, by putting his hand in it. Which certainly could never be put into such exquisite pain, by a bare idea or phantom, unless that the pain be a fancy too: which yet he cannot, when the burn is well, by raising the idea of it, bring upon himself again.

Thus I see, whilst I write this, I can change the appearance of the paper: and by designing the letters tell before-hand what new idea it shall exhibit the very next moment, by barely drawing my pen over it: which will neither appear (let me fancy as much as I will) if my hands stand still; or though I move my pen, if my eyes be shut: nor when those characters are once made on the paper, can I choose afterwards but see them as they are; that is, have the ideas of such letters as I have made. Whence it is manifest, that they are not barely the sport and play of my own imagination, when I find that the characters, that were made at the pleasure of my own thought, do not obey them; nor yet cease to be, whenever I shall fancy it; but continue to affect the senses constantly and regularly, according to the figures I made them. To which if we will add, that the sight of those shall, from another man, draw such sounds, as I beforehand design they shall stand for; there will be little reason left to doubt, that those words I write do really exist without me, when they cause a long series of regular sounds to affect my ears, which could not be the effect of

of my imagination, nor could my memory retain them in that order.

This certainty is as great as our condition needs.

§. 8. But yet, if after all this any one will be so sceptical, as to distrust his senses, and to affirm that all we see and hear, feel and taste, think and do, during our whole being, is but the series and deluding appearances of a long dream, whereof there is no reality; and therefore will question the existence of all things, or our knowledge of any thing; I must desire him to consider, that if all be a dream, then he doth but dream, that he makes the question; and so it is not much matter, that a waking man should answer him. But yet, if he pleases, he may dream that I make him this answer, that the certainty of things existing in rerum natura, when we have the testimony of our senses for it, is not only as great as our frame can attain to, but as our condition needs. For our faculties being suited not to the full extent of being, nor to a perfect, clear, comprehensive knowledge of things free from all doubt and scruple; but to the preservation of us, in whom they are; and accommodated to the use of life; they serve to our purpose well enough, if they will but give us certain notice of those things, which are convenient or inconvenient to us. For he that sees a candle burning, and hath experimented the force of its flame, by putting his finger in it, will little doubt that this is something existing without him, which does him harm, and puts him to great pain: which is assurance enough, when no man requires greater certainty to govern his actions by, than what is as certain as his actions themselves. And if our dreamer pleases to try, whether the glowing heat of a glass furnace be barely a wandering imagination in a drowsy man's fancy; by putting his hand into it, he may perhaps be wakened into a certainty greater than he could wish, that it is something more than bare imagination. So that this evidence is as great as we can desire, being as certain to us as our pleasure or pain, i. e. happiness or misery; beyond which we have no concernment, either of knowing or being. Such an assurance of the existence of things without us, is sufficient to direct us in

in the attaining the good, and avoiding the evil, which is caused by them; which is the important concernment we have of being made acquainted with them.

§. 9. In fine then, when our senses do actually convey into our understandings any idea, we cannot but be satisfied that there doth something at that time really exist without us, which doth affect our senses, and by them give notice of itself to our apprehensive faculties, and actually produce that idea which we then perceive: and we cannot so far distrust their testimony, as to doubt, that such collections of simple ideas, as we have observed by our senses to be united together, do really exist together. But this knowledge extends as far as the present testimony of our senses, employed about particular objects that do then affect them, and no farther. For if I saw such a collection of simple ideas, as is wont to be called man, existing together one minute since, and am now alone, I cannot be certain that the same man exists now, since there is no necessary connexion of his existence a minute since, with his existence now: by a thousand ways he may cease to be, since I had the testimony of my senses for his existence. And if I cannot be certain, that the man I saw last to-day is now in being, I can less be certain that he is so, who hath been longer removed from my senses, and I have not seen since yesterday, or since the last year: and much less can I be certain of the existence of men that I never saw. And therefore though it be highly probable, that millions of men do now exist, yet, whilst I am alone writing this, I have not that certainty of it which we strictly call knowledge; though the great likelihood of it puts me past doubt, and it be reasonable for me to do several things upon the confidence that there are men (and men also of my acquaintance, with whom I have to do) now in the world: but this is but probability, not knowledge.

But reaches no farther than actual sensation.

§. 10. Whereby yet we may observe, how foolish and vain a thing it is, for a man of a narrow knowledge, who having reason given him to judge of the different evidence and probability of things, and to be swayed accordingly; how

Folly to expect demonstration in every thing.

how vain, I ſay, it is to expect demonſtration and certainty in things not capable of it; and refuſe aſſent to very rational propoſitions, and act contrary to very plain and clear truths, becauſe they cannot be made out ſo evident, as to ſurmount every the leaſt (I will not ſay reaſon, but) pretence of doubting. He that in the ordinary affairs of life would admit of nothing but direct plain demonſtration, would be ſure of nothing in this world, but of periſhing quickly. The wholeſomeneſs of his meat or drink would not give him reaſon to venture on it: and I would fain know, what it is he could do upon ſuch grounds, as are capable of no doubt, no objection.

Paſt exiſtence is known by memory.

§. 11. As when our ſenſes are actually employed about any object, we do know that it does exiſt; ſo by our memory we may be aſſured, that heretofore things that affected our ſenſes have exiſted. And thus we have knowledge of the paſt exiſtence of ſeveral things, whereof our ſenſes having informed us, our memories ſtill retain the ideas; and of this we are paſt all doubt, ſo long as we remember well. But this knowledge alſo reaches no farther than our ſenſes have formerly aſſured us. Thus ſeeing water at this inſtant, it is an unqueſtionable truth to me, that water doth exiſt: and remembering that I ſaw it yeſterday, it will alſo be always true; and as long as my memory retains it, always an undoubted propoſition to me, that water did exiſt the 10th of July, 1688, as it will alſo be equally true, that a certain number of very fine colours did exiſt, which at the ſame time I ſaw upon a bubble of that water: but, being now quite out of the ſight both of the water and bubbles too, it is no more certainly known to me that the water doth now exiſt, than that the bubbles or colours therein do ſo; it being no more neceſſary that water ſhould exiſt to-day, becauſe it exiſted yeſterday, than that the colours or bubbles exiſt to-day, becauſe they exiſted yeſterday; though it be exceedingly much more probable, becauſe water hath been obſerved to continue long in exiſtence, but bubbles and the colours on them quickly ceaſe to be.

§. 12.

§. 12. What ideas we have of spirits, and how we come by them, I have already shown. But though we have those ideas in our minds, and know we have them there, the having the ideas of spirits does not make us know, that any such things do exist without us, or that there are any finite spirits, or any other spiritual beings but the eternal God. We have ground from revelation, and several other reasons, to believe with assurance that there are such creatures: but, our senses not being able to discover them, we want the means of knowing their particular existences. For we can no more know, that there are finite spirits really existing, by the idea we have of such beings in our minds, than by the ideas any one has of fairies, or centaurs, he can come to know that things answering those ideas do really exist.

The existence of spirits not knowable.

And therefore concerning the existence of finite spirits, as well as several other things, we must content ourselves with the evidence of faith; but universal certain propositions concerning this matter are beyond our reach. For however true it may be, v. g. that all the intelligent spirits that God ever created, do still exist; yet it can never make a part of our certain knowledge. These and the like propositions we may assent to as highly probable, but are not, I fear, in this state capable of knowing. We are not then to put others upon demonstrating, nor ourselves upon search of universal certainty in all those matters, wherein we are not capable of any other knowledge, but what our senses give us in this or that particular.

§. 13. By which it appears, that there are two sorts of propositions. 1. There is one sort of propositions concerning the existence of any thing answerable to such an idea: as having the idea of an elephant, phœnix, motion, or an angel, in my mind, the first and natural inquiry is, Whether such a thing does any where exist? And this knowledge is only of particulars. No existence of any thing without us, but only of God, can certainly be known farther than our senses inform us. 2. There is another sort of propositions, wherein is expressed

Particular propositions concerning existence are knowable.

pressed the agreement or disagreement of our abstract ideas, and their dependence on one another. Such propositions may be universal and certain. So having the idea of God and myself, of fear and obedience, I cannot but be sure that God is to be feared and obeyed by me: and this proposition will be certain, concerning man in general, if I have made an abstract idea of such a species, whereof I am one particular. But yet this proposition, how certain soever, that men ought to fear and obey God, proves not to me the existence of men in the world, but will be true of all such creatures, whenever they do exist: which certainty of such general propositions, depends on the agreement or disagreement to be discovered in those abstract ideas.

And general propositions concerning abstract ideas.

§. 14. In the former case, our knowledge is the consequence of the existence of things producing ideas in our minds by our senses: in the latter, knowledge is the consequence of the ideas (be they what they will) that are in our minds producing there general certain propositions. Many of these are called æternæ veritates, and all of them indeed are so; not from being written all or any of them in the minds of all men, or that they were any of them propositions in one's mind, till he, having got the abstract ideas, joined or separatrd them by affirmation or negation. But wheresoever we can suppose such a creature as man is, endowed with such faculties, and thereby furnished with such ideas as we have, we must conclude, he must needs, when he applies his thoughts to the consideration of his ideas, know the truth of certain propositions, that will arise from the agreement or disagreement which he will perceive in his own ideas. Such propositions are therefore called eternal truths, not because they are eternal propositions actually formed, and antecedent to the understanding, that at any time makes them; nor because they are imprinted on the mind from any patterns, that are any where out of the mind, and existed before: but because being once made about abstract ideas, so as to be true, they will, whenever they can be supposed to be made again at any time past or to come, by a mind having those

thoſe ideas, always actually be true. For names being ſuppoſed to ſtand perpetually for the ſame ideas, and the ſame ideas having immutably the ſame habitudes one to another; propoſitions concerning any abſtract ideas, that are once true, muſt needs be eternal verities.

CHAP. XII.

Of the Improvement of our Knowledge.

Knowledge is not from maxims.

§. 1. IT having been the common received opinion amongſt men of letters, that maxims were the foundation of all knowledge; and that the ſciences were each of them built upon certain præcognita, from whence the underſtanding was to take its riſe, and by which it was to conduct itſelf, in its inquiries into the matters belonging to that ſcience; the beaten road of the ſchools has been, to lay down in the beginning one or more general propoſitions, as foundations whereon to build the knowledge that was to be had of that ſubject. Theſe doctrines, thus laid down for foundations of any ſcience, were called principles, as the beginnings from which we muſt ſet out, and look no farther backwards in our inquiries, as we have already obſerved.

(The occaſion of that opinion.)

§. 2. One thing which might probably give an occaſion to this way of proceeding in other ſciences, was (as I ſuppoſe) the good ſucceſs it ſeemed to have in mathematics, wherein men, being obſerved to attain a great certainty of knowledge, theſe ſciences came by pre-eminence to be called Μαθήματα, and Μάθησις, learning, or things learned, thoroughly learned, as having of all others the greateſt certainty, clearneſs, and evidence in them.

But from the comparing clear and diſtinct ideas.

§. 3. But if any one will conſider, he will (I gueſs) find, that the great advancement and certainty of real knowledge, which men arrived to in theſe ſciences, was not owing

to the influence of thefe principles, nor derived from any peculiar advantage they received from two or three general maxims, laid down in the beginning; but from the clear, diftinct, complete ideas their thoughts were employed about, and the relation of equality and excefs fo clear between fome of them, that they had an intuitive knowledge, and by that a way to difcover it in others, and this without the help of thofe maxims. For I afk, is it not poffible for a young lad to know, that his whole body is bigger than his little finger, but by virtue of this axiom, that the whole is bigger than a part; nor be affured of it, till he has learned that maxim? Or cannot a country wench know, that having received a fhilling from one that owes her three, and a fhilling alfo from another that owes her three, the remaining debts in each of their hands are equal? Cannot fhe know this, I fay, unlefs fhe fetch the certainty of it from this maxim, that if you take equals from equals, the remainder will be equals, a maxim which poffibly fhe never heard or thought of? I defire any one to confider, from what has been elfewhere faid, which is known firft and cleareft by moft people, the particular inftance, or the general rule; and which it is that gives life and birth to the other. Thefe general rules are but the comparing our more general and abftract ideas, which are the workmanfhip of the mind made, and names given to them, for the eafier difpatch in its reafonings, and drawing into comprehenfive terms, and fhort rules, its various and multiplied obfervations. But knowledge began in the mind, and was founded on particulars; though afterwards, perhaps, no notice be taken thereof: it being natural for the mind (forward ftill to enlarge its knowledge) moft attentively to lay up thofe general notions, and make the proper ufe of them, which is to difburden the memory of the cumberfome load of particulars. For I defire it may be confidered what more certainty there is to a child, or any one, that his body, little finger and all, is bigger than his little finger alone, after you have given to his body the name whole, and to his little finger the name part, than he could have had before; or what new knowledge concerning his body

body can these two relative terms give him, which he could not have without them? Could he not know that his body was bigger than his little finger, if his language were yet so imperfect, that he had no such relative terms as whole and part? I ask farther, when he has got these names, how is he more certain that his body is a whole, and his little finger a part, than he was or might be certain, before he learnt those terms, that his body was bigger than his little finger? Any one may as reasonably doubt or deny that his little finger is a part of his body, as that it is less than his body. And he that can doubt whether it be less, will as certainly doubt whether it be a part. So that the maxim, the whole is bigger than a part, can never be made use of to prove the little finger less than the body, but when it is useless, by being brought to convince one of a truth which he knows already. For he that does not certainly know that any parcel of matter, with another parcel of matter joined to it, is bigger than either of them alone, will never be able to know it by the help of these two relative terms whole and part, make of them what maxim you please.

Dangerous to build upon precarious principles.

§. 4. But be it in the mathematics as it will, whether it be clearer, that taking an inch from a black line of two inches, and an inch from a red line of two inches, the remaining parts of the two lines will be equal, or that if you take equals from equals, the remainder will be equals: which, I say, of these two is the clearer and first known, I leave it to any one to determine, it not being material to my present occasion. That which I have here to do, is to inquire, whether if it be the readiest way to knowledge to begin with general maxims, and build upon them, it be yet a safe way to take the principles, which are laid down in any other science as unquestionable truths; and so receive them without examination, and adhere to them, without suffering them to be doubted of, because mathematicians have been so happy, or so fair, to use none but self-evident and undeniable. If this be so, I know not what may not pass

for truth in morality, what may not be introduced and proved in natural philosophy.

Let that principle of some of the philosophers, that all is matter, and that there is nothing else, be received for certain and indubitable, and it will be easy to be seen by the writings of some that have revived it again in our days, what consequences it will lead us into. Let any one, with Polemo, take the world; or with the stoics, the æther, or the sun; or with Anaximenes, the air; to be God; and what a divinity, religion and worship must we needs have! Nothing can be so dangerous as principles thus taken up without questioning or examination; especially if they be such as concern morality, which influence men's lives, and give a bias to all their actions. Who might not justly expect another kind of life in Aristippus, who placed happiness in bodily pleasure; and in Antisthenes, who made virtue sufficient to felicity? And he who, with Plato, shall place beatitude in the knowledge of God, will have his thoughts raised to other contemplations, than those who look not beyond this spot of earth, and those perishing things which are to be had in it. He that, with Archelaus, shall lay it down as a principle, that right and wrong, honest and dishonest, are defined only by laws, and not by nature, will have other measures of moral rectitude, and pravity, than those who take it for granted, that we are under obligations antecedent to all human constitutions.

This is no certain way to truth.

§. 5. If therefore those that pass for principles are not certain (which we must have some way to know, that we may be able to distinguish them from those that are doubtful) but are only made so to us by our blind assent, we are liable to be misled by them; and instead of being guided into truth, we shall, by principles, be only confirmed in mistake and errour.

But to compare clear complete ideas under ready names.

§. 6. But since the knowledge of the certainty of principles, as well as of all other truths, depends only upon the perception we have of the agreement or disagreement of our ideas, the way to improve our knowledge

ledge is not, I am ſure, blindly, and with an implicit faith, to receive and ſwallow principles; but is, I think, to get and fix in our minds clear, diſtinct, and complete ideas, as far as they are to be had, and annex to them proper and conſtant names. And thus, perhaps, without any other principles, but barely conſidering thoſe ideas, and by comparing them one with another, finding their agreement and diſagreement, and their ſeveral relations and habitudes; we ſhall get more true and clear knowledge, by the conduct of this one rule, than by taking up principles, and thereby putting our minds into the diſpoſal of others.

'The true method of advancing knowledge is by conſidering our abſtract ideas.

§. 7. We muſt therefore, if we will proceed as reaſon adviſes, adapt our methods of inquiry to the nature of the ideas we examine, and the truth we ſearch after. General and certain truths are only founded in the habitudes and relations of abſtract ideas. A ſagacious and methodical application of our thoughts, for the finding out theſe relations, is the only way to diſcover all, that can be put with truth and certainty concerning them into general propoſitions. By what ſteps we are to proceed in theſe, is to be learned in the ſchools of the mathematicians, who from very plain and eaſy beginnings, by gentle degrees, and a continued chain of reaſonings, proceed to the diſcovery and demonſtration of truths, that appear at firſt ſight beyond human capacity. The art of finding proofs, and the admirable methods they have invented for the ſingling out, and laying in order, thoſe intermediate ideas, that demonſtratively ſhow the equality or inequality of unapplicable quantities, is that which has carried them ſo far, and produced ſuch wonderful and unexpected diſcoveries: but whether ſomething like this, in reſpect of other ideas, as well as thoſe of magnitude, may not in time be found out, I will not determine. This, I think, I may ſay, that if other ideas, that are the real as well as nominal eſſences of their ſpecies, were purſued in the way familiar to mathematicians, they would carry our thoughts farther, and with greater evidence and clearneſs, than poſſibly we are apt to imagine.

By which morality alſo may be made clearer.

§. 8. This gave me the confidence to advance that conjecture, which I ſuggeſt, chap. iii. viz. that morality is capable of demonſtration, as well as mathematics. For the ideas that ethics are converſant about being all real eſſences, and ſuch as I imagine have a diſcoverable connexion and agreement one with another; ſo far as we can find their habitudes and relations, ſo far we ſhall be poſſeſſed of certain, real, and general truths: and I doubt not, but, if a right method were taken, a great part of morality might be made out with that clearneſs, that could leave, to a conſidering man, no more reaſon to doubt, than he could have to doubt of the truth of propoſitions in mathematics, which have been demonſtrated to him.

But knowledge of bodies is to be improved only by experience.

§. 9. In our ſearch after the knowledge of ſubſtances, our want of ideas, that are ſuitable to ſuch a way of proceeding, obliges us to a quite different method. We advance not here, as in the other (where our abſtract ideas are real as well as nominal eſſences) by contemplating our ideas, and conſidering their relations and correſpondencies; that helps us very little, for the reaſons, that in another place we have at large ſet down. By which I think it is evident, that ſubſtances afford matter of very little general knowledge; and the bare contemplation of their abſtract ideas will carry us but a very little way in the ſearch of truth and certainty. What then are we to do for the improvement of our knowledge in ſubſtantial beings? Here we are to take a quite contrary courſe; the want of ideas of their real eſſences, ſends us from our own thoughts to the things themſelves, as they exiſt. Experience here muſt teach me what reaſon cannot; and it is by trying alone, that I can certainly know, what other qualities co-exiſt with thoſe of my complex idea, v. g. whether that yellow, heavy, fuſible body, I call gold, be malleable, or no; which experience (which way ever it prove, in that particular body, I examine) makes me not certain, that it is ſo in all, or any other yellow, heavy, fuſible bodies, but that which I have tried.

tried. Becauſe it is no conſequence one way or the other from my complex idea; the neceſſity or inconſiſtence of malleability hath no viſible connexion with the combination of that colour, weight, and fuſibility in any body. What I have ſaid here of the nominal eſſence of gold, ſuppoſed to conſiſt of a body of ſuch a determinate colour, weight, and fuſibility, will hold true, if malleableneſs, fixedneſs, and ſolubility in aqua regia be added to it. Our reaſonings from theſe ideas will carry us but a little way in the certain diſcovery of the other properties in thoſe maſſes of matter wherein all theſe are to be found. Becauſe the other properties of ſuch bodies, depending not on theſe, but on that unknown real eſſence, on which theſe alſo depend, we cannot by them diſcover the reſt; we can go no farther than the ſimple ideas of our nominal eſſence will carry us, which is very little beyond themſelves; and ſo afford us but very ſparingly any certain, univerſal, and uſeful truths. For upon trial having found that particular piece (and all others of that colour, weight, and fuſibility, that I ever tried) malleable, that alſo makes now perhaps a part of my complex idea, part of my nominal eſſence of gold: whereby though I make my complex idea, to which I affix the name gold, to conſiſt of more ſimple ideas than before; yet ſtill, it not containing the real eſſence of any ſpecies of bodies, it helps me not certainly to know (I ſay to know, perhaps it may to conjecture) the other remaining properties of that body, farther than they have a viſible connexion with ſome or all of the ſimple ideas, that make up my nominal eſſence. For example, I cannot be certain from this complex idea, whether gold be fixed, or no; becauſe, as before, there is no neceſſary connexion or inconſiſtence to be *diſcovered betwixt a complex idea of a body yellow*, heavy, fuſible, malleable; betwixt theſe, I ſay, and fixedneſs; ſo that I may certainly know, that in whatſoever body theſe are found, there fixedneſs is ſure to be. Here again for aſſurance, I muſt apply myſelf to experience; as far as that reaches, I may have certain knowledge, but no farther.

This may procure us convenience, not ſcience.

§. 10. I deny not but a man, accuſtomed to rational and regular experiments, ſhall be able to ſee farther into the nature of bodies, and gueſs righter at their yet unknown properties, than one that is a ſtranger to them: but yet, as I have ſaid, this is but judgment and opinion, not knowledge and certainty. This way of getting and improving our knowledge in ſubſtances only by experience and hiſtory, which is all that the weakneſs of our faculties in this ſtate of mediocrity, which we are in in this world, can attain to; makes me ſuſpect, that natural philoſophy is not capable of being made a ſcience. We are able, I imagine, to reach very little general knowledge concerning the ſpecies of bodies, and their ſeveral properties. Experiments and hiſtorical obſervations we may have, from which we may draw advantages of eaſe and health, and thereby increaſe our ſtock of conveniencies for this life; but beyond this I fear our talents reach not, nor are our faculties, as I gueſs, able to advance.

We are fitted for moral knowledge and natural improvements.

§. 11. From whence it is obvious to conclude, that ſince our faculties are not fitted to penetrate into the internal fabrick and real eſſences of bodies; but yet plainly diſcover to us the being of a God, and the knowledge of ourſelves, enough to lead us into a full and clear diſcovery of our duty and great concernment; it will become us, as rational creatures, to employ thoſe faculties we have about what they are moſt adapted to, and follow the direction of nature, where it ſeems to point us out the way. For it is rational to conclude that our proper employment lies in thoſe inquiries, and in that ſort of knowledge which is moſt ſuited to our natural capacities, and carries in it our greateſt intereſt, i. e. the condition of our eternal eſtate. Hence I think I may conclude, that morality is the proper ſcience and buſineſs of mankind in general; (who are both concerned, and fitted to ſearch out their ſummum bonum) as ſeveral arts, converſant about ſeveral parts of nature, are the lot and private talent of particular men, for the common uſe of human life, and their own

own particular subsistence in this world. Of what consequence the discovery of one natural body, and its properties, may be to human life, the whole great continent of America is a convincing instance: whose ignorance in useful arts, and want of the greatest part of the conveniencies of life, in a country that abounded with all sorts of natural plenty, I think, may be attributed to their ignorance of what was to be found in a very ordinary despicable stone, I mean the mineral of iron. And whatever we think of our parts or improvements in this part of the world, where knowledge and plenty seem to vie with each other; yet to any one, that will seriously reflect on it, I suppose, it will appear past doubt, that were the use of iron lost among us, we should in a few ages be unavoidably reduced to the wants and ignorance of the ancient savage Americans, whose natural endowments and provisions come no way short of those of the most flourishing and polite nations. So that he who first made known the use of that contemptible mineral, may be truly styled the father of arts, and author of plenty.

But must beware of hypotheses and wrong principles.

§. 12. I would not therefore be thought to disesteem, or dissuade the study of nature. I readily agree the contemplation of his works gives us occasion to admire, revere, and glorify their author: and, if rightly directed, may be of greater benefit to mankind, than the monuments of exemplary charity, that have at so great charge been raised by the founders of hospitals and almshouses. He that first invented printing, discovered the use of the compass, or made public the virtue and right use of kin kina, did more for the propagation of knowledge, for the supply and increase of useful commodities, and saved more from the grave, than those who built colleges, work-houses and hospitals. All that I would say, is, that we should not be too forwardly possessed with the opinion, or expectation of knowledge, where it is not to be had; or by ways that will not attain to it: that we should not take doubtful systems for complete sciences, nor unintelligible notions for scientifical demonstrations. In the knowledge of bodies, we must be

be content to glean what we can from particular experiments: ſince we cannot, from a diſcovery of their real eſſences, graſp at a time whole ſheaves, and in bundles comprehend the nature and properties of whole ſpecies together. Where our inquiry is concerning co-exiſtence, or repugnancy to co-exiſt, which by contemplation of our ideas we cannot diſcover; there experience, obſervation, and natural hiſtory muſt give us by our ſenſes, and by retail, an inſight into corporeal ſubſtances. The knowledge of bodies we muſt get by our ſenſes, warily employed in taking notice of their qualities and operations on one another: and what we hope to know of ſeparate ſpirits in this world we muſt, I think, expect only from revelation. He that ſhall conſider how little general maxims, precarious principles, and hypotheſes laid down at pleaſure, have promoted true knowledge, or helped to ſatisfy the inquiries of rational men after real improvements; how little, I ſay, the ſetting out at that end has, for many ages together, advanced men's progreſs towards the knowledge of natural philoſophy; will think we have reaſon to thank thoſe, who in this latter age have taken another courſe, and have trod out to us, though not an eaſier way to learned ignorance, yet a ſurer way to profitable knowledge.

The true uſe of hypotheſes.

§. 13. Not that we may not, to explain any phænomena of nature, make uſe of any probable hypotheſis whatſoever: hypotheſes, if they are well made, are at leaſt great helps to the memory, and often direct us to new diſcoveries. But my meaning is, that we ſhould not take up any one too haſtily (which the mind, that would always penetrate into the cauſes of things, and have principles to reſt on, is very apt to do) till we have very well examined particulars, and made ſeveral experiments, in that thing which we would explain by our hypotheſis, and ſee whether it will agree to them all; whether our principles will carry us quite through, and not be as inconſiſtent with one phænomenon of nature, as they ſeem to accommodate and explain another. And at leaſt that we take care, that the name of principles deceive us not, nor impoſe on us, by making us receive that

that for an unquestionable truth, which is really at best but a very doubtful conjecture, such as are most (I had almost said all) of the hypotheses in natural philosophy.

Clear and distinct ideas with settled names, and the finding of those which show their agreement or disagreement, are the ways to enlarge our knowledge.

§. 14. But whether natural philosophy be capable of certainty or no, the ways to enlarge our knowledge, as far as we are capable, seem to me, in short, to be these two:

First, the first is to get and settle in our minds determined ideas of those things, whereof we have general or specific names; at least so many of them as we would consider and improve our knowledge in, or reason about. And if they be specific ideas of substances, we should endeavour also to make them as complete as we can, whereby I mean, that we should put together as many simple ideas, as, being constantly observed to co-exist, may perfectly determine the species: and each of those simple ideas, which are the ingredients of our complex ones, should be clear and distinct in our minds. For it being evident, that our knowledge cannot exceed our ideas; as far as they are either imperfect, confused, or obscure, we cannot expect to have certain, perfect, or clear knowledge.

Secondly, the other is the art of finding out those intermediate ideas, which may show us the agreement or repugnancy of other ideas, which cannot be immediately compared.

Mathematics, an instance of it.

§. 15. That these two (and not the relying on maxims, and drawing consequences from some general propositions) are the right methods of improving our knowledge in the ideas of other modes besides those of quantity, the consideration of mathematical knowledge will easily inform us. Where first we shall find, that he that has not a perfect and clear idea of those angles, or figures of which he desires to know any thing, is utterly thereby incapable of any knowledge about them. Suppose but a man not to have a perfect exact idea of a right angle, a scalenum, or trapezium; and there is nothing more certain, than that he

he will in vain seek any demonstration about them. Farther, it is evident, that it was not the influence of those maxims, which are taken for principles in mathematics, that hath led the masters of that science into those wonderful discoveries they have made. Let a man of good parts know all the maxims generally made use of in mathematics ever so perfectly, and contemplate their extent and consequences as much as he pleases, he will by their assistance, I suppose, scarce ever come to know that the square of the hypothenuse in a right-angled triangle is equal to the squares of the two other sides. The knowledge, that the whole is equal to all its parts, and if you take equals from equals, the remainder will be equal, &c. helped him not, I presume, to this demonstration: and a man may, I think, pore long enough on those axioms, without ever seeing one jot the more of mathematical truths. They have been discovered by the thoughts otherwise applied: the mind had other objects, other views before it, far different from those maxims, when it first got the knowledge of such truths in mathematics, which men well enough acquainted with those received axioms, but ignorant of their method who first made these demonstrations, can never sufficiently admire. And who knows what methods, to enlarge our knowledge in other parts of science, may hereafter be invented, answering that of algebra in mathematics, which so readily finds out the ideas of quantities to measure others by; whose equality or proportion we could otherwise very hardly, or, perhaps, never come to know?

CHAP. XIII.

Some farther Considerations concerning our Knowledge.

Our knowledge partly necessary, partly voluntary.

§. 1. OUR knowledge, as in other things, so in this, has so great a conformity with our sight, that it is neither wholly necessary, nor wholly voluntary. If our

our knowledge were altogether necessary, all men's knowledge would not only be alike, but every man would know all that is knowable: and if it were wholly voluntary, some men so little regard or value it, that they would have extreme little, or none at all. Men that have senses cannot choose but receive some ideas by them; and if they have memory, they cannot but retain some of them; and if they have any distinguishing faculty, cannot but perceive the agreement or disagreement of some of them one with another: as he that has eyes, if he will open them by day, cannot but see some objects, and perceive a difference in them. But though a man, with his eyes open in the light, cannot but see; yet there be certain objects, which he may choose whether he will turn his eyes to; there may be in his reach a book containing pictures and discourses, capable to delight or instruct him, which yet he may never have the will to open, never take the pains to look into.

The application voluntary; but we know as things are, not as we please.

§. 2. There is also another thing in a man's power, and that is, though he turns his eyes sometimes towards an object, yet he may choose whether he will curiously survey it, and with an intent application endeavour to observe accurately all that is visible in it. But yet what he does see, he cannot see otherwise than he does. It depends not on his will to see that black which appears yellow; nor to persuade himself, that what actually scalds him, feels cold. The earth will not appear painted with flowers, nor the fields covered with verdure, whenever he has a mind to it: in the cold winter he cannot help seeing it white and hoary, if he will look abroad. Just thus is it with our understanding; all that is voluntary in our knowledge, is the employing or withholding any of our faculties, from this or that sort of objects, and a more or less accurate survey of them: but, they being employed, our will hath no power to determine the knowledge of the mind one way or other; that is done only by the objects themselves, as far as they are clearly discovered. And therefore, as far as men's senses are conversant about external objects, the mind cannot but receive those

ideas which are prefented by them, and be informed of the exiftence of things without: and fo far as men's thoughts converfe with their own determined ideas, they cannot but, in fome meafure, obferve the agreement or difagreement that is to be found amongft fome of them, which is fo far knowledge: and if they have names for thofe ideas which they have thus confidered, they muft needs be affured of the truth of thofe propofitions, which exprefs that agreement or difagreement they perceive in them, and be undoubtedly convinced of thofe truths. For what a man fees, he cannot but fee; and what he perceives, he cannot but know that he perceives.

Inftance, in numbers.

§. 3. Thus he that has got the ideas of numbers, and hath taken the pains to compare one, two, and three to fix, cannot choofe but know that they are equal: he that hath got the idea of a triangle, and found the ways to meafure its angles, and their magnitudes, is certain that its three angles are equal to two right ones; and can as little doubt of that, as of this truth, "that it is impoffible for "the fame thing to be, and not to be."

In natural religion.

He alfo that hath the idea of an intelligent, but frail and weak being, made by and depending on another, who is eternal, omnipotent, perfectly wife and good, will as certainly know that man is to honour, fear, and obey God, as that the fun fhines when he fees it. For if he hath but the ideas of two fuch beings in his mind, and will turn his thoughts that way, and confider them, he will as certainly find that the inferior, finite and dependent, is under an obligation to obey the fupreme and infinite, as he is certain to find, that three, four, and feven are lefs than fifteen, if he will confider and compute thofe numbers; nor can he be furer in a clear morning that the fun is rifen, if he will but open his eyes, and turn them that way. But yet thefe truths, being ever fo certain, ever fo clear, he may be ignorant of either, or all of them, who will never take the pains to employ his faculties, as he fhould, to inform himfelf about them.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

Of Judgment.

§. 1. THE underſtanding faculties being given to man, not barely for ſpeculation, but alſo for the conduct of his life, man would be at a great loſs, if he had nothing to direct him but what has the certainty of true knowledge. For that being very ſhort and ſcanty, as we have ſeen, he would be often utterly in the dark, and in moſt of the actions of his life, perfectly at a ſtand, had he nothing to guide him in the abſence of clear and certain knowledge. He that will not eat, till he has demonſtration that it will nouriſh him; he that will not ſtir, till he infallibly knows the buſineſs he goes about will ſucceed; will have little elſe to do, but to ſit ſtill and periſh.

Our knowledge being ſhort, we want ſomething elſe.

§. 2. Therefore as God has ſet ſome things in broad day-light; as he has given us ſome certain knowledge, though limited to a few things in compariſon, probably, as a taſte of what intellectual creatures are capable of, to excite in us a deſire and endeavour after a better ſtate: ſo in the greateſt part of our concernments he has afforded us only the twilight, as I may ſo ſay, of probability; ſuitable, I preſume, to that ſtate of mediocrity and probationerſhip, he has been pleaſed to place us in here; wherein, to check our over-confidence and preſumption, we might by every day's experience be made ſenſible of our ſhort-ſightedneſs and liableneſs to errour; the ſenſe whereof might be a conſtant admonition to us, to ſpend the days of this our pilgrimage with induſtry and care, in the ſearch and following of that way, which might lead us to a ſtate of greater perfection: it being highly rational to think, even were revelation ſilent in the caſe, that as men employ thoſe talents God has given them here, they ſhall accordingly receive their rewards at the cloſe of the day, when their ſun ſhall ſet, and night ſhall put an end to their labours.

What uſe to be made of this twilight ſtate.

Judgment supplies the want of knowledge.

§. 3. The faculty which God has given man to supply the want of clear and certain knowledge, in cases where that cannot be had, is judgment: whereby the mind takes its ideas to agree or disagree; or which is the same, any proposition to be true or false, without perceiving a demonstrative evidence in the proofs. The mind sometimes exercises this judgment out of necessity, where demonstrative proofs and certain knowledge are not to be had; and sometimes out of laziness, unskilfulness, or haste, even where demonstrative and certain proofs are to be had. Men often stay not warily to examine the agreement or disagreement of two ideas, which they are desirous or concerned to know; but either incapable of such attention as is requisite in a long train of gradations, or impatient of delay, lightly cast their eyes on, or wholly pass by the proofs; and so without making out the demonstration, determine of the agreement or disagreement of two ideas, as it were by a view of them as they are at a distance, and take it to be the one or the other, as seems most likely to them upon such a loose survey. This faculty of the mind, when it is exercised immediately about things, is called judgment; when about truths delivered in words, is most commonly called assent or dissent: which being the most usual way, wherein the mind has occasion to employ this faculty, I shall under these terms treat of it, as least liable in our language to equivocation.

Judgment is the presuming things to be so, without perceiving it.

§. 4. Thus the mind has two faculties, conversant about truth and falshood.

First, knowledge, whereby it certainly perceives, and is undoubtedly satisfied of the agreement or disagreement of any ideas.

Secondly, judgment, which is the putting ideas together, or separating them from one another in the mind, when their certain agreement or disagreement is not perceived, but presumed to be so; which is, as the word imports, taken to be so before it certainly appears. And if it so unites, or separates them, as in reality things are, it is right judgment.

CHAP.

CHAP. XV.

Of Probability.

§. 1. AS demonſtration is the ſhowing the agreement or diſagreement of two ideas, by the intervention of one or more proofs, which have a conſtant, immutable, and viſible connexion one with another; ſo probability is nothing but the appearance of ſuch an agreement or diſagreement, by the intervention of proofs, whoſe connexion is not conſtant and immutable, or at leaſt is not perceived to be ſo, but is, or appears for the moſt part to be ſo, and is enough to induce the mind to judge the propoſition to be true or falſe, rather than the contrary. For example: in the demonſtration of it, a man perceives the certain immutable connexion there is of equality between the three angles of a triangle, and thoſe intermediate ones which are made uſe of to ſhow their equality to two right ones; and ſo by an intuitive knowledge of the agreement or diſagreement of the intermediate ideas in each ſtep of the progreſs, the whole ſeries is continued with an evidence, which clearly ſhows the agreement or diſagreement of thoſe three angles in equality to two right ones: and thus he has certain knowledge that it is ſo. But another man, who never took the pains to obſerve the demonſtration, hearing a mathematician, a man of credit, affirm the three angles of a triangle to be equal to two right ones, aſſents to it, i. e. receives it for true. In which caſe the foundation of his aſſent is the probability of the thing, the proof being ſuch as for the moſt part carries truth with it: the man, on whoſe teſtimony he receives it, not being wont to affirm any thing contrary to, or beſides his knowledge, eſpecially in matters of this kind. So that that which cauſes his aſſent to this propoſition, that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right ones, that which makes him take theſe ideas to agree, without knowing

Probability is the appearance of agreement upon fallible proofs.

them to do so, is the wonted veracity of the speaker in other cases, or his supposed veracity in this.

It is to supply the want of knowledge.

§. 2. Our knowledge, as has been shown, being very narrow, and we not happy enough to find certain truth in every thing which we have occasion to consider; most of the propositions we think, reason, discourse, nay act upon, are such, as we cannot have undoubted knowledge of their truth: yet some of them border so near upon certainty, that we make no doubt at all about them; but assent to them as firmly, and act, according to that assent, as resolutely, as if they were infallibly demonstrated, and that our knowledge of them was perfect and certain. But there being degrees herein from the very neighbourhood of certainty and demonstration, quite down to improbability and unlikeness, even to the confines of impossibility; and also degrees of assent from full assurance and confidence, quite down to conjecture, doubt, and distrust: I shall come now, (having, as I think, found out the bounds of human knowledge and certainty) in the next place, to consider the several degrees and grounds of probability, and assent or faith.

Being that which makes us presume things to be true before we know them to be so.

§. 3. Probability is likelinesS to be true, the very notation of the word signifying such a proposition, for which there be arguments or proofs, to make it pass or be received for true. The entertainment the mind gives this sort of propositions, is called belief, assent, or opinion, which is the admitting or receiving any proposition for true, upon arguments or proofs that are found to persuade us to receive it as true, without certain knowledge that it is so. And herein lies the difference between probability and certainty, faith and knowledge, that in all the parts of knowledge there is intuition; each immediate idea, each step has its visible and certain connexion; in belief, not so. That which makes me believe is something extraneous to the thing I believe; something not evidently joined on both sides to, and so not manifestly showing the agreement or disagreement of those ideas that are under consideration.

§. 4.

§. 4. Probability then, being to ſupply the defect of our knowledge, and to guide us where that fails, is always converſant about propoſitions, whereof we have no certainty, but only ſome inducements to receive them for true. The grounds of it are, in ſhort, theſe two following.

The grounds of probability are two; conformity with our own experience, or the teſtimony of others experience.

Firſt, the conformity of any thing with our own knowledge, obſervation, and experience.

Secondly, the teſtimony of others, vouching their obſervation and experience. In the teſtimony of others, is to be conſidered, 1. The number. 2. The integrity. 3. The ſkill of the witneſſes. 4. The deſign of the author, where it is a teſtimony out of a book cited. 5. The conſiſtency of the parts, and circumſtances of the relation. 6. Contrary teſtimonies.

§. 5. Probability wanting that intuitive evidence, which infallibly determines the underſtanding, and produces certain knowledge, the mind, if it would proceed rationally, ought to examine all the grounds of probability, and ſee how they make more or leſs for or againſt any propoſition, before it aſſents to, or diſſents from it; and upon a due balancing the whole, reject, or receive it, with a more or leſs firm aſſent, proportionably to the preponderancy of the greater grounds of probability on one ſide or the other. For example:

In this all the arguments pro and con ought to be examined before we come to a judgment.

If I myſelf ſee a man walk on the ice, it is paſt probability, it is knowledge; but if another tells me he ſaw a man in England, in the midſt of a ſharp winter, walk upon water hardened with cold; this has ſo great conformity with what is uſually obſerved to happen, that I am diſpoſed by the nature of the thing itſelf to aſſent to it, unleſs ſome manifeſt ſuſpicion attend the relation of that matter of fact. But if the ſame thing be told to one born between the tropics, who never ſaw nor heard of any ſuch thing before, there the whole probability relies on teſtimony: and as the relators are more in number, and of more credit, and have no intereſt to

ſpeak contrary to the truth; ſo that matter of fact is like to find more or leſs belief. Though to a man, whoſe experience has always been quite contrary, and who has never heard of any thing like it, the moſt untainted credit of a witneſs will ſcarce be able to find belief. As it happened to a Dutch ambaſſador, who entertaining the king of Siam with the particularities of Holland, which he was inquiſitive after, amongſt other things told him, that the water in his country would ſometimes, in cold weather, be ſo hard, that men walked upon it, and that it would bear an elephant if he were there. To which the king replied, "Hitherto I have "believed the ſtrange things you have told me, becauſe "I look upon you as a ſober fair man, but now I am "ſure you lye."

They being capable of great variety.

§. 6. Upon theſe grounds depends the probability of any propoſition: and as the conformity of our knowledge, as the certainty of obſervations, as the frequency and conſtancy of experience, and the number and credibility of teſtimonies, do more or leſs agree or diſagree with it, ſo is any propoſition in itſelf more or leſs probable. There is another, I confeſs, which, though by itſelf it be no true ground of probability, yet is often made uſe of for one, by which men moſt commonly regulate their aſſent, and upon which they pin their faith more than any thing elſe, and that is the opinion of others: though there cannot be a more dangerous thing to rely on, nor more likely to miſlead one; ſince there is much more falſhood and errour among men, than truth and knowledge. And if the opinions and perſuaſions of others, whom we know and think well of, be a ground of aſſent, men have reaſon to be Heathens in Japan, Mahometans in Turky, Papiſts in Spain, Proteſtants in England, and Lutherans in Sweden. But of this wrong ground of aſſent I ſhall have occaſion to ſpeak more at large in another place.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVI.

Of the Degrees of Assent.

§. 1. THE grounds of probability we have laid down in the foregoing chapter; as they are the foundations on which our assent is built, so are they also the measure whereby its several degrees are, or ought to be regulated: only we are to take notice, that whatever grounds of probability there may be, they yet operate no farther on the mind, which searches after truth, and endeavours to judge right, than they appear; at least in the first judgment or search that the mind makes. I confess, in the opinions men have, and firmly stick to, in the world, their assent is not always from an actual view of the reasons that at first prevailed with them: it being in many cases almost impossible, and in most very hard, even for those who have very admirable memories, to retain all the proofs, which upon a due examination made them embrace that side of the question. It suffices that they have once with care and fairness sifted the matter as far as they could; and that they have searched into all the particulars, that they could imagine to give any light to the question; and with the best of their skill cast up the account upon the whole evidence: and thus having once found on which side the probability appeared to them, after as full and exact an inquiry as they can make, they lay up the conclusion in their memories, as a truth they have discovered; and for the future they remain satisfied with the testimony of their memories, that this is the opinion, that by the proofs they have once seen of it deserves such a degree of their assent as they afford it.

Our assent ought to be regulated by the grounds of probability.

§. 2. This is all that the greatest part of men are capable of doing, in regulating their opinions and judgments; unless a man will exact of them, either to retain distinctly in their memories all the proofs concerning

These cannot always be actually in view, and then we must

content ourselves with the remembrance that we once saw ground for such a degree of assent.

any probable truth, and that too in the same order, and regular deduction of consequences in which they have formerly placed or seen them; which sometimes is enough to fill a large volume on one single question: or else they must require a man, for every opinion that he embraces, every day to examine the proofs: both which are impossible. It is unavoidable therefore that the memory be relied on in the case, and that men be persuaded of several opinions, whereof the proofs are not actually in their thoughts; nay, which perhaps they are not able actually to recal. Without this the greatest part of men must be either very sceptics, or change every moment, and yield themselves up to whoever, having lately studied the question, offers them arguments; which, for want of memory, they are not able presently to answer.

The ill consequence of this, if our former judgments were not rightly made.

§. 3. I cannot but own, that men's sticking to their past judgment, and adhering firmly to conclusions formerly made, is often the cause of great obstinacy in errour and mistake. But the fault is not that they rely on their memories for what they have before well judged; but because they judged before they had well examined. May we not find a great number (not to say the greatest part) of men that think they have formed right judgments of several matters; and that for no other reason, but because they never thought otherwise? who imagine themselves to have judged right, only because they never questioned, never examined their own opinions? Which is indeed to think they judged right, because they never judged at all: and yet these of all men hold their opinions with the greatest stiffness; those being generally the most fierce and firm in their tenets, who have least examined them. What we once know, we are certain is so: and we may be secure, that there are no latent proofs undiscovered, which may overturn our knowledge, or bring it in doubt. But, in matters of probability, it is not in every case we can be sure that we have all the particulars before us, that any way concern the question; and that there

there is no evidence behind, and yet unseen, which may cast the probability on the other side, and outweigh all that at present seems to preponderate with us. Who almost is there that hath the leisure, patience, and means, to collect together all the proofs concerning most of the opinions he has, so as safely to conclude that he hath a clear and full view; and that there is no more to be alledged for his better information? And yet we are forced to determine ourselves on the one side or other. The conduct of our lives, and the management of our great concerns, will not bear delay: for these depend, for the most part, on the determination of our judgment in points wherein we are not capable of certain and demonstrative knowledge, and wherein it is necessary for us to embrace the one side or the other.

The right use of it, is mutual charity and forbearance.

§. 4. Since therefore it is unavoidable to the greatest part of men, if not all, to have several opinions, without certain and indubitable proofs of their truth; and it carries too great an imputation of ignorance, lightness, or folly, for men to quit and renounce their former tenets presently upon the offer of an argument, which they cannot immediately answer, and show the insufficiency of: it would methinks become all men to maintain peace, and the common offices of humanity and friendship, in the diversity of opinions; since we cannot reasonably expect, that any one should readily and obsequiously quit his own opinion, and embrace ours with a blind resignation to an authority, which the understanding of man acknowledges not. For however it may often mistake, it can own no other guide but reason, nor blindly submit to the will and dictates of another. If he, you would bring over to your sentiments, be one that examines before he assents, you must give him leave at his leisure to go over the account again, and, recalling what is out of his mind, examine all the particulars, to see on which side the advantage lies: and if he will not think our arguments of weight enough to engage him a-new in so much pains, it is but what we often do ourselves in the like case; and we should take it amiss if others should prescribe to us what points we

should study. And if he be one who takes his opinions upon trust, how can we imagine that he should renounce those tenets which time and custom have so settled in his mind, that he thinks them self-evident, and of an unquestionable certainty; or which he takes to be impressions he has received from God himself, or from men sent by him? How can we expect, I say, that opinions thus settled should be given up to the arguments or authority of a stranger, or adversary; especially if there be any suspicion of interest or design, as there never fails to be, where men find themselves ill treated? We should do well to commiserate our mutual ignorance, and endeavour to remove it in all the gentle and fair ways of information; and not instantly treat others ill, as obstinate and perverse, because they will not renounce their own, and receive our opinions, or at least those we would force upon them, when it is more than probable, that we are no less obstinate in not embracing some of theirs. For where is the man that has incontestable evidence of the truth of all that he holds, or of the falshood of all he condemns; or can say, that he has examined to the bottom all his own, or other men's opinions? The necessity of believing, without knowledge, nay often upon very slight grounds, in this fleeting state of action and blindness we are in, should make us more busy and careful to inform ourselves, than constrain others. At least those, who have not thoroughly examined to the bottom all their own tenets, must confess they are unfit to prescribe to others; and are unreasonable in imposing that as truth on other men's belief, which they themselves have not searched into, nor weighed the arguments of probability, on which they should receive or reject it. Those who have fairly and truly examined, and are thereby got past doubt in all the doctrines they profess and govern themselves by, would have a juster pretence to require others to follow them: but these are so few in number, and find so little reason to be magisterial in their opinions, that nothing insolent and imperious is to be expected from them: and there is reason to think, that, if men were better instructed themselves, they would be less imposing on others.

§. 5. But to return to the grounds of assent, and the several degrees of it, we are to take notice, that the propositions we receive upon inducements of probability, are of two sorts; either concerning some particular existence, or, as it is usually termed, matter of fact, which falling under observation, is capable of human testimony; or else concerning things, which being beyond the discovery of our senses, are not capable of any such testimony.

Probability is either of matter of fact or speculation.

§. 6. Concerning the first of these, viz. particular matter of fact.

The concurrent experience of all other men with ours produces assurance approaching to knowledge.

First, where any particular thing, consonant to the constant observation of ourselves and others in the like case, comes attested by the concurrent reports of all that mention it, we receive it as easily, and build as firmly upon it, as if it were certain knowledge; and we reason and act thereupon with as little doubt, as if it were perfect demonstration. Thus, if all Englishmen, who have occasion to mention it, should affirm that it froze in England the last winter, or that there were swallows seen there in the summer; I think a man could almost as little doubt of it, as that seven and four are eleven. The first therefore, and highest degree of probability, is, when the general consent of all men, in all ages, as far as it can be known, concurs with a man's constant and never-failing experience in like cases, to confirm the truth of any particular matter of fact attested by fair witnesses: such are all the stated constitutions and properties of bodies, and the regular proceedings of causes and effects in the ordinary course of nature. This we call an argument from the nature of things themselves. For what our own and other men's constant observation has found always to be after the same manner, that we with reason conclude to be the effect of steady and regular causes, though they come not within the reach of our knowledge. Thus, that fire warmed a man, made lead fluid, and changed the colour or consistency in wood or charcoal; that iron sunk in water, and swam in quicksilver: these and the like

like propositions about particular facts, being agreeable to our constant experience, as often as we have to do with these matters; and being generally spoke of (when mentioned by others) as things found constantly to be so, and therefore not so much as controverted by any body; we are put past doubt, that a relation affirming any such thing to have been, or any predication that it will happen again in the same manner, is very true. These probabilities rise so near to certainty, that they govern our thoughts as absolutely, and influence all our actions as fully, as the most evident demonstration; and in what concerns us, we make little or no difference between them and certain knowledge. Our belief, thus grounded, rises to assurance.

Unquestionable testimony and experience for the most part produce confidence.

§. 7. Secondly, the next degree of probability is, when I find by my own experience, and the agreement of all others that mention it, a thing to be, for the most part, so; and that the particular instance of it is attested by many and undoubted witnesses, v. g. history giving us such an account of men in all ages; and my own experience, as far as I had an opportunity to observe, confirming it, that most men prefer their private advantage to the public: if all historians that write of Tiberius say that Tiberius did so, it is extremely probable. And in this case, our assent has a sufficient foundation to raise itself to a degree which we may call confidence.

Fair testimony, and the nature of the thing indifferent, produce also confident belief.

§. 8. Thirdly, in things that happen indifferently, as that a bird should fly this or that way; that it should thunder on a man's right or left hand, &c. when any particular matter of fact is vouched by the concurrent testimony of unsuspected witnesses, there our assent is also unavoidable. Thus, that there is such a city in Italy as Rome; that, about one thousand seven hundred years ago, there lived in it a man, called Julius Cæsar; that he was a general, and that he won a battle against another, called Pompey: this, though in the nature of the thing there be nothing for nor against it, yet being related by historians of credit,

credit, and contradicted by no one writer, a man cannot avoid believing it, and can as little doubt of it, as he does of the being and actions of his own acquaintance, whereof he himself is a witness.

Experiences and testimonies clashing infinitely vary the degrees of probability.

§. 9. Thus far the matter goes easy enough. Probability upon such grounds carries so much evidence with it, that it naturally determines the judgment, and leaves us as little liberty to believe, or disbelieve, as a demonstration does, whether we will know, or be ignorant. The difficulty is, when testimonies contradict common experience, and the reports of history and witnesses clash with the ordinary course of nature, or with one another; there it is, where diligence, attention, and exactness are required, to form a right judgment, and to proportion the assent to the different evidence and probability of the thing; which rises and falls, according as those two foundations of credibility, viz. common observation in like cases, and particular testimonies in that particular instance, favour or contradict it. These are liable to so great variety of contrary observations, circumstances, reports, different qualifications, tempers, designs, oversights, &c. of the reporters, that it is impossible to reduce to precise rules the various degrees wherein men give their assent. This only may be said in general, that as the arguments and proofs pro and con, upon due examination, nicely weighing every particular circumstance, shall to any one appear, upon the whole matter, in a greater or less degree, to preponderate on either side; so they are fitted to produce in the mind such different entertainment, as we call belief, conjecture, guess, doubt, wavering, distrust, disbelief, &c.

Traditional testimonies, the farther removed, the less their proof.

§. 10. This is what concerns assent in matters wherein testimony is made use of: concerning which, I think, it may not be amiss to take notice of a rule observed in the law of England; which is, that though the attested copy of a record be good proof, yet the copy of a copy ever so well attested, and by ever so credible witnesses, will not be admitted as a proof in judi-

judicature. This is so generally approved as reasonable, and suited to the wisdom and caution to be used in our inquiry after material truths, that I never yet heard of any one that blamed it. This practice, if it be allowable in the decisions of right and wrong, carries this observation along with it, viz. that any testimony, the farther off it is from the original truth, the less force and proof it has. The being and existence of the thing itself is what I call the original truth. A credible man vouching his knowledge of it is a good proof: but if another equally credible do witness it from his report, the testimony is weaker; and a third that attests the hear-say of an hear-say, is yet less considerable. So that in traditional truths, each remove weakens the force of the proof: and the more hands the tradition has successively passed through, the less strength and evidence does it receive from them. This I thought necessary to be taken notice of, because I find amongst some men the quite contrary commonly practised, who look on opinions to gain force by growing older; and what a thousand years since would not, to a rational man, contemporary with the first voucher, have appeared at all probable, is now urged as certain beyond all question, only because several have since, from him, said it one after another. Upon this ground, propositions, evidently false or doubtful enough in their first beginning, come by an inverted rule of probability to pass for authentic truths; and those which found or deserved little credit from the mouths of their first authors, are thought to grow venerable by age, and are urged as undeniable.

Yet history is of great use.

§. 11. I would not be thought here to lessen the credit and use of history: it is all the light we have in many cases, and we receive from it a great part of the useful truths we have, with a convincing evidence. I think nothing more valuable than the records of antiquity: I wish we had more of them, and more uncorrupted. But this truth itself forces me to say, that no probability can arise higher than its first original. What has no other evidence than the single testimony of one only witness, must stand or fall by his only testimony, whether good, bad,

bad, or indifferent; and though cited afterwards by hundreds of others, one after another, is so far from receiving any strength thereby, that it is only the weaker. Passion, interest, inadvertency, mistake of his meaning, and a thousand odd reasons, or capricio's, men's minds are acted by (impossible to be discovered) may make one man quote another man's words or meaning wrong. He that has but ever so little examined the citations of writers, cannot doubt how little credit the quotations deserve, where the originals are wanting; and consequently how much less quotations of quotations can be relied on. This is certain, that what in one age was affirmed upon slight grounds, can never after come to be more valid in future ages, by being often repeated. But the farther still it is from the original, the less valid it is, and has always less force in the mouth or writing of him that last made use of it, than in his from whom he received it.

In things which sense cannot discover, analogy is the great rule of probability.

§. 12. The probabilities we have hitherto mentioned are only such as concern matter of fact, and such things as are capable of observation and testimony. There remains that other sort, concerning which men entertain opinions with variety of assent, though the things be such, that, falling not under the reach of our senses, they are not capable of testimony. Such are, 1. The existence, nature, and operations of finite immaterial beings without us; as spirits, angels, devils, &c. or the existence of material beings; which either for their smallness in themselves, or remoteness from us, our senses cannot take notice of; as whether there be any plants, animals, and intelligent inhabitants in the planets, and other mansions of the vast universe. 2. Concerning the manner of operation in most parts of the works of nature: wherein though we see the sensible effects, yet their causes are unknown, and we perceive not the ways and manner how they are produced. We see animals are generated, nourished, and move; the loadstone draws iron; and the parts of a candle, successively melting, turn into flame, and give us both light and heat. These and the like effects we

see

see and know: but the causes that operate, and the manner they are produced in, we can only guess and probably conjecture. For these and the like, coming not within the scrutiny of human senses, cannot be examined by them, or be attested by any body; and therefore can appear more or less probable, only as they more or less agree to truths that are established in our minds, and as they hold proportion to other parts of our knowledge and observation. Analogy in these matters is the only help we have, and it is from that alone we draw all our grounds of probability. Thus observing that the bare rubbing of two bodies violently one upon another produces heat, and very often fire itself, we have reason to think, that what we call heat and fire consists in a violent agitation of the imperceptible minute parts of the burning matter: observing likewise that the different refractions of pellucid bodies produce in our eyes the different appearances of several colours; and also that the different ranging and laying the superficial parts of several bodies, as of velvet, watered silk, &c. does the like, we think it probable that the colour and shining of bodies is in them nothing but the different arrangement and refraction of their minute and insensible parts. Thus finding in all parts of the creation, that fall under human observation, that there is a gradual connexion of one with another, without any great or discernible gaps between, in all that great variety of things we see in the world, which are so closely linked together, that in the several ranks of beings, it is not easy to discover the bounds betwixt them; we have reason to be persuaded, that by such gentle steps things ascend upwards in degrees of perfection. It is a hard matter to say where sensible and rational begin, and where insensible and irrational end: and who is there quick-sighted enough to determine precisely, which is the lowest species of living things, and which the first of those which have no life? Things, as far as we can observe, lessen and augment, as the quantity does in a regular cone; where though there be a manifest odds betwixt the bigness of the diameter at a remote distance, yet the difference between the upper and under, where they

they touch one another, is hardly discernible. The difference is exceeding great between some men, and some animals; but if we will compare the understanding and abilities of some men and some brutes, we shall find so little difference, that it will be hard to say, that that of the man is either clearer or larger. Observing, I say, such gradual and gentle descents downwards in those parts of the creation that are beneath man, the rule of analogy may make it probable, that it is so also in things above us and our observation; and that there are several ranks of intelligent beings, excelling us in several degrees of perfection, ascending upwards towards the infinite perfection of the creator, by gentle steps and differences, that are every one at no great distance from the next to it. This sort of probability, which is the best conduct of rational experiments, and the rise of hypothesis, has also its use and influence; and a wary reasoning from analogy leads us often into the discovery of truths and useful productions, which would otherwise lie concealed.

One case where contrary experience lessens not the testimony.

§. 13. Though the common experience and the ordinary course of things have justly a mighty influence on the minds of men, to make them give or refuse credit to any thing proposed to their belief; yet there is one case, wherein the strangeness of the fact lessens not the assent to a fair testimony given of it. For where such supernatural events are suitable to ends aimed at by him, who has the power to change the course of nature, there, under such circumstances, they may be the fitter to procure belief, by how much the more they are beyond, or contrary to ordinary observation. This is the proper case of miracles, which well attested do not only find credit themselves, but give it also to other truths, which need such confirmation.

The bare testimony of revelation is the highest certainty.

§. 14. Besides those we have hitherto mentioned, there is one sort of propositions that challenge the highest degree of our assent upon bare testimony, whether the thing proposed agree or disagree with common experience, and the ordinary course of things, or no.

no. The reason whereof is, because the testimony is of such an one, as cannot deceive, nor be deceived, and that is of God himself. This carries with it an assurance beyond doubt, evidence beyond exception. This is called by a peculiar name, revelation; and our assent to it, faith: which as absolutely determines our minds, and as perfectly excludes all wavering, as our knowledge itself; and we may as well doubt of our own being, as we can, whether any revelation from God be true. So that faith is a settled and sure principle of assent and assurance, and leaves no manner of room for doubt or hesitation. Only we must be sure, that it be a divine revelation, and that we understand it right: else we shall expose ourselves to all the extravagancy of enthusiasm, and all the errour of wrong principles, if we have faith and assurance in what is not divine revelation. And therefore in those cases, our assent can be rationally no higher than the evidence of its being a revelation, and that this is the meaning of the expressions it is delivered in. If the evidence of its being a revelation, or that this is its true sense, be only on probable proofs; our assent can reach no higher than an assurance or diffidence, arising from the more or less apparent probability of the proofs. But of faith, and the precedency it ought to have before other arguments of persuasion, I shall speak more hereafter, where I treat of it, as it is ordinarily placed, in contradistinction to reason; though in truth it be nothing else but an assent founded on the highest reason.

CHAP. XVII.

Of Reason.

Various significations of the word reason.

§. 1. THE word reason in the English language has different significations: sometimes it is taken for true and clear principles; sometimes for clear and fair deductions from those principles; and sometimes for

for the cause, and particularly the final cause. But the consideration I shall have of it here, is in a signification different from all these; and that is, as it stands for a faculty in man, that faculty whereby man is supposed to be distinguished from beasts, and wherein it is evident he much surpasses them.

Wherein reasoning consists.

§. 2. If general knowledge, as has been shown, consists in a perception of the agreement or disagreement of our own ideas; and the knowledge of the existence of all things without us (except only of a God, whose existence every man may certainly know and demonstrate to himself from his own existence) be had only by our senses: what room is there for the exercise of any other faculty, but outward sense and inward perception? What need is there of reason? Very much; both for the enlargement of our knowledge, and regulating our assent: for it hath to do both in knowledge and opinion, and is necessary and assisting to all our other intellectual faculties, and indeed contains two of them, viz. sagacity and illation. By the one, it finds out; and by the other, it so orders the intermediate ideas, as to discover what connexion there is in each link of the chain, whereby the extremes are held together; and thereby, as it were, to draw into view the truth sought for, which is that which we call illation or inference, and consists in nothing but the perception of the connexion there is between the ideas, in each step of the deduction, whereby the mind comes to see either the certain agreement or disagreement of any two ideas, as in demonstration, in which it arrives at knowledge; or their probable connexion, on which it gives or withholds its assent, as in opinion. Sense and intuition reach but a very little way. The greatest part of our knowledge depends upon deductions and intermediate ideas: and in those cases, where we are fain to substitute assent instead of knowledge, and take propositions for true, without being certain they are so, we have need to find out, examine, and compare the grounds of their probability. In both these cases, the faculty which finds out the means, and rightly applies them to discover certainty in the one, and probability in the

other, is that which we call reason. For as reason perceives the necessary and indubitable connexion of all the ideas or proofs one to another, in each step of any demonstration that produces knowledge; so it likewise perceives the probable connexion of all the ideas or proofs one to another, in every step of a discourse, to which it will think assent due. This is the lowest degree of that which can be truly called reason. For where the mind does not perceive this probable connexion, where it does not discern whether there be any such connexion or no; there men's opinions are not the product of judgment, or the consequence of reason, but the effects of chance and hazard, of a mind floating at all adventures, without choice and without direction.

Its four parts.

§. 3. So that we may in reason consider these four degrees; the first and highest is the discovering and finding out of truths; the second, the regular and methodical disposition of them, and laying them in a clear and fit order, to make their connexion and force be plainly and easily perceived; the third is the perceiving their connexion; and the fourth, a making a right conclusion. These several degrees may be observed in any mathematical demonstration; it being one thing to perceive the connexion of each part, as the demonstration is made by another; another, to perceive the dependence of the conclusion on all the parts; a third, to make out a demonstration clearly and neatly one's self; and something different from all these, to have first found out these intermediate ideas or proofs by which it is made.

Syllogism not the great instrument of reason.

§. 4. There is one thing more, which I shall desire to be considered concerning reason; and that is, whether syllogism, as is generally thought, be the proper instrument of it, and the usefullest way of exercising this faculty. The causes I have to doubt are these,

First, because syllogism serves our reason but in one only of the forementioned parts of it; and that is, to show the connexion of the proofs in any one instance, and no more: but in this it is of no great use, since the mind

mind can conceive ſuch connexion where it really is, as eaſily, nay perhaps better, without it.

If we will obſerve the actings of our own minds, we ſhall find that we reaſon beſt and cleareſt, when we only obſerve the connexion of the proof, without reducing our thoughts to any rule of ſyllogiſm. And therefore we may take notice, that there are many men that reaſon exceeding clear and rightly, who know not how to make a ſyllogiſm. He that will look into many parts of Aſia and America, will find men reaſon there perhaps as acutely as himſelf, who yet never heard of a ſyllogiſm, nor can reduce any one argument to thoſe forms: and I believe ſcarce any one makes ſyllogiſms in reaſoning within himſelf. Indeed ſyllogiſm is made uſe of on occaſion, to diſcover a fallacy hid in a rhetorical flouriſh, or cunningly wrapt up in a ſmooth period; and, ſtripping an abſurdity of the cover of wit and good language, ſhow it in its naked deformity. But the weakneſs or fallacy of ſuch a looſe diſcourſe it ſhows, by the artificial form it is put into, only to thoſe who have thoroughly ſtudied mode and figure, and have ſo examined the many ways that three propoſitions may be put together, as to know which of them does certainly conclude right, and which not, and upon what grounds it is that they do ſo. All who have ſo far conſidered ſyllogiſm, as to ſee the reaſon why in three propoſitions laid together in one form, the concluſion will be certainly right, but in another, not certainly ſo; I grant are certain of the concluſion they draw from the premiſes in the allowed modes and figures. But they who have not ſo far looked into thoſe forms, are not ſure by virtue of ſyllogiſm, that the concluſion certainly follows from the premiſes; they only take it to be ſo by an implicit faith in their teachers, and a confidence in thoſe forms of argumentation; but this is ſtill but believing, not being certain. Now if, of all mankind, thoſe who can make ſyllogiſms are extremely few in compariſon of thoſe who cannot; and if, of thoſe few who have been taught logic, there is but a very ſmall number, who do any more than believe that ſyllogiſms in the allowed modes and figures do conclude right, without knowing cer-

tainly that they do so; if syllogisms must be taken for the only proper instrument of reason and means of knowledge; it will follow, that before Aristotle there was not one man that did or could know any thing by reason; and that since the invention of syllogisms, there is not one of ten thousand that doth.

But God has not been so sparing to men to make them barely two-legged creatures, and left it to Aristotle to make them rational, i. e. those few of them that he could get so to examine the grounds of syllogisms, as to see, that in above threescore ways, that three propositions may be laid together, there are but about fourteen, wherein one may be sure that the conclusion is right; and upon what grounds it is, that in these few the conclusion is certain, and in the other not. God has been more bountiful to mankind than so. He has given them a mind that can reason, without being instructed in methods of syllogizing: the understanding is not taught to reason by these rules; it has a native faculty to perceive the coherence or incoherence of its ideas, and can range them right, without any such perplexing repetitions. I say not this any way to lessen Aristotle, whom I look on as one of the greatest men amongst the antients; whose large views, acuteness, and penetration of thought, and strength of judgment, few have equalled: and who in this very invention of forms of argumentation, wherein the conclusion may be shown to be rightly inferred, did great service against those who were not ashamed to deny any thing. And I readily own, that all right reasoning may be reduced to his forms of syllogism. But yet I think, without any diminution to him, I may truly say, that they are not the only, nor the best way of reasoning, for the leading of those into truth who are willing to find it, and desire to make the best use they may of their reason, for the attainment of knowledge. And he himself, it is plain, found out some forms to be conclusive, and others not, not by the forms themselves, but by the original way of knowledge, i. e. by the visible agreement of ideas. Tell a country gentlewoman that the wind is south-west, and the weather louring, and like to rain, and she will easily understand it is not

safe

ſafe for her to go abroad thin clad, in ſuch a day, after a fever: ſhe clearly ſees the probable connexion of all theſe, viz. ſouth-weſt wind, and clouds, rain, wetting, taking cold, relapſe, and danger of death, without tying them together in thoſe artificial and cumberſome fetters of ſeveral ſyllogiſms, that clog and hinder the mind, which proceeds from one part to another quicker and clearer without them; and the probability which ſhe eaſily perceives in things thus in their native ſtate would be quite loſt, if this argument were managed learnedly, and propoſed in mode and figure. For it very often confounds the connexion: and, I think, every one will perceive in mathematical demonſtrations, that the knowledge gained thereby comes ſhorteſt and cleareſt without ſyllogiſms.

Inference is looked on as the great act of the rational faculty, and ſo it is when it is rightly made; but the mind, either very deſirous to enlarge its knowledge, or very apt to favour the ſentiments it has once imbibed, is very forward to make inferences, and therefore often makes too much haſte, before it perceives the connexion of the ideas that muſt hold the extremes together.

To infer is nothing but, by virtue of one propoſition laid down as true, to draw in another as true, i. e. to ſee or ſuppoſe ſuch a connexion of the two ideas of the inferred propoſition, v. g. Let this be the propoſition laid down, "men ſhall be puniſhed in another world," and from thence be inferred this other, "then men can determine themſelves." The queſtion now is to know whether the mind has made this inference right or no; if it has made it by finding out the intermediate ideas, and taking a view of the connexion of them, placed in a due order, it has proceeded rationally, and made a right inference. If it has done it without ſuch a view, it has not ſo much made an inference that will hold, or an inference of right reaſon, as ſhown a willingneſs to have it be, or be taken for ſuch. But in neither caſe is it ſyllogiſm that diſcovered thoſe ideas, or ſhowed the connexion of them, for they muſt be both found out, and the connexion every where perceived, before they can rationally be made uſe of in ſyllogiſm: unleſs it can be

ſaid, that any idea, without conſidering what connexion it hath with the two other, whoſe agreement ſhould be ſhown by it, will do well enough in a ſyllogiſm, and may be taken at a venture for the medius terminus, to prove any concluſion. But this nobody will ſay, becauſe it is by virtue of the perceived agreement of the intermediate idea with the extremes, that the extremes are concluded to agree; and therefore each intermediate idea muſt be ſuch as in the whole chain hath a viſible connexion with thoſe two it has been placed between, or elſe thereby the concluſion cannot be inferred or drawn in: for wherever any link of the chain is looſe, and without connexion, there the whole ſtrength of it is loſt, and it hath no force to infer or draw in any thing. In the inſtance above-mentioned, what is it ſhows the force of the inference, and conſequently the reaſonableneſs of it, but a view of the connexion of all the intermediate ideas that draw in the concluſion, or propoſition inferred? v. g. men ſhall be puniſhed——— God the puniſher———juſt puniſhment———the puniſhed guilty———could have done otherwiſe——— freedom———ſelf-determination: by which chain of ideas thus viſibly linked together in train, i. e. each intermediate idea agreeing on each ſide with thoſe two it is immediately placed between, the ideas of men and ſelf-determination appear to be connected, i. e. this propoſition, men can determine themſelves, is drawn in, or inferred from this, that they ſhall be puniſhed in the other world. For here the mind ſeeing the connexion there is between the idea of men's puniſhment in the other world and the idea of God puniſhing; between God puniſhing and the juſtice of the puniſhment; between juſtice of the puniſhment and guilt; between guilt and a power to do otherwiſe; between a power to do otherwiſe and freedom; and between freedom and ſelf-determination; ſees the connexion between men and ſelf-determination.

Now I aſk whether the connexion of the extremes be not more clearly ſeen in this ſimple and natural diſpoſition, than in the perplexed repetitions, and jumble of five or ſix ſyllogiſms. I muſt beg pardon for calling it

jumble, till ſomebody ſhall put theſe ideas into ſo many ſyllogiſms, and then ſay, that they are leſs jumbled, and their connexion more viſible, when they are tranſpoſed and repeated, and ſpun out to a greater length in artificial forms, than in that ſhort and natural plain order they are laid down in here, wherein every one may ſee it; and wherein they muſt be ſeen before they can be put into a train of ſyllogiſms. For the natural order of the connecting ideas, muſt direct the order of the ſyllogiſms, and a man muſt ſee the connexion of each intermediate idea with thoſe that it connects, before he can with reaſon make uſe of it in a ſyllogiſm. And when all thoſe ſyllogiſms are made, neither thoſe that are, nor thoſe that are not logicians will ſee the force of the argumentation, i. e. the connexion of the extremes, one jot the better. [For thoſe that are not men of art, not knowing the true forms of ſyllogiſm, nor the reaſons of them, cannot know whether they are made in right and concluſive modes and figures or no, and ſo are not at all helped by the forms they are put into; though by them the natural order, wherein the mind could judge of their reſpective connexion, being diſturbed, renders the illation much more uncertain than without them.] And as for the logicians themſelves, they ſee the connexion of each intermediate idea with thoſe it ſtands between (on which the force of the inference depends) as well before as after the ſyllogiſm is made, or elſe they do not ſee it at all. For a ſyllogiſm neither ſhows nor ſtrengthens the connexion of any two ideas immediately put together, but only by the connexion ſeen in them ſhows what connexion the extremes have one with another. But what connexion the intermediate has with either of the extremes in that ſyllogiſm, that no ſyllogiſm does or can ſhow. That the mind only doth or can perceive as they ſtand there in that juxta-poſition only by its own view, to which the ſyllogiſtical form it happens to be in gives no help or light at all; it only ſhows that if the intermediate idea agrees with thoſe it is on both ſides immediately applied to; then thoſe two remote ones, or as they are called, extremes, do certainly agree, and therefore the immediate connexion of each idea to that

which it is applied to on each ſide, on which the force of the reaſoning depends, is as well ſeen before as after the ſyllogiſm is made, or elſe he that makes the ſyllogiſm could never ſee it at all. This, as has been already obſerved, is ſeen only by the eye, or the perceptive faculty of the mind, taking a view of them laid together, in a juxta-poſition; which view of any two it has equally, whenever they are laid together in any propoſition, whether that propoſition be placed as a major, or a minor, in a ſyllogiſm or no.

Of what uſe then are ſyllogiſms? I anſwer, their chief and main uſe is in the ſchools, where men are allowed without ſhame to deny the agreement of ideas that do manifeſtly agree; or out of the ſchools, to thoſe who from thence have learned without ſhame to deny the connexion of ideas, which even to themſelves is viſible. But to an ingenuous ſearcher after truth, who has no other aim but to find it, there is no need of any ſuch form to force the allowing of the inference: the truth and reaſonableneſs of it is better ſeen in ranging of the ideas in a ſimple and plain order: and hence it is, that men, in their own inquiries after truth, never uſe ſyllogiſms to convince themſelves, [or in teaching others to inſtruct willing learners.] Becauſe, before they can put them into a ſyllogiſm, they muſt ſee the connexion that is between the intermediate idea and the two other ideas it is ſet between and applied to, to ſhow their agreement; and when they ſee that, they ſee whether the inference be good or no, and ſo ſyllogiſm comes too late to ſettle it. For to make uſe again of the former inſtance; I aſk whether the mind, conſidering the idea of juſtice, placed as an intermediate idea between the puniſhment of men and the guilt of the puniſhed, (and, till it does ſo conſider it, the mind cannot make uſe of it as a medius terminus) does not as plainly ſee the force and ſtrength of the inference, as when it is formed into a ſyllogiſm. To ſhow it in a very plain and eaſy example; let animal be the intermediate idea or medius terminus that the mind makes uſe of to ſhow the connexion of homo and vivens: I aſk, whether the mind does not more readily and plainly ſee that connexion in the ſimple

and

and proper position of the connecting idea in the middle; thus,

Homo———Animal———Vivens,

Than in this perplexed one,

Animal——Vivens——Homo——Animal:

Which is the position these ideas have in a syllogism, to show the connexion between homo and vivens by the intervention of animal.

Indeed syllogism is thought to be of necessary use, even to the lovers of truth, to show them the fallacies that are often concealed in florid, witty, or involved discourses. But that this is a mistake will appear, if we consider, that the reason why sometimes men, who sincerely aim at truth, are imposed upon by such loose, and as they are called rhetorical discourses, is, that their fancies being struck with some lively metaphorical representations, they neglect to observe, or do not easily perceive what are the true ideas, upon which the inference depends. Now to show such men the weakness of such an argumentation, there needs no more but to strip it of the superfluous ideas, which, blended and confounded with those on which the inference depends, seem to show a connexion where there is none; or at least do hinder the discovery of the want of it; and then to lay the naked ideas, on which the force of the argumentation depends, in their due order, in which position the mind, taking a view of them, sees what connexion they have, and so is able to judge of the inference without any need of a syllogism at all.

I grant that mode and figure is commonly made use of in such cases, as if the detection of the incoherence of such loose discourses were wholly owing to the syllogistical form; and so I myself formerly thought, till upon a stricter examination I now find, that laying the intermediate ideas naked in their due order, shows the incoherence of the argumentation better than syllogism; not only as subjecting each link of the chain to the immediate view of the mind in its proper place, whereby its connexion is best observed; but also because syllo-

giſm ſhows the incoherence only to thoſe (who are not one of ten thouſand) who perfectly underſtand mode and figure, and the reaſon upon which thoſe forms are eſtabliſhed: whereas a due and orderly placing of the ideas upon which the inference is made, makes every one, whether logician or not logician, who underſtands the terms, and hath the faculty to perceive the agreement or diſagreement of ſuch ideas (without which, in or out of ſyllogiſm, he cannot perceive the ſtrength or weakneſs, coherence or incoherence of the diſcourſe) ſee the want of connexion in the argumentation, and the abſurdity of the inference.

And thus I have known a man unſkilful in ſyllogiſm, who at firſt hearing could perceive the weakneſs and inconcluſiveneſs of a long artificial and plauſible diſcourſe, wherewith others better ſkilled in ſyllogiſm have been miſled. And I believe there are few of my readers who do not know ſuch. And indeed if it were not ſo, the debates of moſt princes councils, and the buſineſs of aſſemblies would be in danger to be miſmanaged, ſince thoſe who are relied upon, and have uſually a great ſtroke in them, are not always ſuch, who have the good luck to be perfectly knowing in the forms of ſyllogiſm, or expert in mode and figure. And if ſyllogiſm were the only, or ſo much as the ſureſt way to detect the fallacies of artificial diſcourſes; I do not think that all mankind, even princes in matters that concern their crowns and dignities, are ſo much in love with falſhood and miſtake, that they would every where have neglected to bring ſyllogiſm into the debates of moment; or thought it ridiculous ſo much as to offer them in affairs of conſequence: a plain evidence to me, that men of parts and penetration, who were not idly to diſpute at their eaſe, but were to act according to the reſult of their debates, and often pay for their miſtakes with their heads or fortunes, found thoſe ſcholaſtic forms were of little uſe to diſcover truth or fallacy, whilſt both the one and the other might be ſhown, and better ſhown without them, to thoſe who would not refuſe to ſee what was viſibly ſhown them.

Secondly,

Secondly, another reason that makes me doubt whether syllogism be the only proper instrument of reason in the discovery of truth, is, that of whatever use mode and figure is pretended to be in the laying open of fallacy (which has been above considered) those scholastic forms of discourse are not less liable to fallacies than the plainer ways of argumentation; and for this I appeal to common observation, which has always found these artificial methods of reasoning more adapted to catch and entangle the mind, than to instruct and inform the understanding. And hence it is that men, even when they are baffled and silenced in this scholastic way, are seldom or never convinced, and so brought over to the conquering side: they perhaps acknowledge their adversary to be the more skilful disputant; but rest nevertheless persuaded of the truth on their side; and go away, worsted as they are, with the same opinion they brought with them, which they could not do, if this way of argumentation carried light and conviction with it, and made men see where the truth lay. And therefore syllogism has been thought more proper for the attaining victory in dispute, than for the discovery or confirmation of truth in fair inquiries. And if it be certain, that fallacies can be couched in syllogism, as it cannot be denied; it must be something else, and not syllogism, that must discover them.

I have had experience how ready some men are, when all the use which they have been wont to ascribe to any thing is not allowed, to cry out, that I am for laying it wholly aside. But, to prevent such unjust and groundless imputations, I tell them, that I am not for taking away any helps to the understanding, in the attainment of knowledge. And if men skilled in, and used to syllogisms, find them assisting to their reason in the discovery of truth, I think they ought to make use of them. All that I aim at is, that they should not ascribe more to these forms than belongs to them; and think that men have no use, or not so full an use of their reasoning faculty without them. Some eyes want spectacles to see things clearly and distinctly: but let not those that use them therefore say, nobody can see clearly without them:

them: those who do so will be thought in favour of art (which perhaps they are beholden to) a little too much to depress and discredit nature. Reason, by its own penetration where it is strong and exercised, usually sees quicker and clearer without syllogism. If use of those spectacles has so dimmed its sight, that it cannot without them see consequences or inconsequences in argumentation, I am not so unreasonable as to be against the using them. Every one knows what best fits his own sight. But let him not thence conclude all in the dark, who use not just the same helps that he finds a need of.

Helps little in demonstration, less in probability.

§. 5. But however it be in knowledge, I think I may truly say, it is of far less, or no use at all in probabilities. For, the assent there being to be determined by the preponderancy, after due weighing of all the proofs, with all circumstances on both sides, nothing is so unfit to assist the mind in that, as syllogism; which running away with one assumed probability, or one topical argument, pursues that till it has led the mind quite out of sight of the thing under consideration; and forcing it upon some remote difficulty, holds it fast there, intangled perhaps, and as it were manacled in the chain of syllogisms, without allowing it the liberty, much less affording it the helps, requisite to show on which side, all things considered, is the greater probability.

Serves not to increase our knowledge, but fence with it.

§. 6. But let it help us (as perhaps may be said) in convincing men of their errours and mistakes: (and yet I would fain see the man that was forced out of his opinion by dint of syllogism) yet still it fails our reason in that part, which, if not its highest perfection, is yet certainly its hardest task, and that which we most need its help in; and that is the finding out of proofs, and making new discoveries. The rules of syllogism serve not to furnish the mind with those intermediate ideas that may show the connexion of remote ones. This way of reasoning discovers no new proofs, but is the art of marshalling and ranging the old ones we have already. The forty-seventh proposition of the first book of Euclid is very true; but the discovery of it, I think, not owing

to

to any rules of common logic. A man knows first, and then he is able to prove syllogistically. So that syllogism comes after knowledge, and then a man has little or no need of it. But it is chiefly by the finding out those ideas that show the connexion of distant ones, that our stock of knowledge is increased, and that useful arts and sciences are advanced. Syllogism at best is but the art of fencing with the little knowledge we have, without making any addition to it. And if a man should employ his reason all this way, he will not do much otherwise than he, who having got some iron out of the bowels of the earth, should have it beaten up all into swords, and put it into his servants hands to fence with, and bang one another. Had the king of Spain employed the hands of his people, and his Spanish iron so, he had brought to light but little of that treasure that lay so long hid in the entrails of America. And I am apt to think, that he who shall employ all the force of his reason only in brandishing of syllogisms, will discover very little of that mass of knowledge, which lies yet concealed in the secret recesses of nature; and which, I am apt to think, native rustic reason (as it formerly has done) is likelier to open a way to, and add to the common stock of mankind, rather than any scholastic proceeding by the strict rule of mode and figure.

Other helps should be sought.

§. 7. I doubt not nevertheless, but there are ways to be found out to assist our reason in this most useful part; and this the judicious Hooker encourages me to say, who in his Eccl. Pol. l. 1. §. 6, speaks thus: "If there might be added "the right helps of true art and learning (which helps, "I must plainly confess, this age of the world carrying "the name of a learned age, doth neither much know, "nor generally regard) there would undoubtedly be "almost as much difference in maturity of judgment "between men therewith inured, and that which men "now are, as between men that are now, and inno-"cents." I do not pretend to have found, or discovered here any of those right helps of art, this great man of deep thought mentions; but this is plain, that syllogism, and the logic now in use, which were as well known

known in his days, can be none of those he means. It is sufficient for me, if by a discourse, perhaps something out of the way, I am sure as to me wholly new and unborrowed, I shall have given occasion to others to cast about for new discoveries, and to seek in their own thoughts, for those right helps of art, which will scarce be found, I fear, by those who servilely confine themselves to the rules and dictates of others. For beaten tracks lead this sort of cattle (as an observing Roman calls them) whose thoughts reach only to imitation, "non quo eundum est, sed quo itur." But I can be bold to say, that this age is adorned with some men of that strength of judgment, and largeness of comprehension, that if they would employ their thoughts on this subject, could open new and undiscovered ways to the advancement of knowledge.

We reason about particulars.

§. 8. Having here had an occasion to speak of syllogism in general, and the use of it in reasoning, and the improvement of our knowledge, it is fit, before I leave this subject, to take notice of one manifest mistake in the rules of syllogism, viz. that no syllogistical reasoning can be right and conclusive, but what has, at least, one general proposition in it. As if we could not reason, and have knowledge about particulars: whereas, in truth, the matter rightly considered, the immediate object of all our reasoning and knowledge, is nothing but particulars. Every man's reasoning and knowledge is only about the ideas existing in his own mind, which are truly, every one of them, particular existences; and our knowledge and reason about other things, is only as they correspond with those of our particular ideas. So that the perception of the agreement or disagreement of our particular ideas, is the whole and utmost of all our knowledge. Universality is but accidental to it, and consists only in this, that the particular ideas, about which it is, are such, as more than one particular thing can correspond with, and be represented by. But the perception of the agreement or disagreement of any two ideas, consequently our own knowledge, is equally clear and certain, whether either, or both, or neither of those ideas

ideas be capable of representing more real beings than one, or no. One thing more I crave leave to offer about syllogism, before I leave it, viz. may one not upon just ground inquire whether the form syllogism now has, is that which in reason it ought to have? For the medius terminus being to join the extremes, i. e. the intermediate idea by its intervention, to show the agreement or disagreement of the two in question; would not the position of the medius terminus be more natural, and show the agreement or disagreement of the extremes clearer and better, if it were placed in the middle between them? Which might be easily done by transposing the propositions, and making the medius terminus the predicate of the first, and the subject of the second. As thus,

"Omnis homo est animal,
"Omne animal est vivens,
"Ergo omnis homo est vivens."

"Omne corpus est entensum & solidum,
"Nullum extensum & solidum est pura extensio,
"Ergo corpus non est pura extensio."

I need not trouble my reader with instances in syllogisms, whose conclusions are particular. The same reason holds for the same form in them, as well as in the general.

1. Reason fails us for want of ideas.

§. 9. Reason, though it penetrates into the depths of the sea and earth, elevates our thoughts as high as the stars, and leads us through the vast spaces and large rooms of this mighty fabric, yet it comes far short of the real extent of even corporeal being; and there are many instances wherein it fails us: as,

First, it perfectly fails us, where our ideas fail. It neither does, nor can extend itself farther than they do. And therefore wherever we have no ideas, our reasoning stops, and we are at an end of our reckoning: and if at any time we reason about words, which do not stand for

any

any ideas, it is only about those sounds, and nothing else.

2. Because of obscure and imperfect ideas.

§. 10. Secondly, our reason is often puzzled, and at a loss, because of the obscurity, confusion, or imperfection of the ideas it is employed about; and there we are involved in difficulties and contradictions. Thus not having any perfect idea of the least extension of matter, nor of infinity, we are at a loss about the divisibility of matter; but having perfect, clear, and distinct ideas of number, our reason meets with none of those inextricable difficulties in numbers, nor finds itself involved in any contradictions about them. Thus, we having but imperfect ideas of the operations of our minds, and of the beginning of motion, or thought, how the mind produces either of them in us, and much imperfecter yet of the operation of God; run into great difficulties about free created agents, which reason cannot well extricate itself out of.

3. For want of intermediate ideas.

§. 11. Thirdly, our reason is often at a stand, because it perceives not those ideas, which could serve to show the certain or probable agreement or disagreement of any other two ideas: and in this some men's faculties far outgo others. Till algebra, that great instrument and instance of human sagacity, was discovered, men, with amazement, looked on several of the demonstrations of antient mathematicians, and could scarce forbear to think the finding several of those proofs to be something more than human.

4. Because of wrong principles.

§. 12. Fourthly, the mind, by proceeding upon false principles, is often engaged in absurdities and difficulties, brought into straits and contradictions, without knowing how to free itself; and in that case it is in vain to implore the help of reason, unless it be to discover the falshood and reject the influence of those wrong principles. Reason is so far from clearing the difficulties which the building upon false foundations brings a man into, that if he will pursue it, it entangles him the more, and engages him deeper in perplexities.

§. 13.

§. 13. Fifthly, as obscure and imperfect ideas often involve our reason, so, upon the same ground, do dubious words, and uncertain signs, often in discourses and arguings, when not warily attended to, puzzle men's reason, and bring them to a non-plus. But these two latter are our fault, and not the fault of reason. But yet the consequences of them are nevertheless obvious; and the perplexities or errours they fill men's minds with, are every where observable.

5. Because of doubtful terms.

§. 14. Some of the ideas that are in the mind, are so there, that they can be by themselves immediately compared one with another: and in these the mind is able to perceive, that they agree or disagree as clearly, as that it has them. Thus the mind perceives, that an arch of a circle is less than the whole circle, as clearly as it does the idea of a circle: and this therefore, as has been said, I call intuitive knowledge; which is certain, beyond all doubt, and needs no probation, nor can have any; this being the highest of all human certainty. In this consists the evidence of all those maxims, which nobody has any doubt about, but every man (does not, as is said, only assent to, but) knows to be true, as soon as ever they are proposed to his understanding. In the discovery of, and assent to these truths, there is no use of the discursive faculty, no need of reasoning, but they are known by a superior and higher degree of evidence. And such, if I may guess at things unknown, I am apt to think, that angels have now, and the spirits of just men made perfect, shall have, in a future state, of thousands of things, which now either wholly escape our apprehensions, or which, our short-sighted reason having got some faint glimpse of, we, in the dark, grope after.

Our highest degree of knowledge is intuitive, without reasoning.

§. 15. But though we have, here and there, a little of this clear light, some sparks of bright knowledge; yet the greatest part of our ideas are such, that we cannot discern their agreement or disagreement by an immediate comparing,

The next is demonstration by reasoning.

paring them. And in all these we have need of reasoning, and must, by discourse and inference, make our discoveries. Now of these there are two sorts, which I shall take the liberty to mention here again.

First, those whose agreement or disagreement, though it cannot be seen by an immediate putting them together, yet may be examined by the intervention of other ideas, which can be compared with them. In this case when the agreement or disagreement of the intermediate idea, on both sides with those which we would compare, is plainly discerned, there it amounts to a demonstration, whereby knowledge is produced; which though it be certain, yet it is not so easy, nor altogether so clear as intuitive knowledge. Because in that there is barely one simple intuition, wherein there is no room for any the least mistake or doubt; the truth is seen all perfectly at once. In demonstration, it is true, there is intuition too, but not altogether at once; for there must be a remembrance of the intuition of the agreement of the medium, or intermediate idea, with that we compared it with before, when we compare it with the other; and where there be many mediums, there the danger of the mistake is the greater. For each agreement or disagreement of the ideas must be observed and seen in each step of the whole train, and retained in the memory, just as it is; and the mind must be sure that no part of what is necessary to make up the demonstration is omitted or overlooked. This makes some demonstrations long and perplexed, and too hard for those who have not strength of parts distinctly to perceive, and exactly carry so many particulars orderly in their heads. And even those, who are able to master such intricate speculations, are fain sometimes to go over them again, and there is need of more than one review before they can arrive at certainty. But yet where the mind clearly retains the intuition it had of the agreement of any idea with another, and that with a third, and that with a fourth, &c. there the agreement of the first and the fourth is a demonstration, and produces certain knowledge, which may be called rational knowledge, as the other is intuitive.

§. 16. Secondly, there are other ideas, whose agreement or disagreement can no otherwise be judged of, but by the intervention of others, which have not a certain agreement with the extremes, but an usual or likely one: and in these it is that the judgment is properly exercised, which is the acquiescing of the mind, that any ideas do agree, by comparing them with such probable mediums. This, though it never amounts to knowledge, no not to that which is the lowest degree of it: yet sometimes the intermediate ideas tie the extremes so firmly together, and the probability is so clear and strong, that assent as necessarily follows it, as knowledge does demonstration. The great excellency and use of the judgment is to observe right, and take a true estimate of the force and weight of each probability; and then, casting them up all right together, choose that side which has the overbalance.

To supply the narrowness of this, we have nothing but judgment upon probable reasoning.

§. 17. Intuitive knowledge is the perception of the certain agreement or disagreement of two ideas immediately compared together.

Intuition, demonstration, judgment.

Rational knowledge is the perception of the certain agreement or disagreement of any two ideas, by the intervention of one or more other ideas.

Judgment is the thinking or taking two ideas to agree or disagree, by the intervention of one or more ideas, whose certain agreement or disagreement with them it does not perceive, but hath observed to be frequent and usual.

§. 18. Though the deducing one proposition from another, or making inferences in words, be a great part of reason, and that which it is usually employed about; yet the principal act of ratiocination is the finding the agreement or disagreement of two ideas one with another, by the intervention of a third. As a man, by a yard, finds two houses to be of the same length, which could not be brought together to measure their equality by juxta-position. Words have their consequences, as

Consequences of words, and consequences of ideas.

the ſigns of ſuch ideas: and things agree or diſagree, as really they are; but we obſerve it only by our ideas.

Four ſorts of arguments.

§. 19. Before we quit this ſubject, it may be worth our while a little to reflect on four ſorts of arguments, that men, in their reaſonings with others, do ordinarily make uſe of, to prevail on their aſſent; or at leaſt ſo to awe them, as to ſilence their oppoſition.

1. Ad verecundiam.

Firſt, the firſt is to allege the opinions of men, whoſe parts, learning, eminency, power, or ſome other cauſe has gained a name, and ſettled their reputation in the common eſteem with ſome kind of authority. When men are eſtabliſhed in any kind of dignity, it is thought a breach of modeſty for others to derogate any way from it, and queſtion the authority of men, who are in poſſeſſion of it. This is apt to be cenſured, as carrying with it too much of pride, when a man does not readily yield to the determination of approved authors, which is wont to be received with reſpect and ſubmiſſion by others: and it is looked upon as inſolence for a man to ſet up, and adhere to his own opinion, againſt the current ſtream of antiquity; or to put it in the balance againſt that of ſome learned doctor, or otherwiſe approved writer. Whoever backs his tenets with ſuch authorities, thinks he ought thereby to carry the cauſe, and is ready to ſtyle it impudence in any one who ſhall ſtand out againſt them. This, I think, may be called argumentum ad verecundiam.

2. Ad ignorantiam.

§. 20. Secondly, another way that men ordinarily uſe to drive others, and force them to ſubmit their judgments, and receive the opinion in debate, is to require the adverſary to admit what they allege as a proof, or to aſſign a better. And this I call argumentum ad ignorantiam.

3. Ad hominem.

§. 21. Thirdly, a third way is to preſs a man with conſequences drawn from his own principles, or conceſſions. This is already known under the name of argumentum ad hominem.

4. Ad judicium.

§. 22. Fourthly, the fourth is the uſing of proofs drawn from any of the foundations

of

of knowledge or probability. This I call argumentum ad judicium. This alone, of all the four, brings true instruction with it, and advances us in our way to knowledge. For, 1. It argues not another man's opinion to be right, because I out of respect, or any other consideration but that of conviction, will not contradict him. 2. It proves not another man to be in the right way, nor that I ought to take the same with him, because I know not a better. 3. Nor does it follow that another man is in the right way, because he has shown me that I am in the wrong. I may be modest, and therefore not oppose another man's persuasion: I may be ignorant, and not be able to produce a better: I may be in an errour, and another may show me that I am so. This may dispose me, perhaps, for the reception of truth, but helps me not to it; that must come from proofs and arguments, and light arising from the nature of things themselves, and not from my shame-facedness, ignorance, or errour.

Above, contrary, and according to reason.

§. 23. By what has been before said of reason, we may be able to make some guess at the distinction of things, into those that are according to, above, and contrary to reason. 1. According to reason are such propositions, whose truth we can discover by examining and tracing those ideas we have from sensation and reflection; and by natural deduction find to be true or probable. 2. Above reason are such propositions, whose truth or probability we cannot by reason derive from those principles. 3. Contrary to reason are such propositions, as are inconsistent with, or irreconcileable to, our clear and distinct ideas. Thus the existence of one God is according to reason; the existence of more than one God, contrary to reason; the resurrection of the dead, above reason. Farther, as above reason may be taken in a double sense, viz. either as signifying above probability, or above certainty; so in that large sense also, contrary to reason, is, I suppose, sometimes taken.

Reason and faith not opposite.

§. 24. There is another use of the word reason, wherein it is opposed to faith; which though it be in itself a very improper

way of ſpeaking, yet common uſe has ſo authorized it, that it would be folly either to oppoſe or hope to remedy it: only I think it may not be amiſs to take notice, that however faith be oppoſed to reaſon, faith is nothing but a firm aſſent of the mind: which if it be regulated, as is our duty, cannot be afforded to any thing but upon good reaſon; and ſo cannot be oppoſite to it. He that believes, without having any reaſon for believing, may be in love with his own fancies; but neither ſeeks truth as he ought, nor pays the obedience due to his Maker, who would have him uſe thoſe diſcerning faculties he has given him, to keep him out of miſtake and errour. He that does not this to the beſt of his power, however he ſometimes lights on truth, is in the right but by chance; and I know not whether the luckineſs of the accident will excuſe the irregularity of his proceeding. This at leaſt is certain, that he muſt be accountable for whatever miſtakes he runs into: whereas he that makes uſe of the light and faculties God has given him, and ſeeks ſincerely to diſcover truth by thoſe helps and abilities he has, may have this ſatisfaction in doing his duty as a rational creature, that, though he ſhould miſs truth, he will not miſs the reward of it. For he governs his aſſent right, and places it as he ſhould, who, in any caſe or matter whatſoever, believes or diſbelieves, according as reaſon directs him. He that doth otherwiſe tranſgreſſes againſt his own light, and miſuſes thoſe faculties which were given him to no other end, but to ſearch and follow the clearer evidence and greater probability. But, ſince reaſon and faith are by ſome men oppoſed, we will ſo conſider them in the following chapter.

CHAP. XVIII.

Of Faith and Reaſon, and their diſtinct Provinces.

Neceſſary to know their boundaries.

§. 1. IT has been above ſhown, 1. That we are of neceſſity ignorant, and want knowledge of all ſorts, where we want ideas.

ideas. 2. That we are ignorant, and want rational knowledge, where we want proofs. 3. That we want certain knowledge and certainty, as far as we want clear and determined specific ideas. 4. That we want probability to direct our assent in matters where we have neither knowledge of our own, nor testimony of other men, to bottom our reason upon.

From these things thus premised, I think we may come to lay down the measures and boundaries between faith and reason; the want whereof may possibly have been the cause, if not of great disorders, yet at least of great disputes, and perhaps mistakes in the world. For till it be resolved, how far we are to be guided by reason, and how far by faith, we shall in vain dispute, and endeavour to convince one another in matters of religion.

Faith and reason what, as contradistinguished.

§. 2. I find every sect, as far as reason will help them, make use of it gladly: and where it fails them, they cry out, it is matter of faith, and above reason. And I do not see how they can argue, with any one, or ever convince a gainsayer who makes use of the same plea, without setting down strict boundaries between faith and reason; which ought to be the first point established in all questions, where faith has any thing to do.

Reason therefore here, as contradistinguished to faith, I take to be the discovery of the certainty or probability of such propositions or truths, which the mind arrives at by deduction made from such ideas, which it has got by the use of its natural faculties; viz. by sensation or reflection.

Faith, on the other side, is the assent to any proposition, not thus made out by the deductions of reason; but upon the credit of the proposer, as coming from God, in some extraordinary way of communication. This way of discovering truths to men we call revelation.

No new simple idea can be conveyed by traditional revelation.

§. 3. First then I say, that no man inspired by God can by any revelation communicate to others any new simple ideas, which they had not before from sensation or reflection. For whatsoever impressions he

himself may have from the immediate hand of God, this revelation, if it be of new simple ideas, cannot be conveyed to another, either by words, or any other signs. Because words, by their immediate operation on us, cause no other ideas, but of their natural sounds: and it is by the custom of using them for signs, that they excite and revive in our minds latent ideas; but yet only such ideas as were there before. For words seen or heard, recal to our thoughts those ideas only, which to us they have been wont to be signs of; but cannot introduce any perfectly new, and formerly unknown simple ideas. The same holds in all other signs, which cannot signify to us things, of which we have before never had any idea at all.

Thus whatever things were discovered to St. Paul, when he was rapt up into the third heaven, whatever new ideas his mind there received, all the description he can make to others of that place, is only this, that there are such things, "as eye hath not seen, nor ear "heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to "conceive." And supposing God should discover to any one, supernaturally, a species of creatures inhabiting, for example, Jupiter or Saturn, (for that it is possible there may be such, nobody can deny) which had six senses; and imprint on his mind the ideas conveyed to theirs by that sixth sense; he could no more, by words, produce in the minds of other men those ideas, imprinted by that sixth sense, than one of us could convey the idea of any colour by the sounds of words into a man, who, having the other four senses perfect, had always totally wanted the fifth of seeing. For our simple ideas then, which are the foundation and sole matter of all our notions and knowledge, we must depend wholly on our reason, I mean our natural faculties; and can by no means receive them, or any of them, from traditional revelation; I say, traditional revelation, in distinction to original revelation. By the one, I mean that first impression, which is made immediately by God, on the mind of any man, to which we cannot set any bounds; and by the other, those impressions delivered over to

others in words, and the ordinary ways of conveying our conceptions one to another.

Traditional revelation may make us know propositions knowable also by reason, but not with the same certainty that reason doth.

§. 4. Secondly, I say, that the same truths may be discovered, and conveyed down from revelation, which are discoverable to us by reason, and by those ideas we naturally may have. So God might, by revelation, discover the truth of any proposition in Euclid; as well as men, by the natural use of their faculties, come to make the discovery themselves. In all things of this kind, there is little need or use of revelation, God having furnished us with natural and surer means to arrive at the knowledge of them. For whatsoever truth we come to the clear discovery of, from the knowledge and contemplation of our own ideas, will always be certainer to us, than those which are conveyed to us by traditional revelation. For the knowledge we have, that this revelation came at first from God, can never be so sure, as the knowledge we have from the clear and distinct perception of the agreement or disagreement of our own ideas; v. g. if it were revealed some ages since, that the three angles of a triangle were equal to two right ones, I might assent to the truth of that proposition, upon the credit of the tradition, that it was revealed; but that would never amount to so great a certainty, as the knowledge of it, upon the comparing and measuring my own ideas of two right angles, and the three angles of a triangle. The like holds in matter of fact, knowable by our senses; v. g. the history of the deluge is conveyed to us by writings, which had their original from revelation: and yet nobody, I think, will say he has as certain and clear a knowledge of the flood, as Noah that saw it; or that he himself would have had, had he then been alive and seen it. For he has no greater assurance than that of his senses, that it is writ in the book supposed writ by Moses inspired; but he has not so great an assurance that Moses writ that book, as if he had seen Moses write it. So that the assurance of its being a revelation is less still than the assurance of his senses.

§. 5.

Revelation cannot be admitted against the clear evidence of reason.

§. 5. In propositions then, whose certainty is built upon the clear perception of the agreement or disagreement of our ideas, attained either by immediate intuition, as in self-evident propositions, or by evident deductions of reason in demonstrations, we need not the assistance of revelation, as necessary to gain our assent, and introduce them into our minds. Because the natural ways of knowledge could settle them there, or had done it already; which is the greatest assurance we can possibly have of any thing, unless where God immediately reveals it to us: and there too our assurance can be no greater, than our knowledge is, that it is a revelation from God. But yet nothing, I think, can, under that title, shake or over-rule plain knowledge; or rationally prevail with any man to admit it for true, in a direct contradiction to the clear evidence of his own understanding. For since no evidence of our faculties, by which we receive such revelations, can exceed, if equal, the certainty of our intuitive knowledge, we can never receive for a truth any thing that is directly contrary to our clear and distinct knowledge: v. g. the ideas of one body, and one place, do so clearly agree, and the mind has so evident a perception of their agreement, that we can never assent to a proposition, that affirms the same body to be in two distant places at once, however it should pretend to the authority of a divine revelation: since the evidence, first, that we deceive not ourselves, in ascribing it to God; secondly, that we understand it right; can never be so great, as the evidence of our own intuitive knowledge, whereby we discern it impossible for the same body to be in two places at once. And therefore no proposition can be received for divine revelation, or obtain the assent due to all such, if it be contradictory to our clear intuitive knowledge. Because this would be to subvert the principles and foundations of all knowledge, evidence, and assent whatsoever: and there would be left no difference between truth and falshood, no measures of credible and incredible in the world, if doubtful propositions shall take place before self-evident; and what we certainly know

know give way to what we may possibly be mistaken in. In propositions therefore contrary to the clear perception of the agreement or disagreement of any of our ideas, it will be in vain to urge them as matters of faith. They cannot move our assent, under that or any other title whatsoever. For faith can never convince us of any thing that contradicts our knowledge. Because though faith be founded on the testimony of God (who cannot lye) revealing any proposition to us; yet we cannot have an assurance of the truth of its being a divine revelation, greater than our own knowledge: since the whole strength of the certainty depends upon our knowledge that God revealed it, which in this case, where the proposition supposed revealed contradicts our knowledge or reason, will always have this objection hanging to it, viz. that we cannot tell how to conceive that to come from God, the bountiful Author of our being, which, if received for true, must overturn all the principles and foundations of knowledge he has given us; render all our faculties useless; wholly destroy the most excellent part of his workmanship, our understandings; and put a man in a condition, wherein he will have less light, less conduct than the beast that perisheth. For if the mind of man can never have a clearer (and perhaps not so clear) evidence of any thing to be a divine revelation, as it has of the principles of its own reason, it can never have a ground to quit the clear evidence of its reason, to give a place to a proposition, whose revelation has not a greater evidence than those principles have.

Traditional revelation much less.

§. 6. Thus far a man has use of reason, and ought to hearken to it, even in immediate and original revelation, where it is supposed to be made to himself: but to all those who pretend not to immediate revelation, but are required to pay obedience, and to receive the truths revealed to others, which by the tradition of writings, or word of mouth, are conveyed down to them; reason has a great deal more to do, and is that only which can induce us to receive them. For matter of faith being only divine revelation, and nothing else; faith, as we use the word, (called

(called commonly divine faith) has to do with no propositions, but those which are supposed to be divinely revealed. So that I do not see how those, who make revelation alone the sole object of faith, can say, that it is a matter of faith, and not of reason, to believe that such or such a proposition, to be found in such or such a book, is of divine inspiration; unless it be revealed, that that proposition, or all in that book, was communicated by divine inspiration. Without such a revelation, the believing, or not believing that proposition or book to be of divine authority, can never be matter of faith, but matter of reason; and such as I must come to an assent to, only by the use of my reason, which can never require or enable me to believe that which is contrary to itself: it being impossible for reason ever to procure any assent to that, which to itself appears unreasonable.

In all things therefore, where we have clear evidence from our ideas, and those principles of knowledge I have above-mentioned, reason is the proper judge; and revelation, though it may in consenting with it confirm its dictates, yet cannot in such cases invalidate its decrees: nor can we be obliged, where we have the clear and evident sentence of reason, to quit it for the contrary opinion, under a pretence that it is matter of faith; which can have no authority against the plain and clear dictates of reason.

Things above reason,

§. 7. But, thirdly, there being many things, wherein we have very imperfect notions, or none at all; and other things, of whose past, present, or future existence, by the natural use of our faculties, we can have no knowledge at all; these, as being beyond the discovery of our natural faculties, and above reason, are, when revealed, the proper matter of faith. Thus, that part of the angels rebelled against God, and thereby lost their first happy state; and that the dead shall rise, and live again: these, and the like, being beyond the discovery of reason, are purely matters of faith; with which reason has directly nothing to do.

§. 8.

§. 8. But ſince God in giving us the light of reaſon has not thereby tied up his own hands from affording us, when he thinks fit, the light of revelation in any of thoſe matters, wherein our natural faculties are able to give a probable determination; revelation, where God has been pleaſed to give it, muſt carry it againſt the probable conjectures of reaſon. Becauſe the mind not being certain of the truth of that it does not evidently know, but only yielding to the probability that appears in it, is bound to give up its aſſent to ſuch a teſtimony; which, it is ſatisfied, comes from one who cannot err, and will not deceive. But yet it ſtill belongs to reaſon to judge of the truth of its being a revelation, and of the ſignification of the words wherein it is delivered. Indeed, if any thing ſhall be thought revelation, which is contrary to the plain principles of reaſon, and the evident knowledge the mind has of its own clear and diſtinct ideas; there reaſon muſt be hearkened to, as to a matter within its province: ſince a man can never have ſo certain a knowledge, that a propoſition which contradicts the clear principles and evidence of his own knowledge, was divinely revealed, or that he underſtands the words rightly wherein it is delivered; as he has, that the contrary is true: and ſo is bound to conſider and judge of it as a matter of reaſon, and not ſwallow it, without examination, as a matter of faith.

or not contrary to reaſon, if revealed, are matter of faith.

§. 9. Firſt, whatever propoſition is revealed, of whoſe truth our mind, by its natural faculties and notions, cannot judge; that is purely matter of faith, and above reaſon.

Revelation in matters where reaſon cannot judge, or but probably, ought to be hearkened to.

Secondly, all propoſitions, whereof the mind, by the uſe of its natural faculties, can come to determine and judge from naturally acquired ideas, are matter of reaſon; with this difference ſtill, that in thoſe concerning which it has but an uncertain evidence, and ſo is perſuaded of their truth only upon probable grounds, which ſtill admit a poſſibility of the contrary to be true, without doing violence to

the

the certain evidence of its own knowledge, and overturning the principles of its own reason; in such probable propositions, I say, an evident revelation ought to determine our assent even against probability. For where the principles of reason have not evidenced a proposition to be certainly true or false, there clear revelation, as another principle of truth, and ground of assent, may determine; and so it may be matter of faith, and be also above reason. Because reason, in that particular matter, being able to reach no higher than probability, faith gave the determination, where reason came short; and revelation discovered on which side the truth lay.

In matters where reason can afford certain knowledge, that is to be hearkened to.

§. 10. Thus far the dominion of faith reaches, and that without any violence or hindrance to reason; which is not injured or disturbed, but assisted and improved, by new discoveries of truth coming from the eternal fountain of all knowledge. Whatever God hath revealed is certainly true; no doubt can be made of it. This is the proper object of faith: but whether it be a divine revelation or no, reason must judge; which can never permit the mind to reject a greater evidence to embrace what is less evident, nor allow it to entertain probability in opposition to knowledge and certainty. There can be no evidence, that any traditional revelation is of divine original, in the words we receive it, and in the sense we understand it, so clear and so certain, as that of the principles of reason: and therefore nothing that is contrary to, and inconsistent with, the clear and self-evident dictates of reason, has a right to be urged or assented to as a matter of faith, wherein reason hath nothing to do. Whatsoever is divine revelation ought to over-rule all our opinions, prejudices, and interest, and hath a right to be received with full assent. Such a submission as this, of our reason to faith, takes not away the land-marks of knowledge: this shakes not the foundations of reason, but leaves us that use of our faculties, for which they were given us.

If the boundaries be not

§. 11. If the provinces of faith and reason are not kept distinct by these boundaries,

ries, there will, in matters of religion, be no room for reason at all; and those extravagant opinions and ceremonies that are to be found in the several religions of the world, will not deserve to be blamed. For, to this crying up of faith, in opposition to reason, we may, I think, in good measure ascribe those absurdities that fill almost all the religions which possess and divide mankind. For men having been principled with an opinion, that they must not consult reason in the things of religion, however apparently contradictory to common sense, and the very principles of all their knowledge; have let loose their fancies and natural superstition; and have been by them led into so strange opinions, and extravagant practices in religion, that a considerate man cannot but stand amazed at their follies, and judge them so far from being acceptable to the great and wise God, that he cannot avoid thinking them ridiculous, and offensive to a sober good man. So that in effect religion, which should most distinguish us from beasts, and ought most peculiarly to elevate us, as rational creatures, above brutes, is that wherein men often appear most irrational and more senseless than beasts themselves. "Credo, quia impossibile est;" I believe, because it is impossible, might in a good man pass for a sally of zeal; but would prove a very ill rule for men to choose their opinions or religion by.

set between faith and reason, no enthusiasm or extravagancy in religion can be contradicted.

CHAP. XIX.

Of Enthusiasm.

§. 1. HE that would seriously set upon the search of truth, ought in the first place to prepare his mind with a love of it. For he that loves it not, will not take much pains to get it, nor be much concerned when he misses it. There is nobody in the commonwealth of learning,

Love of truth necessary.

who does not profess himself a lover of truth; and there is not a rational creature that would not take it amiss to be thought otherwise of. And yet for all this, one may truly say, that there are very few lovers of truth for truth-sake, even amongst those who persuade themselves that they are so. How a man may know whether he be so in earnest, is worth inquiry: and I think there is one unerring mark of it, viz. the not entertaining any proposition with greater assurance, than the proofs it is built upon will warrant. Whoever goes beyond this measure of assent, it is plain, receives not truth in the love of it; loves not truth for truth-sake, but for some other bye-end. For the evidence that any proposition is true (except such as are self-evident) lying only in the proofs a man has of it, whatsoever degrees of assent he affords it beyond the degrees of that evidence, it is plain that all the surplusage of assurance is owing to some other affection, and not to the love of truth: it being as impossible, that the love of truth should carry my assent above the evidence there is to me that it is true, as that the love of truth should make me assent to any proposition for the sake of that evidence, which it has not, that it is true; which is in effect to love it as a truth, because it is possible or probable that it may not be true. In any truth that gets not possession of our minds by the irresistible light of self-evidence, or by the force of demonstration, the arguments that gain it assent are the vouchers and gage of its probability to us; and we can receive it for no other, than such as they deliver it to our understandings. Whatsoever credit or authority we give to any proposition, more than it receives from the principles and proofs it supports itself upon, is owing to our inclinations that way, and is so far a derogation from the love of truth as such: which, as it can receive no evidence from our passions or interests, so it should receive no tincture from them.

A forwardness to dictate, from whence.

§. 2. The assuming an authority of dictating to others, and a forwardness to prescribe to their opinions, is a constant concomitant of this biass and corruption of our judgments. For how almost can it be otherwise, but that

that he ſhould be ready to impoſe on another's belief, who has already impoſed on his own? Who can reaſonably expect arguments and conviction from him, in dealing with others, whoſe underſtanding is not accuſtomed to them in his dealing with himſelf? Who does violence to his own faculties, tyrannizes over his own mind, and uſurps the prerogative that belongs to truth alone, which is to command aſſent by only its own authority, i. e. by and in proportion to that evidence which it carries with it.

Force of enthuſiaſm.

§. 3. Upon this occaſion I ſhall take the liberty to conſider a third ground of aſſent, which with ſome men has the ſame authority, and is as confidently relied on as either faith or reaſon; I mean enthuſiaſm: which, laying by reaſon, would ſet up revelation without it. Whereby in effect it takes away both reaſon and revelation, and ſubſtitutes in the room of it the ungrounded fancies of a man's own brain, and aſſumes them for a foundation both of opinion and conduct.

Reaſon and revelation.

§. 4. Reaſon is natural revelation, whereby the eternal father of light, and fountain of all knowledge, communicates to mankind that portion of truth which he has laid within the reach of their natural faculties: revelation is natural reaſon enlarged by a new ſet of diſcoveries communicated by God immediately, which reaſon vouches the truth of, by the teſtimony and proofs it gives, that they come from God. So that he that takes away reaſon, to make way for revelation, puts out the light of both, and does much-what the ſame, as if he would perſuade a man to put out his eyes, the better to receive the remote light of an inviſible ſtar by a teleſcope.

Riſe of enthuſiaſm.

§. 5. Immediate revelation being a much eaſier way for men to eſtabliſh their opinions, and regulate their conduct, than the tedious and not always ſucceſsful labour of ſtrict reaſoning, it is no wonder that ſome have been very apt to pretend to revelation, and to perſuade themſelves that they are under the peculiar guidance of heaven in their actions and opinions, eſpecially in thoſe of them which

they cannot account for by the ordinary methods of knowledge, and principles of reason. Hence we see that in all ages, men, in whom melancholy has mixed with devotion, or whose conceit of themselves has raised them into an opinion of a greater familarity with God, and a nearer admittance to his favour than is afforded to others, have often flattered themselves with a persuasion of an immediate intercourse with the Deity, and frequent communications from the Divine Spirit. God, I own, cannot be denied to be able to enlighten the understanding by a ray darted into the mind immediately from the fountain of light; this they understand he has promised to do, and who then has so good a title to expect it as those who are his peculiar people, chosen by him, and depending on him?

Enthusiasm.

§. 6. Their minds being thus prepared, whatever groundless opinion comes to settle itself strongly upon their fancies, is an illumination from the spirit of God, and presently of divine authority: and whatsoever odd action they find in themselves a strong inclination to do, that impulse is concluded to be a call or direction from heaven, and must be obeyed; it is a commission from above, and they cannot err in executing it.

§. 7. This I take to be properly enthusiasm, which, though founded neither on reason nor divine revelation, but rising from the conceits of a warmed or over-weening brain, works yet, where it once gets footing, more powerfully on the persuasions and actions of men, than either of those two, or both together: men being most forwardly obedient to the impulses they receive from themselves; and the whole man is sure to act more vigorously, where the whole man is carried by a natural motion. For strong conceit, like a new principle, carries all easily with it, when got above common sense, and freed from all restraint of reason, and check of reflection, it is heightened into a divine authority, in concurrence with our own temper and inclination.

Enthusiasm mistaken for seeing and feeling.

§. 8. Though the odd opinions and extravagant actions enthusiasm has run men into, were enough to warn them against this wrong principle, so apt to misguide them

them both in their belief and conduct; yet the love of something extraordinary, the ease and glory it is to be inspired, and be above the common and natural ways of knowledge, so flatters many men's laziness, ignorance, and vanity, that when once they are got into this way of immediate revelation, of illumination without search, and of certainty without proof, and without examination; it is a hard matter to get them out of it. Reason is lost upon them, they are above it: they see the light infused into their understandings, and cannot be mistaken; it is clear and visible there, like the light of bright sunshine; shows itself, and needs no other proof but its own evidence: they feel the hand of God moving them within, and the impulses of the spirit, and cannot be mistaken in what they feel. Thus they support themselves, and are sure reason hath nothing to do with what they see and feel in themselves: what they have a sensible experience of admits no doubt, needs no probation. Would he not be ridiculous, who should require to have it proved to him that the light shines, and that he sees it? It is its own proof, and can have no other. When the spirit brings light into our minds, it dispels darkness. We see it, as we do that of the sun at noon, and need not the twilight of reason to show it us. This light from heaven is strong, clear, and pure, carries its own demonstration with it; and we may as naturally take a glow-worm to assist us to discover the sun, as to examine the celestial ray by our dim candle, reason.

Enthusiasm how to be discovered.

§. 9. This is the way of talking of these men: they are sure, because they are sure: and their persuasions are right, because they are strong in them. For, when what they say is stripped of the metaphor of seeing and feeling, this is all it amounts to: and yet these similies so impose on them, that they serve them for certainty in themselves, and demonstration to others.

§. 10. But to examine a little soberly this internal light, and this feeling on which they build so much. These men have, they say, clear light, and they see; they have awakened sense, and they feel: this cannot,

they are sure, be disputed them. For when a man says he sees or feels, nobody can deny it him that he does so. But here let me ask: this seeing, is it the perception of the truth of the proposition, or of this, that it is a revelation from God? This feeling, is it a perception of an inclination or fancy to do something, or of the spirit of God moving that inclination? These are two very different perceptions, and must be carefully distinguished, if we would not impose upon ourselves. I may perceive the truth of a proposition, and yet not perceive that it is an immediate revelation from God. I may perceive the truth of a proposition in Euclid, without its being or my perceiving it to be a revelation: nay, I may perceive I came not by this knowledge in a natural way, and so may conclude it revealed, without perceiving that it is a revelation from God; because there be spirits, which, without being divinely commissioned, may excite those ideas in me, and lay them in such order before my mind, that I may perceive their connexion. So that the knowledge of any proposition coming into my mind, I know not how, is not a perception that it is from God. Much less is a strong persuasion, that it is true, a perception that it is from God, or so much as true. But however it be called light and seeing, I suppose it is at most but belief and assurance: and the proposition taken for a revelation, is not such as they know to be true, but take to be true. For where a proposition is known to be true, revelation is needless: and it is hard to conceive how there can be a revelation to any one of what he knows already. If therefore it be a proposition which they are persuaded, but do not know, to be true, whatever they may call it, it is not seeing, but believing. For these are two ways, whereby truth comes into the mind, wholly distinct, so that one is not the other. What I see I know to be so by the evidence of the thing itself: what I believe I take to be so upon the testimony of another: but this testimony I must know to be given, or else what ground have I of believing? I must see that it is God that reveals this to me, or else I see nothing. The question then here is, how do I know that God is the revealer of this to me; that this impression

sion is made upon my mind by his Holy Spirit, and that therefore I ought to obey it? If I know not this, how great soever the assurance is that I am possessed with, it is groundless; whatever light I pretend to, it is but enthusiasm. For whether the proposition supposed to be revealed, be in itself evidently true, or visibly probable, or by the natural ways of knowledge uncertain, the proposition that must be well grounded, and manifested to be true, is this, that God is the revealer of it, and that what I take to be a revelation is certainly put into my mind by him, and is not an illusion dropped in by some other spirit, or raised by my own fancy. For if I mistake not, these men receive it for true, because they presume God revealed it. Does it not then stand them upon, to examine on what grounds they presume it to be a revelation from God? or else all their confidence is mere presumption: and this light, they are so dazzled with, is nothing but an ignis fatuus that leads them constantly round in this circle; it is a revelation, because they firmly believe it, and they believe it, because it is a revelation.

Enthusiasm fails of evidence, that the proposition is from God.

§. 11. In all that is of divine revelation, there is need of no other proof but that it is an inspiration from God: for he can neither deceive nor be deceived. But how shall it be known that any proposition in our minds is a truth infused by God; a truth that is revealed to us by him, which he declares to us, and therefore we ought to believe? Here it is that enthusiasm fails of the evidence it pretends to. For men thus possessed boast of a light whereby they say they are enlightened, and brought into the knowledge of this or that truth. But if they know it to be a truth, they must know it to be so, either by its own self-evidence to natural reason, or by the rational proofs that make it out to be so. If they see and know it to be a truth, either of these two ways, they in vain suppose it to be a revelation. For they know it to be true the same way, that any other man naturally may know that it is so without the help of revelation. For thus all the truths, of what kind soever, that men uninspired are enlightened with,

came into their minds, and are eſtabliſhed there. If they ſay they know it to be true, becauſe it is a revelation from God, the reaſon is good: but then it will be demanded how they know it to be a revelation from God. If they ſay, by the light it brings with it, which ſhines bright in their minds, and they cannot reſiſt: I beſeech them to conſider whether this be any more than what we have taken notice of already, viz. that it is a revelation, becauſe they ſtrongly believe it to be true. For all the light they ſpeak of is but a ſtrong, though ungrounded, perſuaſion of their own minds, that it is a truth. For rational grounds from proofs that it is a truth, they muſt acknowledge to have none; for then it is not received as a revelation, but upon the ordinary grounds that other truths are received: and if they believe it to be true, becauſe it is a revelation, and have no other reaſon for its being a revelation, but becauſe they are fully perſuaded without any other reaſon that it is true; they believe it to be a revelation, only becauſe they ſtrongly believe it to be a revelation; which is a very unſafe ground to proceed on, either in our tenets or actions. And what readier way can there be to run ourſelves into the moſt extravagant errours and miſcarriages, than thus to ſet up fancy for our ſupreme and ſole guide, and to believe any propoſition to be true, any action to be right, only becauſe we believe it to be ſo? The ſtrength of our perſuaſions is no evidence at all of their own rectitude: crooked things may be as ſtiff and inflexible as ſtraight: and men may be as poſitive and peremptory in errour as in truth. How come elſe the untractable zealots in different and oppoſite parties? For if the light, which every one thinks he has in his mind, which in this caſe is nothing but the ſtrength of his own perſuaſion, be an evidence that it is from God, contrary opinions have the ſame title to inſpirations; and God will be not only the father of lights, but of oppoſite and contradictory lights, leading men contrary ways; and contradictory propoſitions will be divine truths, if an ungrounded ſtrength of aſſurance be an evidence, that any propoſition is a divine revelation.

§. 12.

§. 12. This cannot be otherwise, whilst firmness of persuasion is made the cause of believing, and confidence of being in the right is made an argument of truth. St. Paul himself believed he did well, and that he had a call to it when he persecuted the Christians, whom he confidently thought in the wrong: but yet it was he, and not they, who were mistaken. Good men are men still, liable to mistakes; and are sometimes warmly engaged in errours, which they take for divine truths, shining in their minds with the clearest light.

Firmness of persuasion no proof that any proposition is from God.

§. 13. Light, true light, in the mind is, or can be nothing else but the evidence of the truth of any proposition; and if it be not a self-evident proposition, all the light it has, or can have, is from the clearness and validity of those proofs, upon which it is received. To talk of any other light in the understanding is to put ourselves in the dark, or in the power of the Prince of darkness, and by our own consent to give ourselves up to delusion to believe a lie. For if strength of persuasion be the light, which must guide us; I ask how shall any one distinguish between the delusions of Satan, and the inspirations of the Holy Ghost? He can transform himself into an angel of light. And they who are led by this son of the morning, are as fully satisfied of the illumination, i. e. are as strongly persuaded, that they are enlightened by the spirit of God, as any one who is so: they acquiesce and rejoice in it, are acted by it: and nobody can be more sure, nor more in the right (if their own strong belief may be judge) than they.

Light in the mind, what.

§. 14. He therefore that will not give himself up to all the extravagancies of delusion and errour, must bring this guide of his light within to the trial. God, when he makes the prophet, does not unmake the man. He leaves all his faculties in the natural state, to enable him to judge of his inspirations, whether they be of divine original or no. When he illuminates the mind with supernatural light, he does not extinguish that which is

Revelation must be judged of by reason.

natural. If he would have us assent to the truth of any proposition, he either evidences that truth by the usual methods of natural reason, or else makes it known to be a truth which he would have us assent to, by his authority; and convinces us that it is from him, by some marks which reason cannot be mistaken in. Reason must be our last judge and guide in every thing. I do not mean that we must consult reason, and examine whether a proposition revealed from God can be made out by natural principles, and if it cannot, that then we may reject it: but consult it we must, and by it examine, whether it be a revelation from God or no. And if reason finds it to be revealed from God, reason then declares for it, as much as for any other truth, and makes it one of her dictates. Every conceit that thoroughly warms our fancies must pass for an inspiration, if there be nothing but the strength of our persuasions, whereby to judge of our persuasions: if reason must not examine their truth by something extrinsecal to the persuasions themselves, inspirations and delusions; truth and falsehood, will have the same measure, and will not be possible to be distinguished.

Belief no proof of revelation.

§. 15. If this internal light, or any proposition which under that title we take for inspired, be conformable to the principles of reason, or to the word of God, which is attested revelation, reason warrants it, and we may safely receive it for true, and be guided by it in our belief and actions: if it receive no testimony nor evidence from either of these rules, we cannot take it for a revelation, or so much as for true, till we have some other mark that it is a revelation, besides our believing that it is so. Thus we see the holy men of old, who had revelations from God, had something else besides that internal light of assurance in their own minds, to testify to them that it was from God. They were not left to their own persuasions alone, that those persuasions were from God; but had outward signs to convince them of the author of those revelations. And when they were to convince others, they had a power given them to justify the truth of their commission from heaven, and by visible

visible signs to assert the divine authority of a message they were sent with. Moses saw the bush burn without being consumed, and heard a voice out of it. This was something besides finding an impulse upon his mind to go to Pharaoh, that he might bring his brethren out of Egypt: and yet he thought not this enough to authorize him to go with that message, till God, by another miracle of his rod turned into a serpent, had assured him of a power to testify his mission, by the same miracle repeated before them, whom he was sent to. Gideon was sent by an angel to deliver Israel from the Midianites, and yet he desired a sign to convince him that this commission was from God. These, and several the like instances to be found among the prophets of old, are enough to show that they thought not an inward seeing or persuasion of their own minds, without any other proof, a sufficient evidence that it was from God; though the scripture does not every where mention their demanding or having such proofs.

§. 16. In what I have said I am far from denying, that God can, or doth sometimes enlighten men's minds in the apprehending of certain truths, or excite them to good actions by the immediate influence and assistance of the holy spirit, without any extraordinary signs accompanying it. But in such cases too we have reason and scripture, unerring rules to know whether it be from God or no. Where the truth embraced is consonant to the revelation in the written word of God, or the action conformable to the dictates of right reason or holy writ, we may be assured that we run no risk in entertaining it as such; because though perhaps it be not an immediate revelation from God, extraordinarily operating on our minds, yet we are sure it is warranted by that revelation which he has given us of truth. But it is not the strength of our private persuasion within ourselves, that can warrant it to be a light or motion from heaven; nothing can do that but the written word of God without us, or that standard of reason which is common to us with all men. Where reason or scripture is express for any opinion or action, we may receive it as of divine authority; but it is not the strength of our

own

own persuasions which can by itself give it that stamp. The bent of our own minds may favour it as much as we please; that may show it to be a fondling of our own, but will by no means prove it to be an offspring of heaven, and of divine original.

CHAP. XX.

Of Wrong Assent, or Errour.

Causes of errour.

§. 1. KNOWLEDGE being to be had only of visible and certain truth, errour is not a fault of our knowledge, but a mistake of our judgment, giving assent to that which is not true.

But if assent be grounded on likelihood, if the proper object and motive of our assent be probability, and that probability consists in what is laid down in the foregoing chapters, it will be demanded how men come to give their assents contrary to probability. For there is nothing more common than contrariety of opinions; nothing more obvious than that one man wholly disbelieves, what another only doubts of, and a third stedfastly believes, and firmly adheres to. The reasons whereof, though they may be very various, yet, I suppose, may all be reduced to these four:

1. Want of proofs.
2. Want of ability to use them.
3. Want of will to use them.
4. Wrong measures of probability.

1. Want of proofs.

§. 2. First, by want of proofs, I do not mean only the want of those proofs which are no where extant, and so are no where to be had; but the want even of those proofs which are in being, or might be procured. And thus men want proofs who have not the convenience or opportunity to make experiments and observations themselves tending to the proof of any proposition; nor likewise the convenience to inquire into and collect the testimonies

of

of others: and in this state are the greatest part of mankind, who are given up to labour, and enslaved to the necessity of their mean condition, whose lives are worn out only in the provisions for living. These men's opportunities of knowledge and inquiry are commonly as narrow as their fortunes; and their understandings are but little instructed, when all their whole time and pains is laid out to still the croaking of their own bellies, or the cries of their children. It is not to be expected that a man, who drudges on all his life in a laborious trade, should be more knowing in the variety of things done in the world, than a pack-horse, who is driven constantly forwards and backwards in a narrow lane, and dirty road, only to market, should be skilled in the geography of the country. Nor is it at all more possible, that he who wants leisure, books, and languages, and the opportunity of conversing with variety of men, should be in a condition to collect those testimonies and observations which are in being, and are necessary to make out many, nay most of the propositions that, in the societies of men, are judged of the greatest moment; or to find out grounds of assurance so great as the belief of the points he would build on them is thought necessary. So that a great part of mankind are, by the natural and unalterable state of things in this world, and the constitution of human affairs, unavoidably given over to invincible ignorance of those proofs on which others build, and which are necessary to establish those opinions: the greatest part of men, having much to do to get the means of living, are not in a condition to look after those of learned and laborious inquiries.

Obj. What shall become of those who want them, answered.

§. 3. What shall we say then? Are the greatest part of mankind, by the necessity of their condition, subjected to unavoidable ignorance in those things which are of greatest importance to them? (for of these it is obvious to inquire.) Have the bulk of mankind no other guide but accident, and blind chance, to conduct them to their happiness or misery? Are the current opinions, and licensed guides of every country, sufficient evidence

evidence and security to every man to venture his great concernments on; nay, his everlasting happiness or misery? Or can those be the certain and infallible oracles and standards of truth, which teach one thing in Christendom, and another in Turky? Or shall a poor countryman be eternally happy for having the chance to be born in Italy; or a day-labourer be unavoidably lost, because he had the ill luck to be born in England? How ready some men may be to say some of these things, I will not here examine: but this I am sure, that men must allow one or other of these to be true (let them choose which they please) or else grant, that God has furnished men with faculties sufficient to direct them in the way they should take, if they will but seriously employ them that way, when their ordinary vocations allow them the leisure. No man is so wholly taken up with the attendance on the means of living, as to have no spare time at all to think of his soul, and inform himself in matters of religion. Were men as intent upon this, as they are on things of lower concernment, there are none so enslaved to the necessities of life, who might not find many vacancies that might be husbanded to this advantage of their knowledge.

People hindered from inquiry.

§. 4. Besides those, whose improvements and informations are straitened by the narrowness of their fortunes, there are others whose largeness of fortune would plentifully enough supply books and other requisites for clearing of doubts, and discovering of truth: but they are cooped in close, by the laws of their countries, and the strict guards of those whose interest it is to keep them ignorant, lest, knowing more, they should believe the less in them. These are as far, nay farther from the liberty and opportunities of a fair inquiry, than these poor and wretched labourers we before spoke of. And, however they may seem high and great, are confined to narrowness of thought, and enslaved in that which should be the freest part of man, their understandings. This is generally the case of all those who live in places where care is taken to propagate truth without knowledge; where men are forced, at a venture, to be of the religion of

of the country; and must therefore swallow down opinions, as silly people do empirics pills, without knowing what they are made of, or how they will work, and having nothing to do but believe that they will do the cure: but in this are much more miserable than they, in that they are not at liberty to refuse swallowing what perhaps they had rather let alone; or to choose the physician, to whose conduct they would trust themselves.

2. Want of skill to use them.

§. 5. Secondly, those who want skill to use those evidences they have of probabilities; who cannot carry a train of consequences in their heads; nor weigh exactly the preponderancy of contrary proofs and testimonies, making every circumstance its due allowance; may be easily misled to assent to positions that are not probable. There are some men of one, some but of two syllogisms, and no more; and others that can but advance one step farther. These cannot always discern that side on which the strongest proofs lie; cannot constantly follow that which in itself is the more probable opinion. Now that there is such a difference between men, in respect of their understandings, I think nobody, who has had any conversation with his neighbours, will question: though he never was at Westminster-hall, or the Exchange, on the one hand; or at Alms-houses, or Bedlam, on the other. Which great difference in men's intellectuals, whether it rises from any defect in the organs of the body, particularly adapted to thinking; or in the dulness or untractableness of those faculties for want of use; or, as some think, in the natural differences of men's souls themselves; or some, or all of these together; it matters not here to examine: only this is evident, that there is a difference of degrees in men's understandings, apprehensions, and reasonings, to so great a latitude, that one may, without doing injury to mankind, affirm, that there is a greater distance between some men and others, in this respect, than between some men and some beasts. But how this comes about, is a speculation, though of great consequence, yet not necessary to our present purpose.

3. Want of will to use them.

§. 6. Thirdly, there are another sort of people that want proofs, not because they are out of their reach, but because they will not use them: who, though they have riches and leisure enough, and want neither parts nor other helps, are yet never the better for them. Their hot pursuit of pleasure, or constant drudgery in business, engages some men's thoughts elsewhere: lazinesS and oscitancy in general, or a particular aversion for books, study and meditation, keep others from any serious thoughts at all: and some out of fear, that an impartial inquiry would not favour those opinions which best suit their prejudices, lives, and designs, content themselves, without examination, to take upon trust what they find convenient and in fashion. Thus most men, even of those that might do otherwise, pass their lives without an acquaintance with, much less a rational assent to, probabilities they are concerned to know, though they lie so much within their view, that to be convinced of them they need but turn their eyes that way. We know some men will not read a letter which is supposed to bring ill news; and many men forbear to cast up their accounts, or so much as think upon their estates, who have reason to fear their affairs are in no very good posture. How men, whose plentiful fortunes allow them leisure to improve their understandings, can satisfy themselves with a lazy ignorance, I cannot tell: but methinks they have a low opinion of their souls, who lay out all their incomes in provisions for the body, and employ none of it to procure the means and helps of knowledge; who take great care to appear always in a neat and splendid outside, and would think themselves miserable in coarse cloaths, or a patched coat, and yet contentedly suffer their minds to appear abroad in a pie-bald livery of coarse patches, and borrowed shreds, such as it has pleased chance, or their country-taylor (I mean the common opinion of those they have conversed with) to clothe them in. I will not here mention how unreasonable this is for men that ever think of a future state, and their concernment in it, which no rational man can avoid to do sometimes; nor shall I take notice what a

shame

shame and confusion it is, to the greatest contemners of knowledge, to be found ignorant in things they are concerned to know. But this at least is worth the consideration of those who call themselves gentlemen, that however they may think credit, respect, power and authority, the concomitants of their birth and fortune, yet they will find all these still carried away from them, by men of lower condition, who surpass them in knowledge. They who are blind will always be led by those that see, or else fall into the ditch: and he is certainly the most subjected, the most enslaved, who is so in his understanding. In the forgoing instances, some of the causes have been shown of wrong assent, and how it comes to pass, that probable doctrines are not always received with an assent proportionable to the reasons which are to be had for their probability: but hitherto we have considered only such probabilities, whose proofs do exist, but do not appear to him who embraces the errour.

4. Wrong measures of probability; whereof,

§. 7. Fourthly, there remains yet the last sort, who, even where the real probabilities appear, and are plainly laid before them, do not admit of the conviction, nor yield unto manifest reasons, but do either ἐπέχειν, suspend their assent, or give it to the less probable opinion: And to this danger are those exposed, who have taken up wrong measures of probability; which are,

1. Propositions that are not in themselves certain and evident, but doubtful and false, taken up for principles.

2. Received hypotheses.

3. Predominant passions or inclinations.

4. Authority.

1. Doubtful propositions taken for principles.

§. 8. First, the first and firmest ground of probability is the conformity any thing has to our own knowledge; especially that part of our knowledge which we have embraced, and continue to look on as principles. These have so great an influence upon our opinions, that it is usually by them we judge of truth, and measure probability to that degree, that what is inconsistent with our princi-

ples, is so far from passing for probable with us, that it will not be allowed possible. The reverence borne to these principles is so great, and their authority so paramount to all other, that the testimony not only of other men, but the evidence of our own senses are often rejected, when they offer to vouch any thing contrary to these established rules. How much the doctrine of innate principles, and that principles are not to be proved or questioned, has contributed to this, I will not here examine. This I readily grant, that one truth cannot contradict another: but withal I take leave also to say, that every one ought very carefully to beware what he admits for a principle, to examine it strictly, and see whether he certainly knows it to be true of itself by its own evidence, or whether he does only with assurance believe it to be so upon the authority of others. For he hath a strong biass put into his understanding, which will unavoidably misguide his assent, who hath imbibed wrong principles, and has blindly given himself up to the authority of any opinion in itself not evidently true.

§. 9. There is nothing more ordinary, than children's receiving into their minds propositions (especially about matters of religion) from their parents, nurses, or those about them: which being insinuated into their unwary, as well as unbiassed understandings, and fastened by degrees, are at last (equally whether true or false) rivetted there by long custom and education, beyond all possibility of being pulled out again. For men, when they are grown up, reflecting upon their opinions, and finding those of this sort to be as ancient in their minds as their very memories, not having observed their early insinuation, nor by what means they got them, they are apt to reverence them as sacred things, and not to suffer them to be prophaned, touched, or questioned: they look on them as the Urim and Thummim set up in their minds immediately by God himself, to be the great and unerring deciders of truth and falshood, and the judges to which they are to appeal in all manner of controversies.

§. 10. This opinion of his principles (let them be what they will) being once established, in any one's mind,

mind, it is easy to be imagined what reception any proposition shall find, how clearly soever proved, that shall invalidate their authority, or at all thwart with these internal oracles; whereas the grossest absurdities and improbabilities, being but agreeable to such principles, go down glibly, and are easily digested. The great obstinacy that is to be found in men firmly believing quite contrary opinions, though many times equally absurd, in the various religions of mankind, are as evident a proof, as they are an unavoidable consequence, of this way of reasoning from received traditional principles. So that men will disbelieve their own eyes, renounce the evidence of their senses, and give their own experience the lye, rather than admit of any thing disagreeing with these sacred tenets. Take an intelligent Romanist, that, from the first dawning of any notions in his understanding, hath had this principle constantly inculcated, viz. that he must believe as the church (i. e. those of his communion) believes, or that the pope is infallible; and this he never so much as heard questioned, till at forty or fifty years old he met with one of other principles: how is he prepared easily to swallow, not only against all probability, but even the clear evidence of his senses, the doctrine of transubstantiation? This principle has such an influence on his mind, that he will believe that to be flesh which he sees to be bread. And what way will you take to convince a man of any improbable opinion he holds, who, with some philosophers, hath laid down this as a foundation of reasoning, that he must believe his reason (for so men improperly call arguments drawn from their principles) against his senses? Let an enthusiast be principled, that he or his teacher is inspired, and acted by an immediate communication of the divine spirit, and you in vain bring the evidence of clear reasons against his doctrine. Whoever therefore have imbibed wrong principles, are not, in things inconsistent with these principles, to be moved by the most apparent and convincing probabilities, till they are so candid and ingenuous to themselves, as to be persuaded to examine even those very principles, which many never suffer themselves to do.

2. Received hypotheses.

§. 11. Secondly, next to these are men whose understandings are cast into a mould, and fashioned just to the size of a received hypothesis. The difference between these and the former is, that they will admit of matter of fact, and agree with dissenters in that; but differ only in assigning of reasons, and explaining the manner of operation. These are not at that open defiance with their senses, with the former: they can endure to hearken to their information a little more patiently; but will by no means admit of their reports in the explanation of things; nor be prevailed on by probabilities, which would convince them that things are not brought about just after the same manner that they have decreed within themselves that they are. Would it not be an insufferable thing for a learned professor, and that which his scarlet would blush at, to have his authority of forty years standing, wrought out of hard rock Greek and Latin, with no small expence of time and candle, and confirmed by general tradition and a reverend beard, in an instant overturned by an upstart novelist? Can any one expect that he should be made to confess, that what he taught his scholars thirty years ago, was all errour and mistake; and that he sold them hard words and ignorance at a very dear rate? What probabilities, I say, are sufficient to prevail in such a case? And who ever by the most cogent arguments will be prevailed with to disrobe himself at once of all his old opinions, and pretences to knowledge and learning, which with hard study he hath all his time been labouring for; and turn himself out stark naked, in quest afresh of new notions? All the arguments that can be used, will be as little able to prevail, as the wind did with the traveller to part with his cloke, which he held only the faster. To this of wrong hypothesis may be reduced the errours that may be occasioned by a true hypothesis, or right principles, but not rightly understood. There is nothing more familiar than this. The instances of men contending for different opinions, which they all derive from the infallible truth of the scripture, are an undeniable proof of it. All that call themselves Christians allow the text, that says,

says, μετανοεῖτε, to carry in it the obligation to a very weighty duty. But yet how very erroneous will one of their practices be, who, understanding nothing but the French, take this rule with one translation to be "repentez vous," repent; or with the other, "faitiez penitence," do penance!

3. Predominant passions.

§. 12. Thirdly, probabilities, which cross men's appetites and prevailing passions, run the same fate. Let ever so much probability hang on one side of a covetous man's reasoning, and money on the other; it is easy to foresee which will outweigh. Earthly minds, like mud-walls, resist the strongest batteries: and though perhaps sometimes the force of a clear argument may make some impression, yet they nevertheless stand firm, and keep out the enemy truth, that would captivate or disturb them. Tell a man, passionately in love, that he is jilted; bring a score of witnesses of the falshood of his mistress, it is ten to one but three kind words of hers shall invalidate all their testimonies. "Quod volumus, facile credimus;" What suits our wishes, is forwardly believed; is, I suppose, what every one hath more than once experimented: and though men cannot always openly gainsay or resist the force of manifest probabilities that make against them, yet yield they not to the argument. Not but that it is the nature of the understanding constantly to close with the more probable side; but yet a man hath a power to suspend and restrain its inquiries, and not permit a full and satisfactory examination, as far as the matter in question is capable, and will bear it to be made. Until that be done, there will be always these two ways left of evading the most apparent probabilities.

The means of evading probabilities: 1. Supposed fallacy.

§. 13. First, that the arguments being (as for the most part they are) brought in words, there may be a fallacy latent in them: and the consequences being, perhaps, many in train, they may be some of them incoherent. There are very few discourses so short, clear, and consistent to which most men may not, with satisfaction enough to themselves, raise this doubt; and from whose conviction they may not, without reproach

of disingenuity or unreasonableness, set themselves free with the old reply, "non persuadebis, etiamsi persuaseris;" Though I cannot answer, I will not yield.

2. Supposed arguments for the contrary.

§. 14. Secondly, manifest probabilities may be evaded, and the assent withheld upon this suggestion, that I know not yet all that may be said on the contrary side. And therefore though I be beaten, it is not necessary I should yield, not knowing what forces there are in reserve behind. This is a refuge against conviction so open and so wide, that it is hard to determine, when a man is quite out of the verge of it.

What probabilities determine the assent.

§. 15. But yet there is some end of it; and a man having carefully inquired into all the grounds of probability and unlikeliness, done his utmost to inform himself in all particulars fairly, and cast up the sum total on both sides; may in most cases come to acknowledge, upon the whole matter, on which side the probability rests: wherein some proofs in matter of reason, being suppositions upon universal experience, are so cogent and clear; and some testimonies in matter of fact so universal; that he cannot refuse his assent. So that, I think, we may conclude, that in propositions, where though the proofs in view are of most moment, yet there are sufficient grounds to suspect that there is either fallacy in words, or certain proofs as considerable to be produced on the contrary side; there assent, suspence, or dissent, are often voluntary actions: but where the proofs are such as make it highly probable, and there is not sufficient ground to suspect, that there is either fallacy of words (which sober and serious consideration may discover) nor equally valid proofs, yet undiscovered, latent on the other side (which also the nature of the thing may, in some cases, make plain to a considerate man) there, I think, a man, who has weighed them, can scarce refuse his assent to the side, on which the greater probability appears. Whether it be probable, that a promiscuous jumble of printing letters should often fall into a method and order, which should stamp on paper a coherent discourse; or that a blind fortuitous concourse of atoms,

not

not guided by an understanding agent, should frequently constitute the bodies of any species of animals: in these and the like cases, I think, nobody that considers them can be one jot at a stand which side to take, nor at all waver in his assent. Lastly, when there can be no supposition (the thing in its own nature indifferent, and wholly depending upon the testimony of witnesses) that there is as fair testimony against, as for the matter of fact attested; which by inquiry is to be learned, v. g. whether there was one thousand seven hundred years ago such a man at Rome as Julius Cæsar: in all such cases, I say, I think it is not in any rational man's power to refuse his assent; but that it necessarily follows, and closes with such probabilities. In other less clear cases, I think, it is in man's power to suspend his assent; and perhaps content himself with the proofs he has, if they favour the opinion that suits with his inclination or interest, and so stop from farther search. But that a man should afford his assent to that side, on which the less probability appears to him, seems to me utterly impracticable, and as impossible, as it is to believe the same thing probable and improbable at the same time.

Where it is in our power to suspend it.

§. 16. As knowledge is no more arbitrary than perception; so, I think, assent is no more in our power than knowledge. When the agreement of any two ideas appears to our minds, whether immediately, or by the assistance of reason, I can no more refuse to perceive, no more avoid knowing it, than I can avoid seeing those objects which I turn my eyes to, and look on in day-light: and what upon full examination I find the most probable, I cannot deny my assent to. But though we cannot hinder our knowledge, where the agreement is once perceived, nor our assent, where the probability manifestly appears upon due consideration of all the measures of it: yet we can hinder both knowledge and assent, by stopping our inquiry, and not employing our faculties in the search of any truth. If it were not so, ignorance, errour, or infidelity could not in any case be a fault. Thus in some cases we can prevent or suspend our assent: but can a man, versed in modern or ancient history, doubt

whether there is such a place as Rome, or whether there was such a man as Julius Cæsar? Indeed there are millions of truths, that a man is not, or may not think himself concerned to know; as whether our king Richard the Third was crooked, or no; or whether Roger Bacon was a mathematician, or a magician. In these and suchlike cases, where the assent one way or other is of no importance to the interest of any one; no action, no concernment of his, following or depending thereon; there it is not strange, that the mind should give itself up to the common opinion, or render itself to the first comer. These and the like opinions are of so little weight and moment, that, like motes in the sun, their tendencies are very rarely taken notice of. They are there, as it were, by chance, and the mind lets them float at liberty. But where the mind judges that the proposition has concernment in it; where the assent or not assenting is thought to draw consequences of moment after it, and good and evil to depend on choosing or refusing the right side; and the mind sets itself seriously to inquire and examine the probability; there, I think, it is not in our choice to take which side we please, if manifest odds appear on either. The greater probability, I think, in that case will determine the assent: and a man can no more avoid assenting, or taking it to be true, where he perceives the greater probability, than he can avoid knowing it to be true, where he perceives the agreement or disagreement of any two ideas.

If this be so, the foundation of errour will lie in wrong measures of probability; as the foundation of vice in wrong measures of good.

4. Authority. §. 17. Fourthly, the fourth and last wrong measure of probability I shall take notice of, and which keeps in ignorance or errour more people than all the other together, is that which I mentioned in the foregoing chapter; I mean, the giving up our assent to the common received opinions, either of our friends or party, neighbourhood or country. How many men have no other ground for their tenets, than the supposed honesty, or learning, or number, of those of the same profession? As if honest or bookish men could not

err,

err, or truth were to be established by the vote of the multitude: yet this with most men serves the turn. The tenet has had the attestation of reverend antiquity, it comes to me with the passport of former ages, and therefore I am secure in the reception I give it: other men have been, and are of the same opinion (for that is all is said) and therefore it is reasonable for me to embrace it. A man may more justifiably throw up cross and pile for his opinions, than take them up by such measures. All men are liable to errour, and most men are in many points, by passion or interest, under temptation to it. If we could but see the secret motives that influenced the men of name and learning in the world, and the leaders of parties, we should not always find that it was the embracing of truth for its own sake, that made them espouse the doctrines they owned and maintained. This at least is certain, there is not an opinion so absurd, which a man may not receive upon this ground. There is no errour to be named, which has not had its professors: and a man shall never want crooked paths to walk in, if he thinks that he is in the right way, wherever he has the footsteps of others to follow.

Men not in so many errours as imagined.

§. 18. But, notwithstanding the great noise is made in the world about errours and opinions, I must do mankind that right, as to say there are not so many men in errours and wrong opinions, as is commonly supposed. Not that I think they embrace the truth; but indeed, because concerning those doctrines they keep such a stir about, they have no thought, no opinion at all. For if any one should a little catechise the greatest part of the partizans of most of the sects in the world, he would not find, concerning those matters they are so zealous for, that they have any opinions of their own: much less would he have reason to think, that they took them upon the examination of arguments, and appearance of probability. They are resolved to stick to a party, that education or interest has engaged them in; and there, like the common soldiers of an army, show their courage and warmth as their leaders direct, without ever examining or so much as knowing the cause they contend

for. If a man's life shows, that he has no serious regard for religion; for what reason should we think, that he beats his head about the opinions of his church, and troubles himself to examine the grounds of this or that doctrine? It is enough for him to obey his leaders, to have his hand and his tongue ready for the support of the common cause, and thereby approve himself to those, who can give him credit, preferment or protection in that society. Thus men become professors of, and combatants for, those opinions they were never convinced of, nor proselytes to; no, nor ever had so much as floating in their heads: and though one cannot say, there are fewer improbable or erroneous opinions in the world than there are; yet it is certain, there are fewer that actually assent to them, and mistake them for truth, than is imagined.

CHAP. XXI.

Of the Division of the Sciences.

Three sorts. §. 1. ALL that can fall within the compass of human understanding, being either, first, the nature of things, as they are in themselves, their relations, and their manner of operation: or, secondly, that which man himself ought to do, as a rational and voluntary agent, for the attainment of any end, especially happiness: or, thirdly, the ways and means, whereby the knowledge of both the one and the other of these is attained and communicated: I think, science may be divided properly into these three sorts.

1. Physica. §. 2. First, the knowledge of things, as they are in their own proper beings, their constitution, properties, and operations; whereby I mean not only matter and body, but spirits also, which have their proper natures, constitutions, and operations, as well as bodies. This, in a little more enlarged sense of the word, I call Φυσικὴ, or natural philosophy. The end of this is bare speculative truth; and whatsoever can afford

afford the mind of man any such, falls under this branch, whether it be God himself, angels, spirits, bodies, or any of their affections, as number, and figure, &c.

§. 3. Secondly, Πρακτικὴ, the skill of right applying our own powers and actions, for the attainment of things good and useful. The most considerable under this head is ethics, which is the seeking out those rules and measures of human actions, which lead to happiness, and the means to practise them. The end of this is not bare speculation, and the knowledge of truth; but right, and a conduct suitable to it. 2. Practica.

§. 4. Thirdly, the third branch may be called Σημειωτικὴ, or the doctrine of signs, the most usual whereof being words, it is aptly enough termed also Λογικὴ, logick; the business whereof is to consider the nature of signs, the mind makes use of for the understanding of things, or conveying its knowledge to others. For since the things the mind contemplates are none of them, besides itself, present to the understanding, it is necessary that something else, as a sign or representation of the thing it considers, should be present to it: and these are ideas. And because the scene of ideas that makes one man's thoughts, cannot be laid open to the immediate view of another, nor laid up any where but in the memory, a no very sure repository; therefore to communicate our thoughts to one another, as well as record them for our own use, signs of our ideas are also necessary. Those which men have found most convenient, and therefore generally make use of, are articulate sounds. The consideration then of ideas and words, as the great instruments of knowledge, makes no despicable part of their contemplation, who would take a view of human knowledge in the whole extent of it. And perhaps if they were distinctly weighed, and duly considered, they would afford us another sort of logic and critic, than what we have been hitherto acquainted with. Σημειωτικὴ.

§. 5. This seems to me the first and most general, as well as natural division of the objects of our understanding. For a man can employ his thoughts about nothing, but either the contemplation of things themselves

This is the first division of the objects of knowledge.

ſelves for the diſcovery of truth; or about the things in his own power, which are his own actions, for the attainment of his own ends; or the ſigns the mind makes uſe of both in the one and the other, and the right ordering of them for its clearer information. All which three, viz. things as they are in themſelves knowable; actions as they depend on us, in order to happineſs; and the right uſe of ſigns in order to knowledge, being toto cœlo different, they ſeemed to me to be the three great provinces of the intellectual world, wholly ſeparate and diſtinct one from another.

The End of the Eſſay of Human Understanding.

A

DEFENCE

OF

Mr. LOCKE's OPINION

CONCERNING

PERSONAL IDENTITY.

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THE candid author of the late eſſay upon perſonal identity cannot juſtly be offended with any attempt to explain and vindicate Mr. Locke's hypotheſis, if it is carried on in the ſame ſpirit, though it ſhould be attended with the overthrow of ſome of his own favourite notions; ſince he owns that it is of conſequence to form right opinions on this point: which was indeed once deemed an important one, how little ſoever ſuch may be regarded now-a-days. I ſhall proceed therefore, without farther apology, to ſettle the terms of this queſtion, and endeavour to ſtate it ſo as to bring matters to a ſhort and clear determination.

Now the word perſon, as is well obſerved by Mr. Locke (the diſtinguiſhing excellence of whoſe writings conſiſts in ſticking cloſe to the point in hand, and ſtriking out all foreign and impertinent conſiderations) is properly a forenſic term, and here to be uſed in the ſtrict forenſic ſenſe, denoting ſome ſuch quality or modification in man as denominates him a moral agent, or an accountable creature; renders him the proper ſubject of laws, and a true object of rewards or puniſhments. When we apply it to any man, we do not treat of him abſolutely, and in groſs; but under a particular relation or preciſion: we do not comprehend or concern ourſelves about the ſeveral inherent properties which accompany him in real exiſtence, which go to the making up the whole complex notion of an active and intelligent being; but arbitrarily abſtract one ſingle quality

or

or mode from all the reſt, and view him under that diſtinct preciſion only which points out the idea abovementioned, excluſive of every other idea that may belong to him in any other view, either as ſubſtance, quality, or mode. And therefore the conſideration of this ſame quality, or qualification, will not be altered by any others of which he may be poſſeſſed; but remains the ſame whatever he ſhall conſiſt of beſides: whether his ſoul be a material or immaterial ſubſtance, or no ſubſtance at all, as may appear from examining the import of theſe pronouns, I, thou, he, &c. [the grammatical meaning of ſuch words generally pointing out the true origin of our ideas primarily annexed to them] which both in their original ſenſe and common acceptation are purely perſonal terms, and as ſuch lead to no farther conſideration either of ſoul or body; nay, ſometimes are diſtinguiſhed from both, as in the following line,

Linquebant dulces animas, aut ægra trahebant
Corpora *.

An inquiry after the identity of ſuch perſon will be, whether at different times he is, or how he can be, and know himſelf to be the ſame in that reſpect, or equally ſubjected to the very ſame relations and conſequent obligations which he was under formerly, and in which he ſtill perceives himſelf to be involved, whenever he reflects upon himſelf and them. This we ſhall find to conſiſt in nothing more, than his becoming ſenſible at different times of what he had thought or done before; and being as fully convinced that he then thought or did it, as he now is of his preſent thoughts, acts, or exiſtence.

Beyond this we neither can, nor need go for evidence in any thing; this, we ſhall ſoon ſee, is the clear and only medium through which diſtant things can be diſcovered and compared together; which at the ſame time ſufficiently aſcertains and eſtabliſhes their ſeveral natures and realities reſpectively; ſo far as they relate to our-

* See Locke on 1 Cor. xv. 53.

ſelves

selves and to each other: or if this should not be esteemed sufficient to that end, we shall find, in the last place, that there is nothing else left for it. This distinct consciousness of our past actions, from whence arise all the ideas of merit and demerit, will most undoubtedly be regarded with the strictest exactness in foro divino; and indeed has its due weight in foro humano, whenever it can be with certainty determined: wherever this appears to be wanting, all judicial proceedings are at an end. How plain soever any criminal act were, the man would now-a-days be acquitted from guilt in the commission of it, and discharged from the penalties annexed to such fact, could it at the same time be as plainly made out, that he was incapable of knowing what he did, or is now under a like incapacity of recollecting it. And it would be held a sufficient reason for such acquittal, that the punishment, or persecution of a creature in these circumstances, could not answer the end proposed by society in punishment, viz. the prevention of evil, the only end that I know of, which can justify punishments in any case. The reason then why such a plea has usually so small regard paid to it in courts of justice, is, I apprehend, either the difficulty of having this incapacity proved with the same clearness that the fact itself is established; or the common maxim that one crime, or criminal indisposition, is not admissible in excuse for another; as in cases of drunkenness, violent passion, killing or maiming men by mistake when one is engaged in an unlawful pursuit, &c. Or in some of these cases perhaps men are punished for the murders, &c. not because they possibly may be conscious of them, and yet that consciousness not appear; but that such evils may be more effectually prevented by striking at the remoter cause, i. e. exciting a salutary terrour of those confessedly evil practices and habits, which are often found to terminate in such fatal effects. A kind of injustice is here indeed committed by society, which we have no reason to suppose will be admitted in foro divino, and some worse instances may be seen in our statute books. By the 23 of Hen. 8. a man becoming lunatic after an act of treason shall be liable to be arraigned, tried, and exe-

cuted. But Hale * in his P. C. ſays, That if a traitor becomes non compos before conviction he ſhall not be arraigned; if after conviction, he ſhall not be executed: and Hawkins † obſerves the ſame concerning thoſe who have committed any capital offences.

In human courts, which cannot always dive into the hearts of men and diſcover the true ſprings of action, nor conſequently weigh the effects and operations of each in an equal balance; in this ſtate of ignorance and uncertainty, ſuch a notorious indiſpoſition as that of drunkenneſs, v. g. being generally a great fault in itſelf, is ſeldom allowed in extenuation of ſuch others as are committed under its influence; nor indeed does it, I believe, often produce any new, materially different trains of thinking, or totally obliterate the old ones; but where this is really ſo, the Deity would make juſt abatement for ſuch defect or diſability, as was at the time both unconquerable and unavoidable; nor can we properly impute actions conſequent upon any real diſorder of the rational faculties, howſoever that diſorder might have been contracted; and therefore all animadverſions upon them muſt be in vain: nor is a man puniſhable for any thing beſide the bare act of contracting ſuch diſorder, or for the original cauſe of this diſability, how great or durable ſoever; the dangerous conſequences of which he did, or might foreſee. As is the caſe in ſome other confirmed habits, viz. that of ſwearing, &c. which often operate mechanically and unperceived, and in which therefore all the moral turpitude (or what is ſo accounted) ariſing from them, never can reach beyond the fountain-head from whence they are derived, and from which all the effects of them naturally, and even neceſſarily flow. We muſt therefore conclude in general, that a perſon's guilt is eſtimated according to his paſt and preſent conſciouſneſs of the offence, and of his having been the author of it. Nor is it merely his having forgotten the thing, but his having ſo far loſt the notion of it out of his mind, that how frequently ſoever, or in what forcible manner ſoever, it may be pre-

* Hale P. C. 10. † Hawk. P. C. c.

ſented

ſented to him again, he lies under an utter incapacity of becoming ſenſible and ſatisfied that he was ever privy to it before, which is affirmed to render this thing really none of his, or wholly exculpate him when called to anſwer for it. Suppoſe this ſame conſciouſneſs to return, his accountableneſs (call it perſonality, or what you pleaſe) will return along with it: that is, the infliction of evil upon him will now anſwer ſome purpoſe, and therefore he muſt be conſidered as now liable to it. Thus ſome wholly loſe the uſe of their intellectual faculties for a time, and recover them at intervals. In ſuch caſes they are conſidered as puniſhable by laws, and ſo declared by juries, in proportion to the probability of their being conſcious of the fact. Others lie under a partial deprivation of ſome one faculty for certain periods, while they continue to enjoy the reſt in tolerable perfection. I knew a learned man, who was ſaid to recollect with eaſe ſubjects upon which he had written, or any others that had been diſcuſſed before the laſt ten or fifteen years; could reaſon freely, and readily turn to the authors he had read upon them; but take him into the latter part of his life, and all was blank; when any late incidents were repeated to him, he would only ſtare at you, nor could he be made ſenſible of any one modern occurrence however ſtrongly repreſented to him. Was this man equally anſwerable for all tranſactions within the laſt period of his life, as for thoſe in the firſt? Or if he could have been made ſenſible of the latter part, but had irrecoverably loſt the former; could that former part have been in like manner imputed to him? Surely not. And the reaſon plainly is, becauſe ſociety could find no advantage from conſidering him as accountable in either caſe. Which ſhows perſonality to be ſolely a creature of ſociety, an abſtract conſideration of man, neceſſary for the mutual benefit of him and his fellows; i. e. a mere forenſic term; and to inquire after its criterion or conſtituent, is to inquire in what circumſtances ſocieties or civil combinations of men have in fact agreed to inflict evil upon individuals, in order to prevent evils to the whole body from any irregular member. Daily experience ſhows, that they always

make conſciouſneſs of the fact a neceſſary requiſite in ſuch puniſhment, and that all inquiry relates to the probability of ſuch conſciouſneſs. The execution of divine juſtice muſt proceed in the ſame manner. The Deity inflicts evil with a ſettled view to ſome end; and no end worthy of him can be anſwered by inflicting it as a puniſhment, unleſs to prevent other evils. Such end may be anſwered, if the patient is conſcious, or can be made conſcious of the fact, but not otherwiſe. And whence then does this difference in any one's moral capacity ariſe, but from that plain diverſity in his natural one? from his abſolute irretrievable want of conſciouſneſs in one caſe, and not in the other? Suppoſe now that one in the former condition kills a man; that he, or ſome part of what we call him, was ever ſo notoriouſly the inſtrument, or occaſion of that death; yet if he was either then inſenſible of the fact, or afterwards became ſo, and ſo continued: Would he be any more guilty of murder, than if that death had been occaſioned by another perſon? ſince at that time he was truly ſuch, or at leaſt is ſo now, notwithſtanding that moſt people might be apt to judge him ſtill the ſame, from a ſameneſs in outward circumſtances, (which generally ſupply the beſt means men have of judging) from his ſhape, mien, or appearance; though theſe often differ widely from the internal conſtitution, yet are as often miſtaken for it; and this accordingly thought and ſpoke of with little more philoſophical propriety, than when we, in the vulgar phraſe, deſcribe a man's condition by ſaying, We would not be in his coat.

Suppoſe one then in the ſituation abovementioned; could any pains, think you, inflicted on him ſuit the idea, or anſwer the ends of puniſhment, either with regard to himſelf, or others, farther than mere ſhow and deluſion? Rewards and puniſhments are evidently inſtituted for the benefit of ſociety, for the encouragement of virtue, or ſuppreſſion of vice, in the object thus rewarded or puniſhed, and in the reſt of the community; but what tendency to the above purpoſes can either of theſe have, if diſpenſed to one who is not ſo far himſelf as to become conſcious of having done any thing to deſerve

deſerve it? What inſtruction is conveyed to him? What admonition to ſuch others, as are duly acquainted with the whole of the caſe, and ſee every circumſtance thus groſsly miſapplied? And as in theſe caſes, laws only can define the circumſtances in which a man ſhall be treated as accountable, they only can create guilt, i. e. guilt alſo is a forenſic term, or a mode of conſidering any action, which in its eſſence implies knowledge of a law, offence againſt that law, and a ſenſe of having offended againſt it; i. e. an after conſciouſneſs of the fact; without which after conſciouſneſs, puniſhment would be of little avail, as it would neither ſerve to guard the man himſelf againſt a like delinquency, nor tend to the warning of others, who by ſuch inflictions would openly perceive that they might chance to ſuffer pain, without being able to aſſign a reaſon for it.—Thus may perſonality be extended or contracted, and vary in various reſpects, times, and degrees, and thereby become liable to great confuſion, in our applying it to various ſubjects; yet is the ground and foundation of it fixed; and when once diſcovered, its conſequences are not leſs ſo, both before God and man.

Abſtract, general ideas (of which this is an eminent one) are alone productive of certain, uniform, and univerſal knowledge: Thus qualities of a certain kind, when abſtracted, or taken apart from nature, and ſet up for common ſtandards, are ſo far independent as to become abſolute, unmixed, or perfect in themſelves *, however different they may be found in their reſpective concretes. Thus goodneſs, juſtice, guilt, merit, &c. in general, are ever the ſame goodneſs, &c. all the world over, however imperfectly they may appear in any particular ſubjects, times, and places. In the ſame manner as a line, or the abſtract conſideration of length without thickneſs or breadth; the conſideration of ſurface, i. e. length and breadth without thickneſs, muſt be the ſame, in all intelligent beings of like faculties with us, though the natural ſubſtances which ſuggeſt them may differ

* Note 10. to King's Origin of Evil. Rem. k.

with an endlefs variety. Let perfonality anfwer to a line or furface; let the fubftances it is predicated of, like the infinite variety of folids in nature, (with their appendages, heat, cold, colour, &c.) in which length and breadth are found, vary as you pleafe; ftill the abftract ideas of line and furface, and therefore of perfon, will remain invariable. And thus propofitions formed out of thefe general ideas contain certain truths, that are in one fenfe eternal and immutable, as depending on no precarious exiftences whatever. Being merely what we ourfelves make them, they muft continue the fame while the fame number of fuch ideas continue joined together, and appear the fame to every intelligent being that contemplates them *. They do not ftand in need (I fay) of an objective reality, or the exiftence of any external things in full conformity to them, fince we here confider things no farther than as coming up to thefe original ftandards, fettled in the minds of men; or as capable of being included in fuch meafures as are applied to determine their precife quantity, quality, &c. we are ranking them under a certain fpecies or fort; hence called their effence, which entitles them to the name defcriptive of it, as is fufficiently explained by Mr. Locke. They want therefore nothing more to eftablifh their reality, than to be confiftently put together, fo as may diftinguifh them from others that are merely chimerical, and qualify them for the admiffion of any real beings that may occur: Thus, not only the inftance of a triangle fo frequently ufed by Mr. Locke, but every theorem in Euclid, may be ranked among the abftract confiderations of quantity, apart from all real exiftence, which feldom comes up to it: As it may be juftly queftioned whether any triangle or circle, as defined by him, ever exifted in nature, i. e. exifted fo that all the lines of the triangle were right ones, or all the lines drawn from the centre to the circumference equal. Thefe ideas prefuppofe † no one being in particular, they imply nothing more than a proper fubject of in-

* See the firft note to A. B. King's Origin of Evil.
† Vide Bp. Butler's Diff. on Perfonal Identity.

quiry

quiry (as was said above) or some such creature as is either actually endowed with, or at least susceptible of these specific qualities, or modes, which furnish matter for the whole tribe of abstractions daily made and preserved by such terms as usually serve to denote them; whether appellatives, in order to distinguish men in their several stations and relations, private or public; to describe their character or conduct, office, &c. as parent, patriot, king, &c. or such more general, technical ones, as paternity, patriotism, kingship, &c. the nature, end, and use, of all which abstractions, with their names, are well enough understood, and would not easily be mistaken in affairs of common life, which are happily less liable to such kind of subtile refinements, as have brought metaphysical speculations into that contempt under which they have long laboured. In short, of these same abstractions consist all general terms and theorems of every science; and the truth and certainty contained in them, when applied to morals or theology, is no less determinate than in other sciences; it is equally capable of strict demonstration, as Mr. Locke observes, and equally applicable to full as useful and important purposes: The great general truths, I say, arising out of these general essences, or entities, (as they are sometimes called) are all clear, constant, and invariable in themselves, though the names in which such a collection of ideas should be preserved, are often through the poverty and imperfection of language rendered extremely vague and uncertain in each writer or speaker, and the ideas formed by them in other men's minds (which are their proper archetypes, and a conformity to which alone makes them right or wrong, truly or untruly applied) thereby become no less frequently confused and indeterminate. Thus, in the case before us, the word person is often used to signify the whole aggregate of a rational being, including both the very imperfect idea, if it be any idea at all, of substance, and its several properties, [as is the common way] or taking all the essential qualities together, [which properly constitute the substance of any thing*] with several of their modes.

* See the first note to King, and the authors there cited.

As when ſpeaking of any one, we include ſoul, body, ſtation, and other circumſtances, and accordingly ſtyle him a wiſe, worthy perſon; a tall, comely; a rich, great one, &c. where perſon in a lax, popular ſenſe ſignifies as much as man. In which popular ſenſe Mr. Locke manifeſtly takes the word, when he ſays, it "ſtands for "a thinking intelligent being, that has reaſon and re-"flection, and can conſider itſelf as itſelf, the ſame "thinking being, in different times and places." B. 2. C. 27. §. 9. But when the term is uſed more accurately and philoſophically, it ſtands for one eſpecial property of that thing or being, ſeparated from all the reſt that do or may attend it in real exiſtence, and ſet apart for ranging ſuch beings into diſtinct claſſes, (as hinted above) and conſidering them under diſtinct relations and connexions, which are no leſs neceſſary to be determined in life, and which ſhould therefore have their proper and peculiar denomination. And thus ſameneſs of perſon ſtands to denote, not what conſtitutes the ſame rational agent, though it always is predicated of ſuch; but we conſider his rationality ſo far only, as it makes him capable of knowing what he does and ſuffers, and on what account, and thereby renders him amenable to juſtice for his behaviour, as above-mentioned.

Whatever ingredients therefore of different kinds go to the compoſition, what other particulars, whether mental or corporeal, contribute to the formation of this intelligent being, theſe make no part of our inquiry; which, I beg leave to repeat it again, is not what enters into the natural conſtitution of a thing, but what renders it ſo far a moral one, and is the ſine quâ non of its being juſtly chargeable with any of its paſt actions, here or hereafter: Or, in other words, it does not affect the reality or the permanency of ſuch intelligent beings, but only regulates and retains thoſe beings under ſuch a moral relation, as makes them properly accountable to ſome ſuperior for their courſe of action. It is an artificial diſtinction, yet founded in the nature, but not the whole nature of man, who muſt have many other eſſential powers and properties to ſubſiſt as man, and even to ſupport this in queſtion; but none other, we ſay, that

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can affect, or in any wiſe alter his condition in the above-named reſpect, and therefore none that come with propriety into the preſent conſideration.

This is all the myſtery of the matter, which has puzzled ſo many ingenious writers, and been ſo marvelloufly miſtaken by ſuch as are not ſufficiently acquainted with the doctrine of abſtractions, or are miſled by terms of art, inſtead of attending to the preciſe ideas which theſe ought to convey, and would always convey if they were but carefully and ſteadily applied; for want of which proper application, men of genius and good ſenſe have fallen into ſuch egregious trifling *, as ſerves only to diſturb this beyond moſt other parts of ſcience, and has filled the above celebrated queſtion with a multitude of quibbles, which Mr. Locke's clear and copious anſwers to his ſeveral opponents might, one would have hoped, have moſt effectually prevented; but which are ſubſiſting to this very day, to the no ſmall mortification of all ſincere lovers of truth, and admirers of that able defender of it. And I have been the larger on this head of general words and notions, which have ſo cloſe a con-

* An extraordinary inſtance of this kind is to be met with in Biſhop Berkeley, which he calls a demonſtration of the point; where the ſuppoſed union of A and C, not with the whole of B, but with ſome different parts of which B conſiſts, will hardly make them one with each other:——But this famous demonſtration may be ranked among ſome others of the ſame ſort, and ſafely truſted with the reader: 'Let us ſuppoſe that a perſon hath ideas, and is conſcious during a certain ſpace of time, which we will divide into three equal parts, whereof the latter terms are marked by the letters A, B, C. In the firſt part of time the perſon gets a certain number of ideas, which are retained in A: during the ſecond part of time he retains one half of his old ideas, and loſeth the other half, in place of which he acquires as many new ones: ſo that in B his ideas are half old and half new. And in the third part we ſuppoſe him to loſe the remainder of the ideas acquired in the firſt, and to get new ones in their ſtead, which are retained in C, together with thoſe acquired in the ſecond part of time.—The perſons in A and B are the ſame, being conſcious of common ideas by the ſuppoſition. The perſon in B is (for the ſame reaſon) one and the ſame with the perſon in C. Therefore the perſon in A is the ſame with the perſon in C, by that undoubted axiom, quæ conveniunt uni tertio conveniunt inter ſe. But the perſon in C hath no idea in common with the perſon in A. Therefore perſonal identity doth not conſiſt in conſciouſneſs.' Alciphron, v. 2. p. 160.

nexion with each other, and with the present question, as the subject perhaps is not sufficiently explained by Mr. Locke in any one place of his admirable essay, though it occurs pretty often; and since the several properties or attributes of these same abstract ideas are still so miserably misunderstood, as to have their very existence disputed, probably because he has been pleased to set it forth in a manner somewhat paradoxical. Though this word existence also is a term often misapplied, as if nothing could really exist which was not an object of the senses: Whereas in these, and several other ideas, as has been often observed, their esse is percipi.

Again, We are often misled on the other hand by imagining what things are in themselves (as we usually term it) or in their internal essences; instead of considering them as they appear, and stand related to us; or according to the ideas that are obviously suggested by them; which ideas only should be the objects of our contemplation, (since we really perceive nothing else) and ought always to regulate our inquiry into things, as these are the sole foundation of all our knowledge concerning them, of all that can with safety direct, or be of service to us.

But to return to our author. That property then, or quality, or whatever he chooses to call it, which, in his own words, renders men "sensible that they are the same" in some respects, is in Mr. Locke's sense, in the legal, and in common sense, that which so far makes them such, or brings them into the same relative capacity of being ranked among moral, social creatures, and of being treated accordingly, for several obvious purposes in social life. This consciousness, I say, of being thus far ourselves, is what, in Mr. Locke's language, makes us so. In this case, as in some other ideal objects, to be, and be perceived, is really the same, and what this author calls the sign, coincides with the thing signified. Whether any intelligent being is at present what he is in every respect, wants no proof; of this he has self-evident intuitive knowledge *, and can go no higher. And whether he now is what he was once be-

* See note 10. to King. Rem. a.

fore,

fore, in this ſingle article of perſonality, can only be determined by his now being ſenſible of what he then thought and did, which is equally ſelf-evident; and thus again, conſciouſneſs at the ſame time, and by the ſame means, that it convinces him of this, does likewiſe conſtitute him ſuch to all ends and purpoſes whatſoever.

Well then, having examined a little into the nature, and enumerated ſome few properties of an abſtract idea in general, and ſhown that this particular one before us can be nothing more, we may find perhaps that however fluctuating and changeful this account may be judged to render perſonality; how much ſoever it may fall ſhort of ſome ſublime ſyſtems about purely immaterial ſubſtances, and perfectly independent principles of thought; yet there is no help for theſe changes in the ſeat of perſonality; ſince, in the laſt place, we know of nothing more ſtable and permanent in our conſtitution that has the leaſt pretence to ſettle and ſupport it. All parts of the body are to a certain degree in perpetual flux, nor is any one of them, that we are acquainted with, concerned in the preſent caſe more than another. As to the mind, both its cogitative and active powers are ſuſpended (whether they be ſo or not is a matter of fact, in which experience only, and not ſubtile argumentations drawn from the nature of an unknown, perhaps imaginary, eſſence ought to decide) during ſound ſleep: Nay, every drowſy nod (as Mr. Locke expreſſes it) muſt ſhake their doctrine, who maintain that theſe powers are inceſſantly employed. Call then a reſuſcitation or revival of theſe powers, when we awake, another beginning of their exiſtence, a new creation; and argue againſt the poſſibility of any ſuch interruption or annihilation of them, as long as you pleaſe; yet that it is matter of fact, and nightly experience, and capable of as good proof as a negative propoſition will admit, is made out ſufficiently by the above-named excellent writer. This, if properly attended to, and purſued through its genuine conſequences, would go a great way towards unfolding the true nature of the human mind, which many thoughtful men ſeem yet very little acquainted

quainted with, and very much afraid to examine *. And while this disposition holds, we can never expect to come at the original core of all those corruptions that have infected this branch of philosophy, and extended

* Will not the least hint of this doctrine, say they, give great offence, by appearing to undermine the settled distinction between soul and body, which is so much countenanced and confirmed in scripture?—Does it not tend to disturb common apprehensions, and confound both the sense and language of mankind?

Answ. 1. If this doctrine be true, and a truth of some importance, it will surely stand the test, and ought to be supported, against all such inconclusive argumentations as are drawn from consequences, and common prejudices, and can only serve to obstruct all kinds of improvement in any science whatsoever.

Answ. 2. The two great constituents of our frame frequently alluded to in scripture, and to which [as to other popular notions and received forms of expression] it usually accommodates itself, are here no more confounded, than when St. Paul introduces a third as no less essential to the whole of our composition: "I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, "and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus "Christ." 1 Thess. v. 23.

So far is either the true sense of scripture, or the real nature of things, from being confined to the logical arrangement of them under their established genera or species; so little concerned either in our physical or metaphysical distinctions of them, v. g. into animal and vegetable, material and immaterial, substance and property, &c. nor is its language more confounded, or its authority shaken, by such a new system of pneumatology, than it was by the late one of Copernicus concerning each of the planetary motions; which proved, that strictly and philosophically speaking neither does the sun rise, nor the earth stand upon pillars, &c. or by Newton's principles of gravity and vacuum (for whose supposed innovations his French commentators lately thought themselves still obliged to enter their caveat, and make apology to the church;) or Locke's more hardy doctrine of "no innate ideas:" of which this doctrine of ours is a necessary consequence; since if the mind was once a mere rasa tabula, it will soon appear not only from whence it received all its furniture, but also where that is lodged. (See Esq. Search's account of what he terms the mind's internal organs. Light of Nat. pursued, c. 7. 8.) all which were once equally dangerous and offensive positions; but would such surmises, as have been advanced about them, be admitted in any other case? would even a Romish, or any other inquisition now be found weak or wicked enough to proceed upon them? and if at last an author shall incur the odium theologicum, and be traduced by the name of sadducee, socinian, semipagan, &c. for his innocent, as he thinks, perhaps laudable intentions;—if offence will be taken, as it often happens, where no just cause of offence is given; he must patiently submit to his hard fate, and only beg leave to inquire whether there be not some room for suspending our judgment awhile, 'till it more fully appears where the fault of all this chiefly lies, and who is really answerable for it.

them-

themſelves to ſome other parts of ſcience. Nor are the ſeveral proofs, or, if you pleaſe, probabilities, that I was not thinking all the laſt night, ſufficiently anſwered by the old excuſe that I may forget all ſuch thoughts immediately as ſoon as ever I awake: for ſetting aſide the great improbability of this happening ſo very conſtantly, for ſo long a time, it muſt appear to any one who underſtands what he ſays, that whoſoever, or whatſoever, was thus employed, it could not poſſibly be I who was all this while buſily engaged in ſuch thoughts, ſince they never bore the leaſt ſhare in my ſeries of conſciouſneſs, never were connected with the chain of my waking thoughts, nor therefore could any more belong to me, than if you ſuppoſe them (as you might full as well, for argument's ſake, and to ſalve an hypotheſis) to be the working of ſome ſecret mechaniſm, or kept up in the watch that was lying by me. Something like this, I preſume, would be the plea, which all the advocates for this lame ſyſtem would offer in their own defence, were any one ſo injurious as to charge them with things done or ſaid in their ſleep. The ſame obſervation may be urged againſt that abſurd, ſelf-repugnant hypotheſis of our having been in a pre-exiſtent ſtate: for whatſoever was done there, it can be nothing to us, who had never the leaſt notice or conception of it.

To the difficulties ſo often objected, of this being a "new creation," and making the ſame thing have "two beginnings of exiſtence;"—We may obſerve, that it would indeed be an abſurdity to ſuppoſe two beginnings of exiſtence, if the identity of a ſubſtance, being, or man were inquired into; but when the inquiry is made into the artificial abſtract idea of perſonality, invented for a particular end, to anſwer which conſciouſneſs only is required, beginning and end of exiſtence are quite out of the queſtion, being foreign to any conſideration of the ſubject.—It may be farther obſerved, that in fact we meet with ſomething of the ſame kind every morning after a total interruption of thought (and I hope, we may by this time in one ſenſe be allowed to term it ſo) during ſound ſleep: nay, if we ſearch the thing narrowly, and may in our turn enter into ſuch minutiæ,

thus

thus much will be implied in the ſucceſſive train of our ideas, even in each hour of the day; that ſame article of ſucceſſion including ſome degree of diſtance between each of them, and conſequently at every ſucceſſive ſtep there is a new production, which may with equal reaſon be ſtyled an interruption of thought, or a new exertion of the thinking power.—But enough of theſe nugæ difficiles. Such changeable, frail creatures then are we through life; yet ſafe in the hand of that unchangeably juſt, wiſe, good, and all-powerful Being, who perfectly underſtands our frame, and will make due allowances for each defect or diſorder incident to it; who at firſt created us out of nothing, and ſtill preſerves us through each ſhifting ſcene, be the revolutions in it never ſo frequent and rapid, and will at length moſt aſſuredly conduct us to immortality. Though in every reſpect we are here "fleeing as it were a ſhadow, and "never continuing in one ſtay," and at laſt ſuffer a ſhort ſeeming pauſe * in our exiſtence, which is in ſcripture termed the "ſleep of death;" yet will he again raiſe us "out of the duſt;" reſtore us to ourſelves, and to our friends †; revive our conſciouſneſs of each paſt act or habit, that may prove of the leaſt moral import; cauſe the "ſecrets of all hearts to be laid open," and

* i. e. a pauſe in the opinion and ſight of other ſentient beings exiſting after our departure, but not a pauſe ſtrictly ſo called to the perſon himſelf, in which there will be an unbroken thread of conſciouſneſs or continued perſonality; time unperceived being no time, time abſolute a fiction, and no idea intervening between the moments of his falling aſleep and waking again, theſe will be to him coincident: which ſhows, that perſonality cannot have two beginnings of exiſtence, though the ſubſtance in which it is found may be perpetually varied, and though ſometimes a leſs number of facts riſe up to his remembrance.

† To one who has not ſeen and felt the unhappy effects of human prejudice and partial judgment in ſuch caſes, it might appear ſtrange that ſo many wiſe and able men ſhould ſtill continue ignorant of this, after all the fulleſt information given us in the following expreſs declaration of that great and good apoſtle St. Paul: "I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are aſleep, that ye ſorrow not "even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jeſus died "and roſe again, even ſo them alſo which ſleep in Jeſus, will God bring "with him. — Wherefore comfort one another with theſe words." 1 Theſſ. iv. 13, &c.

either

either reward or puniſh every one according to his works done in the body.

Nor does it imply a plurality of perſons in any man at any time given to charge him with various actions or omiſſions; ſince he may become guilty of a plurality of crimes, as often as he is induced or enabled to reflect upon them, though theſe cannot be crowded into his mind altogether, any more than they could have been ſo committed. Nor therefore need all paſt actions become at once preſent to the mind; which is utterly inconſiſtent with our frame, as it now ſtands, and perhaps with that of every other created being; nor is there a neceſſity for any one idea being always actually in view; which is equally ſo; but only for a capacity of having ſuch brought to mind again, together with a conſciouſneſs of their having been there before, (which diſtinguiſhes them from entirely new ones,) or a poſſibility of recognizing them upon occaſion, at leaſt whenever we are to account for them, as has been frequently obſerved. So far as any ſuch recognition reaches, ſuch perſon is the ſame; when this faculty varies, that muſt vary alſo; and he become the ſame, or not, at different times and in divers reſpects, as obſerved likewiſe; at leaſt his accountableneſs muſt vary in proportion, call this perſonality, or what you think fit. Nor does it properly lie in a power of cauſing a return of the ſame idea; but rather in the capacity of receiving it, of re-admitting the ſame conſciouſneſs concerning any paſt thought, action, or perception. Nor is it merely a preſent repreſentation of any ſuch act; but a repreſentation of it as our own, which entitles us to it; one perſon may know or become conſcious of the deeds of another, but this is not knowing that he himſelf was the author of thoſe deeds, which is a contradiction; and to treat him as ſuch upon that account only, would be inverting all rules of right and wrong; and could not therefore be practiſed by either God or man, ſince no end could poſſibly be anſwered by ſuch treatment, as obſerved above.

To dwell upon thoſe ſurpriſing conſequences that might attend the transferring the ſame conſciouſneſs to different beings, or giving the ſame being very different ones, is merely puzzling and perplexing the point, by

by introducing ſuch confuſions as never really exiſted, and would not alter the true ſtate of the queſtion, if they did.

Such Fairy tales and Arabian transformations, poſſible or impoſſible, can only ſerve to amuſe the fancy, without any ſolid information to the judgment. Theſe flights of mere imagination Mr. Locke generally avoids, though he was here tempted to indulge a few ſuch, in playing with the wild ſuppoſitions of his adverſaries, [v. g. a change of ſouls between Socrates and the mayor of Queenborough, &c.] probably to enliven a dry ſubject, and render it more palatable to the bulk of his readers.

Nor are thoſe caſes of a diſordered imagination in lunacy, or vapours, where perſons are for a time beſide themſelves (as we uſually term it) and may believe ſuch chimerical alterations to befal them, any more to the purpoſe.

But it were endleſs to unravel all the futile ſophiſms and falſe ſuppoſitions, that have been introduced into the preſent queſtion; I have endeavoured to obviate ſuch as appeared moſt material, and account for them; and at the ſame time to inculcate a doctrine, which, though common enough, ſeemed not enough attended to; yet is fundamentally requiſite to a right underſtanding of this intricate ſubject. And if that which is laid down above be a true ſtate of the caſe, all the reſt of our author's plan, [of placing perſonal identity in a continuation of thought *] will drop of courſe. I truſt the reader will make allowance for ſome repetitions, which were left to render things as plain as poſſible, and prevent future ſubterfuges of the like kind; and if the ſubſtance of theſe few haſty obſervations on the firſt part of this ingenious writer's eſſay, prove in the leaſt degree ſatisfactory to himſelf, or have a tendency to enlarge general knowledge, and guard againſt popular errours, I muſt rely upon his candour for excuſing the manner in

* Which diſpoſition, could it be made out, would never anſwer the intent of ſociety, or help to direct us in our duty, the two grand objects which firſt gave birth to perſonality; i. e. to a very partial confined conſideration of that complex idea, ſubſtance, or being, called man.

which they are thrown out; and ſhall take the liberty of cloſing them in the form of a ſyllogiſm, which is ſubmitted to his conſideration:

Quo poſito ponitur perſonæ identitas, et quo ſublato tollitur, id perſonalem identitatem conſtituit:

Sed poſitâ conſcientiâ, &c.

Ergo.

A P P E N D I X.

A friend, well acquainted with the ſubject of the foregoing ſheets, having communicated to me ſome obſervations concerning the uſe of the word Perſon, which came too late to be inſerted in their proper place, I muſt take the liberty of annexing them, though they occaſion ſome more redundancies and repetitions, in order to throw as much light as is poſſible on this very obſcure and long controverted queſtion.

AS Mr. Locke's definition of the term perſon, (chap. xxvii. §. 9.) may poſſibly create ſome difficulty, it will be proper to examine into the ſenſe which ſhould be put upon this word, whenever we inquire after the identity of any man's perſon; which may perhaps at once lead us to a juſt conception of the whole. In the aforementioned ſection, Mr. Locke ſays, that perſon ſtands for "a thinking intelligent being, that has reaſon and reflection," &c. whereas I ſhould imagine, the expreſſion would have been more juſt, had he ſaid that the word perſon ſtands for an attribute, or quality, or character of a thinking intelligent being; in the ſame ſenſe as Tully uſes it, Orat. pro Syll. §. 3. "Hanc mihi tu "ſi, propter res meas geſtas, imponis in omni vitâ meâ "perſonam, Torquate, vehementer erras. Me natura "miſericordem, patria ſeverum; crudelem nec patria, "nec natura eſſe voluit: denique iſtam ipſam perſonam "vehementem et acrem, quam mihi tum tempus et "reſpublica impoſuit, jam voluntas et natura ipſa de-"traxit." It came at laſt to be confounded with, and ſtand for homo gerens perſonam, (Taylor, Civ. L. p. 247, 248.) and in this ſenſe Locke has incautiouſly defined the word. It is attributed alſo to more intelligent beings

beings than one; as by the jesuits in their declaration prefixed to the third book of Newton, alienam coacti sumus gerere personam. The word person then, according to the received sense in all classical authors, standing for a certain guise, character, quality, i. e. being in fact a mixed mode, or relation, and not a substance; we must next inquire, what particular character or quality it stands for in this place, as the same man may bear many characters and relations at the same, or different times. The answer is, that here it stands for that particular quality or character, under which a man is considered, when he is treated as an intelligent being subject to government and laws, and accountable for his actions: i. e. not the man himself, but an abstract consideration of him, for such and such particular ends: and to inquire after its identity is to inquire, not after the identity of a conscious being, but after the identity of a quality or attribute of such a conscious being. All difficulties that relate to a man's forgetting some actions, &c. now vanish, when person is considered as a character, and not a substance, or confounded with homo gerens personam: and it amounts to no more than saying, a man puts on a mask—continuing to wear it for some time—puts off one mask and takes another, i. e. appears to have consciousness—to recollect past consciousnesses—does not recollect them, &c. The impropriety consists in saying, a man is the same person with him who did such a fact; which is the same as to say, a man is blackness, guilt, &c. i. e. a mixed mode is predicated of a substance; whereas it ought to be, in strict propriety of speech, the person of the man who did such a fact, is the same with the person of him, who now stands before us; or, in plainer terms, the man who now stands before the court is conscious of the former facts, and is therefore the proper object of punishment. It may be observed, that the word personality is really an absurd expression: since person itself stands for the mixed mode or quality;—and personality therefore may be ranked among the old scholastic terms of corporeity, egoity, tableity, &c. or is even yet more harsh; as mixed modes, such as gratitude, murder, and therefore person, cannot be thus re-modified without peculiar absurdity.

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Quid tam temerarium tamque indignum ſapientis gravitate atque conſtantiâ, quam aut falſum ſentire, aut quod non ſatis exploratè perceptum ſit, & cognitum, ſine ullâ dubitatione defendere?

Cic. de Natura Deorum, lib. 1.

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§. 1. THE laſt reſort a man has recourſe to, in the conduct of himſelf, is his underſtanding: for though we diſtinguiſh the faculties of the mind, and give the ſupreme command to the will, as to an agent; yet the truth is, the man, who is the agent, determines himſelf to this, or that, voluntary action, upon ſome precedent knowledge, or appearance of knowledge in the underſtanding. No man ever 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 underſtanding, with ſuch light as it has, well or ill informed, conſtantly leads; and by that light, true or falſe, all his operative powers are directed. The will itſelf, how abſolute and uncontrollable ſoever it may be thought, never fails in its obedience to the dictates of the underſtanding. Temples have their ſacred images,

Introduction.

and we ſee what influence they have always had over a great part of mankind. But, in truth, the ideas and images in men's minds are the inviſible powers, that conſtantly govern them; and to theſe they all univerſally pay a ready ſubmiſſion. It is, therefore, of the higheſt concernment, that great care ſhould be taken of the underſtanding, to conduct it right, in the ſearch of knowledge, and in the judgments it makes.

The logic, now in uſe, has ſo long poſſeſſed the chair, as the only art taught in the ſchools, for the direction of the mind, in the ſtudy of the arts and ſciences, that it would perhaps be thought an affectation of novelty to ſuſpect, that rules, that have ſerved the learned world theſe two or three thouſand years, and which, without any complaint of defects, the learned have reſted in, are not ſufficient to guide the underſtanding. And I ſhould not doubt, but this attempt would be cenſured as vanity, or preſumption, did not the great lord Verulam's authority juſtify it; who, not ſervilely thinking learning could not be advanced beyond what it was, becauſe for many ages it had not been, did not reſt in the lazy approbation and applauſe of what was, becauſe it was; but enlarged his mind to what it might be. In his preface to his Novum Organum, concerning logic, he pronounces thus, "Qui ſummas dialecticæ partes tribue-
" runt, atque inde fidiſſima ſcientiis præſidia comparari
" putârunt, veriſſimè et optimè viderunt intellectum
" humanum, ſibi permiſſum, meritò ſuſpectum eſſe de-
" bere. Verum infirmior omninò eſt malo medicina;
" nec ipſa mali expers. Siquidem dialectica, quæ re-
" cepta eſt, licet ad civilia et artes, quæ in ſermone et
" opinione poſitæ ſunt, rectiſſimè adhibeatur; naturæ
" tamen ſubtilitatem longo intervallo non attingit, et
" prenſando quod non capit, ad errores potius ſtabili-
" endos et quaſi figendos, quam ad viam veritati aperi-
" endam valuit."

" They, ſays he, who attributed ſo much to logic,
" perceived very well and truly, that it was not ſafe to
" truſt the underſtanding to itſelf without the guard of
" any rules. But the remedy reached not the evil, but
" became a part of it: for the logic, which took place,

though

" though it might do well enough in civil affairs, and " the arts, which conſiſted in talk and opinion; yet " comes very far ſhort of ſubtlety, in the real perfor- " mances of nature; and, catching at what it cannot " reach, has ſerved to confirm and eſtabliſh errours, " rather than to open a way to truth." And therefore a little after he ſays, " That it is abſolutely neceſſary, " that a better and perfecter uſe and employment of the " mind and underſtanding ſhould be introduced." " Neceſſariò requiritur ut melior et perfectior mentis et " intellectûs humani uſus et adoperatio introducatur."

Parts.

§. 2. There is, it is viſible, great variety in men's underſtandings, and their natural conſtitutions put ſo wide a difference between ſome men, in this reſpect, that art and induſtry would never be able to maſter; and their very natures ſeem to want a foundation to raiſe on it that which other men eaſily attain unto.—Amongſt men of equal education there is great inequality of parts. And the woods of America, as well as the ſchools of Athens, produce men of ſeveral abilities in the ſame kind. Though this be ſo, yet I imagine moſt men come very ſhort of what they might attain unto, in their ſeveral degrees, by a neglect of their underſtandings. A few rules of logic are thought ſufficient, in this caſe, for thoſe who pretend to the higheſt improvement; whereas I think there are a great many natural defects in the underſtanding, capable of amendment; which are overlooked and wholly neglected. And it is eaſy to perceive, that men are guilty of a great many faults, in the exerciſe and improvement of this faculty of the mind, which hinder them in their progreſs, and keep them in ignorance and errour all their lives. Some of them I ſhall take notice of, and endeavour to point out proper remedies for, in the following diſcourſe,

Reaſoning.

§. 3. Beſides the want of determined ideas, and of ſagacity, and exerciſe in finding out, and laying in order, intermediate ideas; there are three miſcarriages, that men are guilty of, in reference to their reaſon, whereby this faculty is hindered in them from that ſervice it might do, and was deſigned for.

And he, that reflects upon the actions and diſcourſes of mankind, will find their defects in this kind very frequent, and very obſervable.

1. The firſt is of thoſe who ſeldom reaſon at all, but do and think according to the example of others, whether parents, neighbours, miniſters, or who elſe they are pleaſed to make choice of to have an implicit faith in, for the ſaving of themſelves the pains and trouble of thinking and examining for themſelves.

2. The ſecond is of thoſe who put paſſion in the place of reaſon, and, being reſolved that ſhall govern their actions and arguments, neither uſe their own, nor hearken to other people's reaſon, any farther than it ſuits their humour, intereſt, or party; and theſe one may obſerve commonly content themſelves with words, which have no diſtinct ideas to them, though, in other matters, that they come with an unbiaſſed indifferency to, they want not abilities to talk and hear reaſon, where they have no ſecret inclination, that hinders them from being intractable to it.

3. The third ſort is of thoſe who readily and ſincerely follow reaſon; but, for want of having that, which one may call large, ſound, round-about ſenſe, have not a full view of all that relates to the queſtion, and may be of moment to decide it. We are all ſhort-ſighted, and very often ſee but one ſide of a matter; our views are not extended to all that has a connexion with it. From this defect I think no man is free. We ſee but in part, and we know but in part, and therefore it is no wonder we conclude not right from our partial views. This might inſtruct the proudeſt eſteemer of his own parts, how uſeful it is to talk and conſult with others, even ſuch as come ſhort of him in capacity, quickneſs, and penetration: for, ſince no one ſees all, and we generally have different proſpects of the ſame thing, according to our different, as I may ſay, poſitions to it; it is not incongruous to think, nor beneath any man to try, whether another may not have notions of things, which have eſcaped him, and which his reaſon would make uſe of, if they came into his mind. The faculty of reaſoning ſeldom or never deceives thoſe who truſt to it; its con-

ſequences,

ſequences, from what it builds on, are evident and certain; but that, which it oftener, if not only, miſleads us in, is, that the principles from which we conclude, the grounds upon which we bottom our reaſoning, are but a part, ſomething is left out, which ſhould go into the reckoning, to make it juſt and exact. Here we may imagine a vaſt and almoſt infinite advantage, that angels and ſeparate ſpirits may have over us; who, in their ſeveral degrees of elevation above us, may be endowed with more comprehenſive faculties: and ſome of them, perhaps, having perfect and exact views of all finite beings, that come under their conſideration, can, as it were, in the twinkling of an eye, collect together all their ſcattered and almoſt boundleſs relations. A mind ſo furniſhed, what reaſon has it to acquieſce in the certainty of its concluſions!

In this we may ſee the reaſon, why ſome men of ſtudy and thought, that reaſon right, and are lovers of truth, do make no great advances in their diſcoveries of it. Errour and truth are uncertainly blended in their minds; their deciſions are lame and defective, and they are very often miſtaken in their judgments: the reaſon whereof is, they converſe but with one ſort of men, they read but one ſort of books, they will not come in the hearing but of one ſort of notions: the truth is, they canton out to themſelves a little Goſhen, in the intellectual world, where light ſhines, and, as they conclude, day bleſſes them; but the reſt of that vaſt expanſum they give up to night and darkneſs, and ſo avoid coming near it. They have a pretty traffic with known correſpondents, in ſome little creek; within that they confine themſelves, and are dexterous managers enough of the wares and products of that corner, with which they content themſelves, but will not venture out into the great ocean of knowledge, to ſurvey the riches that nature hath ſtored other parts with, no leſs genuine, no leſs ſolid, no leſs uſeful, than what has fallen to their lot, in the admired plenty and ſufficiency of their own little ſpot, which to them contains whatſoever is good in the univerſe. Thoſe who live thus mewed up, within their own contracted territories, and will not look abroad

beyond the boundaries that chance, conceit, or lazinesS, has set to their inquiries; but live separate from the notions, discourses, and attainments of the rest of mankind; may not amiss be represented by the inhabitants of the Marian islands; who, being separated, by a large tract of sea, from all communion with the habitable parts of the earth, thought themselves the only people of the world. And though the straitness of the conveniencies of life amongst them, had never reached so far as to the use of fire, till the Spaniards, not many years since, in their voyages from Acapulco to Manilla, brought it amongst them; yet, in the want and ignorance of almost all things, they looked upon themselves, even after that the Spaniards had brought, amongst them, the notice of variety of nations, abounding in sciences, arts, and conveniencies of life, of which they knew nothing; they looked upon themselves, I say, as the happiest and wisest people of the universe. But, for all that, nobody, I think, will imagine them deep naturalists, or solid metaphysicians; nobody will deem the quickest-sighted amongst them to have very enlarged views in ethics, or politics; nor can any one allow the most capable amongst them to be advanced so far in his understanding, as to have any other knowledge, but of the few little things of his and the neigbouring islands, within his commerce; but far enough from that comprehensive enlargement of mind, which adorns a soul devoted to truth, assisted with letters, and a free generation of the several views and sentiments of thinking men of all sides. Let not men, therefore, that would have a sight of what every one pretends to be desirous to have a sight of, truth in its full extent, narrow and blind their own prospect. Let not men think there is no truth, but in the sciences that they study, or books that they read. To prejudge other men's notions, before we have looked into them, is not to show their darkness, but to put out our own eyes. "Try all things, hold fast that which is good," is a divine rule, coming from the Father of light and truth; and it is hard to know, what other way men can come at truth, to lay hold of it, if they do not dig and search for it as for

gold and hid treasure; but he that does so, must have much earth and rubbish, before he gets the pure metal; sand, and pebbles, and dross usually lie blended with it, but the gold is never the less gold, and will enrich the man that employs his pains to seek and separate it. Neither is there any danger he should be deceived by the mixture. Every man carries about him a touch-stone, if he will make use of it, to distinguish substantial gold from superficial glitterings, truth from appearances. And, indeed, the use and benefit of this touch-stone, which is natural reason, is spoiled and lost only by assumed prejudices, overweening presumption, and narrowing our minds. The want of exercising it, in the full extent of things intelligible, is that which weakens and extinguishes this noble faculty in us. Trace it, and see whether it be not so. The day-labourer in a country-village has commonly but a small pittance of knowledge, because his ideas and notions have been confined to the narrow bounds of a poor conversation and employment: the low mechanic of a country-town does somewhat out-do him: porters and coblers of great cities surpass them. A country gentleman who, leaving Latin and learning in the university, removes thence to his mansion-house, and associates with neighbours of the same strain, who relish nothing but hunting and a bottle; with those alone he spends his time, with those alone he converses, and can away with no company, whose discourse goes beyond what claret and dissoluteness inspire. Such a patriot, formed in this happy way of improvement, cannot fail, as we see, to give notable decisions upon the bench, at quarter-sessions, and eminent proofs of his skill in politics, when the strength of his purse and party have advanced him to a more conspicuous station. To such a one, truly, an ordinary coffee-house gleaner of the city is an arrant statesman, and as much superior to, as a man conversant about Whitehall and the court, is to an ordinary shop-keeper. To carry this a little farther: Here is one muffled up in the zeal and infallibility of his own sect, and will not touch a book, or enter into debate with a person that will question any of those things, which to him are

sacred.

sacred. Another surveys our differences in religion with an equitable and fair indifference, and so finds, probably, that none of them are in every thing unexceptionable. These divisions and systems were made by men, and carry the mark of fallible on them; and in those, whom he differs from, and till he opened his eyes, had a general prejudice against, he meets with more to be said for a great many things, than before he was aware of, or could have imagined. Which of these two, now, is most likely to judge right, in our religious controversies, and to be most stored with truth, the mark all pretend to aim at? All these men, that I have instanced in, thus unequally furnished with truth, and advanced in knowledge, I suppose of equal natural parts; all the odds between them has been the different scope that has been given to their understandings to range in, for the gathering up of information, and furnishing their heads with ideas, and notions and observations, whereon to employ their mind, and form their understandings.

It will, possibly, be objected, "who is sufficient for all this?" I answer, more than can be imagined. Every one knows what his proper business is, and what, according to the character he makes of himself, the world may justly expect of him; and, to answer that, he will find he will have time and opportunity enough to furnish himself, if he will not deprive himself, by a narrowness of spirit, of those helps that are at hand. I do not say, to be a good geographer, that a man should visit every mountain, river, promontory, and creek, upon the face of the earth, view the buildings, and survey the land every where, as if he were going to make a purchase; but yet every one must allow that he shall know a country better, that makes often sallies into it, and traverses up and down, than he that, like a mill-horse, goes still round in the same track, or keeps within the narrow bounds of a field, or two, that delight him. He that will inquire out the best books, in every science, and inform himself of the most material authors of the several sects of philosophy and religion, will not find it an infinite work to acquaint himself with the sentiments of mankind, concerning the most weighty and comprehensive

henſive ſubjects. Let him exerciſe the freedom of his reaſon and underſtanding in ſuch a latitude as this, and his mind will be ſtrengthened, his capacity enlarged, his faculties improved; and the light, which the remote and ſcattered parts of truth will give to one another, will ſo aſſiſt his judgment, that he will ſeldom be widely out, or miſs giving proof of a clear head, and a comprehenſive knowledge. At leaſt, this is the only way I know, to give the underſtanding its due improvement to the full extent of its capacity, and to diſtinguiſh the two moſt different things I know in the world, a logical chicaner from a man of reaſon. Only he, that would thus give the mind its flight, and ſend abroad his inquiries into all parts after truth, muſt be ſure to ſettle in his head determined ideas of all that he employs his thoughts about, and never fail to judge himſelf, and judge unbiaſſedly, of all that he receives from others, either in their writings or diſcourſes. Reverence, or prejudice, muſt not be ſuffered to give beauty, or deformity, to any of their opinions.

Of practice and habits.

§. 4. We are born with faculties and powers capable almoſt of any thing, ſuch at leaſt as would carry us farther than can eaſily be imagined: but it is only the exerciſe of thoſe powers, which gives us ability and ſkill in any thing, and leads us towards perfection.

A middle-aged ploughman will ſcarce ever be brought to the carriage and language of a gentleman, though his body be as well proportioned, and his joints as ſupple, and his natural parts not any way inferior. The legs of a dancing-maſter, and the fingers of a muſician, fall as it were naturally, without thought, or pains, into regular and admirable motions. Bid them change their parts, and they will in vain endeavour to produce like motions in the members not uſed to them, and it will require length of time and long practice to attain but ſome degrees of a like ability. What incredible and aſtoniſhing actions do we find rope-dancers and tumblers bring their bodies to! Not but that ſundry, in almoſt all manual arts, are as wonderful; but I name thoſe which the world takes notice of for ſuch, becauſe, on that very account,

account, they give money to ſee them. All theſe admired motions, beyond the reach and almoſt conception of unpractiſed ſpectators, are nothing but the mere effects of uſe and induſtry in men, whoſe bodies have nothing peculiar in them from thoſe of the amazed lookers-on.

As it is in the body, ſo it is in the mind; practice makes it what it is, and moſt even of thoſe excellencies, which are looked on as natural endowments, will be found, when examined into more narrowly, to be the product of exerciſe, and to be raiſed to that pitch, only by repeated actions. Some men are remarked for pleaſantneſs in raillery; others for apologues and appoſite diverting ſtories. This is apt to be taken for the effect of pure nature, and that the rather, becauſe it is not got by rules, and thoſe who excel in either of them, never purpoſely ſet themſelves to the ſtudy of it, as an art to be learnt. But yet it is true, that at firſt ſome lucky hit, which took with ſomebody, and gained him commendation, encouraged him to try again, inclined his thoughts and endeavours that way, till at laſt he inſenſibly got a facility in it, without perceiving how; and that is attributed wholly to nature, which was much more the effect of uſe and practice. I do not deny, that natural diſpoſition may often give the firſt riſe to it, but that never carries a man far, without uſe and exerciſe; and it is practice alone, that brings the powers of the mind, as well as thoſe of the body, to their perfection. Many a good poetic vein is buried under a trade, and never produces any thing for want of improvement. We ſee the ways of diſcourſe and reaſoning are very different, even concerning the ſame matter, at court and in the univerſity. And he that will go but from Weſtminſter-hall to the Exchange, will find a different genius and turn in their ways of talking; and yet one cannot think that all whoſe lot fell in the city, were born with different parts from thoſe who were bred at the univerſity, or inns of court.

To what purpoſe all this, but to ſhow that the difference, ſo obſervable in men's underſtandings and parts, does not ariſe ſo much from their natural faculties, as acquired

acquired habits. He would be laughed at, that ſhould go about to make a fine dancer out of a country hedger, at paſt fifty. And he will not have much better ſucceſs, who ſhall endeavour, at that age, to make a man reaſon well, or ſpeak handſomely, who has never been uſed to it, though you ſhould lay before him a collection of all the beſt precepts of logic or oratory. Nobody is made any thing by hearing of rules, or laying them up in his memory; practice muſt ſettle the habit of doing, without reflecting on the rule; and you may as well hope to make a good painter, or muſician, extempore, by a lecture and inſtruction in the arts of muſic and painting, as a coherent thinker, or a ſtrict reaſoner, by a ſet of rules, ſhowing him wherein right reaſoning conſiſts.

This being ſo, that defects and weakneſs in men's underſtandings, as well as other faculties, come from want of a right uſe of their own minds; I am apt to think, the fault is generally miſlaid upon nature, and there is often a complaint of want of parts, when the fault lies in want of a due improvement of them. We ſee men frequently dexterous and ſharp enough in making a bargain, who, if you reaſon with them about matters of religion, appear perfectly ſtupid.

Ideas.

§. 5. I will not here, in what relates to the right conduct and improvement of the underſtanding, repeat again the getting clear and determined ideas, and the employing our thoughts rather about them, than about ſounds put for them; nor of ſettling the ſignification of words, which we uſe with ourſelves, in the ſearch of truth, or with others, in diſcourſing about it. Thoſe hindrances of our underſtandings in the purſuit of knowledge I have ſufficiently enlarged upon, in another place; ſo that nothing more needs here to be ſaid of thoſe matters.

Principles.

§. 6. There is another fault, that ſtops, or miſleads, men in their knowledge, which I have alſo ſpoken ſomething of, but yet is neceſſary to mention here again, that we may examine it to the bottom, and ſee the root it ſprings from; and that is a cuſtom of taking up with principles that are not ſelf-evident, and very often not ſo much as true. It is not

unuſual

unuſual to ſee men reſt their opinions upon foundations that have no more certainty and ſolidity than the propoſitions built on them, and embraced for their ſake. Such foundations are theſe and the like, viz.—the founders, or leaders, of my party are good men, and therefore their tenets are true;—it is the opinion of a ſect that is erroneous, therefore it is falſe:—it hath been long received in the world, therefore it is true; or—it is new, and therefore falſe.

Theſe, and many the like, which are by no means the meaſures of truth and falſhood, the generality of men make the ſtandards by which they accuſtom their underſtanding to judge. And thus, they falling into a habit of determining of truth, and falſhood, by ſuch wrong meaſures, it is no wonder they ſhould embrace errour for certainty, and be very poſitive in things they have no ground for.

There is not any, who pretends to the leaſt reaſon, but, when any of theſe his falſe maxims are brought to the teſt, muſt acknowledge them to be fallible, and ſuch as he will not allow in thoſe that differ from him; and yet, after he is convinced of this, you ſhall ſee him go on in the uſe of them, and, the very next occaſion that offers, argue again upon the ſame grounds. Would one not be ready to think that men are willing to impoſe upon themſelves and miſlead their own underſtandings, who conduct them by ſuch wrong meaſures, even after they ſee they cannot be relied on? But yet they will not appear ſo blameable, as may be thought at firſt ſight: for I think there are a great many, that argue thus in earneſt, and do it not to impoſe on themſelves, or others. They are perſuaded of what they ſay, and think there is weight in it, though in a like caſe they have been convinced there is none; but men would be intolerable to themſelves, and contemptible to others, if they ſhould embrace opinions without any ground, and hold what they could give no manner of reaſon for. True or falſe, ſolid or ſandy, the mind muſt have ſome foundation to reſt itſelf upon; and, as I have remarked in another place, it no ſooner entertains any propoſition, but it preſently haſtens to ſome hypotheſis to bottom it on; till

till then it is unquiet and unſettled. So much do our own very tempers diſpoſe us to a right uſe of our underſtandings, if we would follow, as we ſhould, the inclinations of our nature.

In ſome matters of concernment, eſpecially thoſe of religion, men are not permitted to be always wavering and uncertain; they muſt embrace and profeſs ſome tenets or other; and it would be a ſhame, nay a contradiction too heavy for any one's mind to lie conſtantly under, for him to pretend ſeriouſly to be perſuaded of the truth of any religion, and yet not to be able to give any reaſon of his belief, or to ſay any thing for his preference of this to any other opinion: and therefore they muſt make uſe of ſome principles or other, and thoſe can be no other than ſuch as they have and can manage; and to ſay they are not in earneſt perſuaded by them, and do not reſt upon thoſe they make uſe of, is contrary to experience, and to allege that they are not miſled, when we complain they are.

If this be ſo, it will be urged, why then do they not make uſe of ſure and unqueſtionable principles, rather than reſt on ſuch grounds as may deceive them, and will, as is viſible, ſerve to ſupport errour, as well as truth?

To this I anſwer, the reaſon why they do not make uſe of better and ſurer principles, is becauſe they cannot: But this inability proceeds not from want of natural parts (for thoſe few, whoſe caſe that is, are to be excuſed) but for want of uſe and exerciſe. Few men are, from their youth, accuſtomed to ſtrict reaſoning, and to trace the dependence of any truth, in a long train of conſequences, to its remote principles, and to obſerve its connexion; and he that by frequent practice has not been uſed to this employment of his underſtanding, it is no more wonder, that he ſhould not, when he is grown into years, be able to bring his mind to it, than that he ſhould not be, on a ſudden, able to grave, or deſign, dance on the ropes, or write a good hand, who has never practiſed either of them.

Nay, the moſt of men are ſo wholly ſtrangers to this, that they do not ſo much as perceive their want of it; *they*

they diſpatch the ordinary buſineſs of their callings by rote, as we ſay, as they have learnt it; and if at any time they miſs ſucceſs, they impute it to any thing, rather than want of thought or ſkill; that they conclude (becauſe they know no better) they have in perfection: or, if there be any ſubject that intereſt, or fancy, has recommended to their thoughts, their reaſoning about it is ſtill after their own faſhion; be it better or worſe, it ſerves their turns, and is the beſt they are acquainted with; and, therefore, when they are led by it into miſtakes, and their buſineſs ſucceeds accordingly, they impute it to any croſs accident, or default of others, rather than to their own want of underſtanding; that is what nobody diſcovers, or complains of, in himſelf. Whatſoever made his buſineſs to miſcarry, it was not want of right thought and judgment in himſelf: he ſees no ſuch defect in himſelf, but is ſatisfied that he carries on his deſigns well enough by his own reaſoning, or at leaſt ſhould have done, had it not been for unlucky traverſes not in his power. Thus, being content with this ſhort and very imperfect uſe of his underſtanding, he never troubles himſelf to ſeek out methods of improving his mind, and lives all his life without any notion of cloſe reaſoning, in a continued connexion of a long train of conſequences, from ſure foundations; ſuch as is requiſite for the making out and clearing moſt of the ſpeculative truths moſt men own to believe, and are moſt concerned in. Not to mention here, what I ſhall have occaſion to inſiſt on, by and by, more fully, viz. that in many caſes it is not one ſeries of conſequences will ſerve the turn, but many different and oppoſite deductions muſt be examined and laid together, before a man can come to make a right judgment of the point in queſtion. What then can be expected from men, that neither ſee the want of any ſuch kind of reaſoning, as this; nor, if they do, know how to ſet about it, or could perform it? You may as well ſet a countryman, who ſcarce knows the figures, and never caſt up a ſum of three particulars, to ſtate a merchant's long account, and find the true balance of it.

What

What then ſhould be done in the caſe? I anſwer, we ſhould always remember what I ſaid above, that the faculties of our ſouls are improved and made uſeful to us, juſt after the ſame manner as our bodies are. Would you have a man write or paint, dance or fence well, or perform any other manual operation dexterouſly and with eaſe; let him have ever ſo much vigour and activity, ſupplenefs and addreſs naturally, yet nobody expects this from him, unleſs he has been uſed to it, and has employed time and pains in faſhioning and forming his hand, or outward parts, to theſe motions. Juſt ſo it is in the mind; would you have a man reaſon well, you muſt uſe him to it betimes, exerciſe his mind in obſerving the connexion of ideas, and following them in train. Nothing does this better than mathematics; which, therefore, I think ſhould be taught all thoſe who have the time and opportunity; not ſo much to make them mathematicians, as to make them reaſonable creatures; for though we all call ourſelves ſo, becauſe we are born to it, if we pleaſe; yet we may truly ſay, nature gives us but the ſeeds of it; we are born to be, if we pleaſe, rational creatures, but it is uſe and exerciſe only that makes us ſo, and we are, indeed, ſo no farther than induſtry and application has carried us. And, therefore, in ways of reaſoning, which men have not been uſed to, he that will obſerve the concluſions they take up, muſt be ſatisfied they are not all rational.

This has been the leſs taken notice of, becauſe every one, in his private affairs, uſes ſome ſort of reaſoning or other, enough to denominate him reaſonable. But the miſtake is, that he that is found reaſonable in one thing, is concluded to be ſo in all, and to think, or to ſay otherwiſe, is thought ſo unjuſt an affront, and ſo ſenſeleſs a cenſure, that nobody ventures to do it. It looks like the degradation of a man below the dignity of his nature. It is true, that he that reaſons well in any one thing, has a mind naturally capable of reaſoning well in others, and to the ſame degree of ſtrength and clearneſs, and poſſibly much greater, had his underſtanding been ſo employed. But it is as true that he who can reaſon well to-day, about one ſort of matters,

cannot at all reaſon to-day about others, though perhaps a year hence he may. But wherever a man's rational faculty fails him, and will not ſerve him to reaſon, there we cannot ſay he is rational, how capable ſoever he may be, by time and exerciſe, to become ſo.

Try in men of low and mean education, who have never elevated their thoughts above the ſpade and the plough, nor looked beyond the ordinary drudgery of a day-labourer. Take the thoughts of ſuch an one, uſed for many years to one track, out of that narrow compaſs he has been, all his life, confined to, you will find him no more capable of reaſoning than almoſt a perfect natural. Some one or two rules, on which their concluſions immediately depend, you will find in moſt men have governed all their thoughts; theſe, true or falſe, have been the maxims they have been guided by: take theſe from them, and they are perfectly at a loſs, their compaſs and pole-ſtar then are gone, and their underſtanding is perfectly at a nonplus; and therefore they either immediately return to their old maxims again, as the foundations of all truth to them, notwithſtanding all that can be ſaid to ſhow their weakneſs; or if they give them up to their reaſons, they, with them, give up all truth and farther inquiry, and think there is no ſuch thing as certainty. For if you would enlarge their thoughts, and ſettle them upon more remote and ſurer principles, they either cannot eaſily apprehend them; or, if they can, know not what uſe to make of them; for long deductions from remote principles are what they have not been uſed to, and cannot manage.

What then, can grown men never be improved, or enlarged in their underſtandings? I ſay not ſo; but this I think I may ſay, that it will not be done without induſtry and application, which will require more time and pains than grown men, ſettled in their courſe of life, will allow to it, and therefore very ſeldom is done. And this very capacity of attaining it, by uſe and exerciſe only, brings us back to that which I laid down before, that it is only practice that improves our minds as well as bodies, and we muſt expect nothing from our under-

underſtandings, any farther than they are perfected by habits.

The Americans are not all born with worſe underſtandings than the Europeans, though we ſee none of them have ſuch reaches in the arts and ſciences. And, among the children of a poor countryman, the lucky chance of education, and getting into the world, gives one infinitely the ſuperiority in parts over the reſt, who, continuing at home, had continued alſo juſt of the ſame ſize with his brethren.

He that has to do with young ſcholars, eſpecially in mathematics, may perceive how their minds open by degrees, and how it is exerciſe alone that opens them. Sometimes they will ſtick a long time at a part of a demonſtration, not for want of will and application, but really for want of perceiving the connexion of two ideas, that, to one whoſe underſtanding is more exerciſed, is as viſible as any thing can be. The ſame would be with a grown man beginning to ſtudy mathematics, the underſtanding, for want of uſe, often ſticks in every plain way, and he himſelf that is ſo puzzled, when he comes to ſee the connexion, wonders what it was he ſtuck at, in a caſe ſo plain.

Mathematics.

§. 7. I have mentioned mathematics as a way to ſettle in the mind an habit of reaſoning cloſely and in train; not that I think it neceſſary that all men ſhould be deep mathematicians, but that, having got the way of reaſoning, which that ſtudy neceſſarily brings the mind to, they might be able to transfer it to other parts of knowledge, as they ſhall have occaſion. For, in all ſorts of reaſoning, every ſingle argument ſhould be managed as a mathematical demonſtration; the connexion and dependence of ideas ſhould be followed, till the mind is brought to the ſource on which it bottoms, and obſerves the coherence all along, though in proofs of probability one ſuch train is not enough to ſettle the judgment, as in demonſtrative knowledge.

Where a truth is made out by one demonſtration, there needs no farther inquiry: but in probabilities, where there wants demonſtration to eſtabliſh the truth

beyond doubt, there it is not enough to trace one argument to its ſource, and obſerve its ſtrength and weakneſs, but all the arguments, after having been ſo examined on both ſides, muſt be laid in balance one againſt another, and, upon the whole, the underſtanding determine its aſſent.

This is a way of reaſoning the underſtanding ſhould be accuſtomed to, which is ſo different from what the illiterate are uſed to, that even learned men oftentimes ſeem to have very little or no notion of it. Nor is it to be wondered, ſince the way of diſputing, in the ſchools, leads them quite away from it, by inſiſting on one topical argument, by the ſucceſs of which the truth, or falſhood, of the queſtion is to be determined, and victory adjudged to the opponent, or defendant; which is all one as if one ſhould balance an account by one ſum, charged and diſcharged, when there are an hundred others to be taken into conſideration.

This, therefore, it would be well if men's minds were accuſtomed to, and that early; that they might not erect their opinions upon one ſingle view, when ſo many other are requiſite to make up the account, and muſt come into the reckoning, before a man can form a right judgment. This would enlarge their minds, and give a due freedom to their underſtandings, that they might not be led into errour by preſumption, lazineſs, or precipitancy; for I think nobody can approve ſuch a conduct of the underſtanding, as ſhould miſlead it from truth, though it be ever ſo much in faſhion to make uſe of it.

To this perhaps it will be objected, that to manage the underſtanding as I propoſe, would require every man to be a ſcholar, and to be furniſhed with all the materials of knowledge, and exerciſed in all the ways of reaſoning. To which I anſwer, that it is a ſhame for thoſe that have time, and the means to attain knowledge, to want any helps, or aſſiſtance, for the improvement of their underſtandings, that are to be got; and to ſuch I would be thought here chiefly to ſpeak. Thoſe methinks, who, by the induſtry and parts of their anceſtors, have been ſet free from a conſtant drudgery to their backs and their bellies, ſhould beſtow ſome of their

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ſpare time on their heads, and open their minds, by ſome trials and eſſays, in all the ſorts and matters of reaſoning. I have before mentioned mathematics, wherein algebra gives new helps and views to the underſtanding. If I propoſe theſe, it is not, as I ſaid, to make every man a thorough mathematician, or a deep algebraiſt; but yet I think the ſtudy of them is of infinite uſe, even to grown men; firſt, by experimentally convincing them, that to make any one reaſon well, it is not enough to have parts wherewith he is ſatisfied, and that ſerve him well enough in his ordinary courſe. A man in thoſe ſtudies will ſee, that however good he may think his underſtanding, yet in many things, and thoſe very viſible, it may fail him. This would take off that preſumption that moſt men have of themſelves in this part; and they would not be ſo apt to think their minds wanted no helps to enlarge them, that there could be nothing added to the acuteneſs and penetration of their underſtandings.

Secondly, the ſtudy of mathematics would ſhow them the neceſſity there is in reaſoning, to ſeparate all the diſtinct ideas, and ſee the habitudes that all thoſe concerned in the preſent inquiry have to one another, and to lay by thoſe which relate not to the propoſition in hand, and wholly to leave them out of the reckoning. This is that which, in other ſubjects, beſides quantity, is what is abſolutely requiſite to juſt reaſoning, though in them it is not ſo eaſily obſerved, nor ſo carefully practiſed. In thoſe parts of knowledge where it is thought demonſtration has nothing to do, men reaſon as it were in the lump; and if, upon a ſummary and confuſed view, or upon a partial conſideration, they can raiſe the appearance of a probability, they uſually reſt content; eſpecially if it be in a diſpute where every little ſtraw is laid hold on, and every thing that can but be drawn-in any way to give colour to the argument, is advanced with oſtentation. But that mind is not in a poſture to find the truth, that does not diſtinctly take all the parts aſunder, and, omitting what is not at all to the point, draw a concluſion from the reſult of all the particulars, which any way influence it. There is an-

other no leſs uſeful habit to be got by an application to mathematical demonſtrations, and that is, of uſing the mind to a long train of conſequences: but having mentioned that already, I ſhall not again here repeat it.

As to men whoſe fortunes and time are narrower, what may ſuffice them is not of that vaſt extent as may be imagined, and ſo comes not within the objection.

Nobody is under an obligation to know every thing. Knowledge and ſcience in general, is the buſineſs only of thoſe who are at eaſe and leiſure. Thoſe who have particular callings ought to underſtand them; and it is no unreaſonable propoſal, nor impoſſible to be compaſſed, that they ſhould think and reaſon right about what is their daily employment. This one cannot think them incapable of, without levelling them with the brutes, and charging them with a ſtupidity below the rank of rational creatures.

Religion. §. 8. Beſides his particular calling for the ſupport of this life, every one has a concern in a future life, which he is bound to look after. This engages his thoughts in religion; and here it mightily lies upon him to underſtand and reaſon right. Men, therefore, cannot be excuſed from underſtanding the words, and framing the general notions relating to religion, right. The one day of ſeven, beſides other days of reſt, allows in the chriſtian world time enough for this (had they no other idle hours) if they would but make uſe of theſe vacancies from their daily labour, and apply themſelves to an improvement of knowledge with as much diligence as they often do to a great many other things that are uſeleſs, and had but thoſe that would enter them according to their ſeveral capacities in a right way to this knowledge. The original make of their minds is like that of other men, and they would be found not to want underſtanding fit to receive the knowledge of religion, if they were a little encouraged and helped in it, as they ſhould be. For there are inſtances of very mean people, who have raiſed their minds to a great ſenſe and underſtanding of religion: and though theſe have not been ſo frequent as could be wiſhed; yet they are enough to clear that condition of

life

life from a necessity of gross ignorance, and to show that more might be brought to be rational creatures and christians (for they can hardly be thought really to be so, who, wearing the name, know not so much as the very principles of that religion) if due care were taken of them. For, if I mistake not, the peasantry lately in France (a rank of people under a much heavier pressure of want and poverty, than the day-labourers in England) of the reformed religion understood it much better, and could say more for it, than those of a higher condition among us.

But if it shall be concluded that the meaner sort of people must give themselves up to brutish stupidity in the things of their nearest concernment, which I see no reason for, this excuses not those of a freer fortune and education, if they neglect their understandings, and take no care to employ them as they ought, and set them right in the knowledge of those things for which principally they were given them. At least those, whose plentiful fortunes allow them the opportunities and helps of improvements, are not so few, but that it might be hoped great advancements might be made in knowledge of all kinds, especially in that of the greatest concern and largest views, if men would make a right use of their faculties, and study their own understandings.

Ideas.

§. 9. Outward corporeal objects, that constantly importune our senses and captivate our appetites, fail not to fill our heads with lively and lasting ideas of that kind. Here the mind needs not to be set upon getting greater store; they offer themselves fast enough, and are usually entertained in such plenty, and lodged so carefully, that the mind wants room, or attention, for others that it has more use and need of. To fit the understanding, *therefore, for such reasoning* as I have been above speaking of, care should be taken to fill it with moral and more abstract ideas; for these not offering themselves to the senses, but being to be framed to the understanding, people are generally so neglectful of a faculty they are apt to think wants nothing, that I fear most men's minds are more unfurnished with such ideas than is imagined. They often use the words, and

how can they be suspected to want the ideas? What I have said in the third book of my essay, will excuse me from any other answer to this question. But to convince people of what moment it is to their understandings to be furnished with such abstract ideas, steady and settled in them, give me leave to ask, how any one shall be able to know whether he be obliged to be just, if he has not established ideas in his mind of obligation and of justice; since knowledge consists in nothing but the perceived agreement or disagreement of those ideas? and so of all others the like, which concern our lives and manners. And if men do find a difficulty to see the agreement or disagreement of two angles, which lie before their eyes, unalterable in a diagram; how utterly impossible will it be to perceive it in ideas that have no other sensible object to represent them to the mind but sounds; with which they have no manner of conformity, and therefore had need to be clearly settled in the mind themselves, if we would make any clear judgment about them? This, therefore, is one of the first things the mind should be employed about, in the right conduct of the understanding, without which it is impossible it should be capable of reasoning right about those matters. But in these, and all other ideas, care must be taken that they harbour no inconsistencies, and that they have a real existence where real existence is supposed; and are not mere chimeras with a supposed existence.

Prejudice.

§. 10. Every one is forward to complain of the prejudices that mislead other men or parties, as if he were free, and had none of his own. This being objected on all sides, it is agreed, that it is a fault and an hindrance to knowledge. What now is the cure? No other but this, that every man should let alone others prejudices, and examine his own. Nobody is convinced of his by the accusation of another; he recriminates by the same rule, and is clear. The only way to remove this great cause of ignorance and errour out of the world, is, for every one impartially to examine himself. If others will not deal fairly with their own minds, does that make my errours truths? or ought it to make me in love with them, and willing to impose on

on myſelf? If others love cataracts in their eyes, ſhould that hinder me from couching of mine as ſoon as I can? Every one declares againſt blindneſs, and yet who almoſt is not fond of that which dims his ſight, and keeps the clear light out of his mind, which ſhould lead him into truth and knowledge? Falſe or doubtful poſitions, relied upon as unqueſtionable maxims, keep thoſe in the dark from truth who build on them. Such are uſually the prejudices imbibed from education, party, reverence, faſhion, intereſt, &c. This is the mote which every one ſees in his brother's eye, but never regards the beam in his own. For who is there almoſt that is ever brought fairly to examine his own principles, and ſee whether they are ſuch as will bear the trial? But yet this ſhould be one of the firſt things every one ſhould ſet about, and be ſcrupulous in, who would rightly conduct his underſtanding in the ſearch of truth and knowledge.

To thoſe who are willing to get rid of this great hindrance of knowledge, (for to ſuch only I write) to thoſe who would ſhake off this great and dangerous impoſtor, prejudice, who dreſſes up falſhood in the likeneſs of truth, and ſo dexterouſly hoodwinks men's minds, as to keep them in the dark, with a belief that they are more in the light than any that do not ſee with their eyes; I ſhall offer this one mark whereby prejudice may be known. He that is ſtrongly of any opinion, muſt ſuppoſe (unleſs he be ſelf-condemned) that his perſuaſion is built upon good grounds; and that his aſſent is no greater than what the evidence of the truth he holds forces him to; and that they are arguments, and not inclination, or fancy, that make him ſo confident and poſitive in his tenets. Now if, after all his profeſſion, he cannot bear any oppoſition to his opinion, if he cannot ſo much as give a patient hearing, much leſs examine and weigh the arguments on the other ſide, does he not plainly confeſs it is prejudice governs him? and it is not the evidence of truth, but ſome lazy anticipation, ſome beloved preſumption, that he deſires to reſt undiſturbed in. For, if what he holds be, as he gives out, well fenced with evidence, and he ſees it to be true, what need he fear to put it to the proof? If his opinion be

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settled upon a firm foundation, if the arguments that support it, and have obtained his assent, be clear, good, and convincing, why should he be shy to have it tried whether they be proof or not? He whose assent goes beyond this evidence, owes this excess of his adherence only to prejudice, and does in effect own it, when he refuses to hear what is offered against it; declaring thereby, that it is not evidence he seeks, but the quiet enjoyment of the opinion he is fond of, with a forward condemnation of all that may stand in opposition to it, unheard and unexamined; which, what is it but prejudice? "qui æquum statuerit, parte inauditâ alterâ, etiamsi æquum statuerit, haud æquus fuerit." He that would acquit himself in this case as a lover of truth, not giving way to any pre-occupation, or biass, that may mislead him, must do two things that are not very common, nor very easy.

Indifferency.

§. 11. First, he must not be in love with any opinion, or wish it to be true, till he knows it to be so, and then he will not need to wish it: for nothing that is false can deserve our good wishes, nor a desire that it should have the place and force of truth; and yet nothing is more frequent than this. Men are fond of certain tenets upon no other evidence but respect and custom, and think they must maintain them, or all is gone; though they have never examined the ground they stand on, nor have ever made them out to themselves, or can make them out to others: we should contend earnestly for the truth, but we should first be sure that it is truth, or else we fight against God, who is the God of truth, and do the work of the devil, who is the father and propagator of lyes; and our zeal, though ever so warm, will not excuse us, for this is plainly prejudice.

Examine.

§. 12. Secondly, he must do that which he will find himself very averse to, as judging the thing unnecessary, or himself incapable of doing it. He must try whether his principles be certainly true, or not, and how far he may safely rely upon them. This, whether fewer have the heart or the skill to do, I shall not determine; but this, I am sure, is that

which

which every one ought to do, who profeſſes to love truth, and would not impoſe upon himſelf; which is a ſurer way to be made a fool of, than by being expoſed to the ſophiſtry of others. The diſpoſition to put any cheat upon ourſelves works conſtantly, and we are pleaſed with it, but are impatient of being bantered or miſled by others. The inability I here ſpeak of, is not any natural defect that makes men incapable of examining their own principles. To ſuch, rules of conducting their underſtandings are uſeleſs; and that is the caſe of very few. The great number is of thoſe whom the ill habit of never exerting their thoughts has diſabled; the powers of their minds are ſtarved by diſuſe, and have loſt that reach and ſtrength which nature fitted them to receive from exerciſe. Thoſe who are in a condition to learn the firſt rules of plain arithmetic, and could be brought to caſt up an ordinary ſum, are capable of this, if they had but accuſtomed their minds to reaſoning: but they that have wholly neglected the exerciſe of their underſtandings in this way, will be very far, at firſt, from being able to do it, and as unfit for it as one unpractiſed in figures to caſt up a ſhop-book, and, perhaps, think it as ſtrange to be ſet about it. And yet it muſt nevertheleſs be confeſſed to be a wrong uſe of our underſtandings, to build our tenets (in things where we are concerned to hold the truth) upon principles that may lead us into errour. We take our principles at hap-hazard, upon truſt, and without ever having examined them, and then believe a whole ſyſtem, upon a preſumption that they are true and ſolid; and what is all this, but childiſh, ſhameful, ſenſeleſs credulity?

In theſe two things, viz. an equal indifferency for all truth; I mean the receiving it, the love of it, as truth, but not loving it for any other reaſon, before we know it to be true; and in the examination of our principles, and not receiving any for ſuch, nor building on them, till we are fully convinced, as rational creatures, of their ſolidity, truth, and certainty; conſiſts that freedom of the underſtanding which is neceſſary to a rational creature, and without which it is not truly an underſtanding. It is conceit, fancy, extravagance, any thing rather than

than underſtanding, if it muſt be under the conſtraint of receiving and holding opinions by the authority of any thing but their own, not fancied, but perceived, evidence. This was rightly called impoſition, and is of all other the worſt and moſt dangerous ſort of it. For we impoſe upon ourſelves, which is the ſtrongeſt impoſition of all others; and we impoſe upon ourſelves in that part which ought with the greateſt care to be kept free from all impoſition. The world is apt to caſt great blame on thoſe who have an indifferency for opinions, eſpecially in religion. I fear this is the foundation of great errour and worſe conſequences. To be indifferent which of two opinions is true, is the right temper of the mind that preſerves it from being impoſed on, and diſpoſes it to examine with that indifferency, till it has done its beſt to find the truth, and this is the only direct and ſafe way to it. But to be indifferent whether we embrace falſhood or truth, is the great road to errour. Thoſe who are not indifferent which opinion is true, are guilty of this; they ſuppoſe, without examining, that what they hold is true, and then think they ought to be zealous for it. Thoſe, it is plain by their warmth and eagerneſs, are not indifferent for their own opinions, but methinks are very indifferent whether they be true or falſe; ſince they cannot endure to have any doubts raiſed, or objections made againſt them; and it is viſible they never have made any themſelves, and ſo, never having examined them, know not, nor are concerned, as they ſhould be, to know whether they be true or falſe.

Theſe are the common and moſt general miſcarriages which I think men ſhould avoid, or rectify, in a right conduct of their underſtandings, and ſhould be particularly taken care of in education. The buſineſs whereof, in reſpect of knowledge, is not, as I think, to perfect a learner in all or any one of the ſciences, but to give his mind that freedom, that diſpoſition, and thoſe habits, that may enable him to attain any part of knowledge he ſhall apply himſelf to, or ſtand in need of, in the future courſe of his life.

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This, and this only, is well principling, and not the instilling a reverence and veneration for certain dogmas, under the specious title of principles, which are often so remote from that truth and evidence which belongs to principles, that they ought to be rejected, as false and erroneous; and often cause men so educated, when they come abroad into the world, and find they cannot maintain the principles so taken up and rested in, to cast off all principles, and turn perfect sceptics, regardless of knowledge and virtue.

There are several weaknesses and defects in the understanding, either from the natural temper of the mind, or ill habits taken up, which hinder it in its progress to knowledge. Of these, there are as many, possibly, to be found, if the mind were thoroughly studied, as there are diseases of the body, each whereof clogs and disables the understanding to some degree, and therefore deserves to be looked after and cured. I shall set down some few to excite men, especially those who make knowledge their business, to look into themselves, and observe whether they do not indulge some weaknesses, allow some miscarriages in the management of their intellectual faculty, which is prejudicial to them in the search of truth.

Observations.

§. 13. Particular matters of fact are the undoubted foundations on which our civil and natural knowledge is built: the benefit the understanding makes of them, is to draw from them conclusions, which may be as standing rules of knowledge, and consequently of practice. The mind often makes not that benefit it should of the information it receives from the accounts of civil or natural historians, by being too forward or too slow in making observations on the particular facts recorded in them.

There are those who are very assiduous in reading, and yet do not much advance their knowledge by it. They are delighted with the stories that are told, and perhaps can tell them again, for they make all they read nothing but history to themselves; but not reflecting on it, not making to themselves observations from what they read, they are very little improved by all that crowd of particulars,

ticulars, that either paſs through, or lodge themſelves in their underſtandings. They dream on in a conſtant courſe of reading and cramming themſelves; but not digeſting any thing, it produces nothing but an heap of crudities.

If their memories retain well, one may ſay, they have the materials of knowledge; but, like thoſe for building, they are of no advantage, if there be no other uſe made of them but to let them lie heaped up together. Oppoſite to theſe, there are others who loſe the improvement they ſhould make of matters of fact by a quite contrary conduct. They are apt to draw general concluſions, and raiſe axioms from every particular they meet with. Theſe make as little true benefit of hiſtory as the other; nay, being of forward and active ſpirits, receive more harm by it; it being of worſe conſequence to ſteer one's thoughts by a wrong rule, than to have none at all; errour doing to buſy men much more harm, than ignorance to the ſlow and ſluggiſh. Between theſe, thoſe ſeem to do beſt, who taking material and uſeful hints, ſometimes from ſingle matters of fact, carry them in their minds to be judged of, by what they ſhall find in hiſtory, to confirm or reverſe theſe imperfect obſervations; which may be eſtabliſhed into rules fit to be relied on, when they are juſtified by a ſufficient and wary induction of particulars. He that makes no ſuch reflections on what he reads, only loads his mind with a rhapſody of tales, fit, in winter-nights, for the entertainment of others: and he that will improve every matter of fact into a maxim, will abound in contrary obſervations, that can be of no other uſe but to perplex and pudder him, if he compares them; or elſe to miſguide him, if he gives himſelf up to the authority of that, which for its novelty, or for ſome other fancy, beſt pleaſes him.

Bias.

§. 14. Next to theſe, we may place thoſe who ſuffer their own natural tempers and paſſions they are poſſeſſed with, to influence their judgments, eſpecially of men and things, that may any way relate to their preſent circumſtances and intereſt. Truth is all ſimple, all pure, will bear no mixture of any thing

else with it. It is rigid and inflexible to any bye interests; and so should the understanding be, whose use and excellency lies in conforming itself to it. To think of every thing just as it is in itself, is the proper business of the understanding, though it be not that which men always imploy it to. This all men, at first hearing, allow, is the right use every one should make of his understanding. Nobody will be at such an open defiance with common sense, as to profess that we should not endeavour to know, and think of things as they are in themselves; and yet there is nothing more frequent than to do the contrary; and men are apt to excuse themselves; and think they have reason to do so, if they have but a pretence that it is for God, or a good cause; that is, in effect, for themselves, their own persuasion, or party: for those in their turns the several sects of men, especially in matters of religion, entitle God and a good cause. But God requires not men to wrong or misuse their faculties for him, nor to lye to others, or themselves, for his sake; which they purposely do, who will not suffer their understandings to have right conceptions of the things proposed to them, and designedly restrain themselves from having just thoughts of every thing, as far as they are concerned to inquire. And as for a good cause, that needs not such ill helps; if it be good, truth will support it, and it has no need of fallacy or falshood.

Arguments.

§. 15. Very much of kin to this, is the hunting after arguments to make good one side of a question, and wholly to neglect and refuse those which favour the other side. What is this but wilfully to misguide the understanding, and is so far from giving truth its due value, that it wholly debases it: espouse opinions that best comport with their power, profit, or credit, and then seek arguments to support them? Truth light upon this way, is of no more avail to us than errour; for what is so taken up by us may be false as well as true, and he has not done his duty who has thus stumbled upon truth in his way to preferment.

There is another, but more innocent way of collecting arguments, very familiar among bookish men, which

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is to furniſh themſelves with the arguments they meet with pro and con in the queſtions they ſtudy. This helps them not to judge right, nor argue ſtrongly, but only to talk copiouſly on either ſide, without being ſteady and ſettled in their own judgments: For ſuch arguments gathered from other men's thoughts, floating only in the memory, are there ready, indeed, to ſupply copious talk with ſome appearance of reaſon, but are far from helping us to judge right. Such variety of arguments only diſtract the underſtanding that relies on them, unleſs it has gone farther than ſuch a ſuperficial way of examining; this is to quit truth for appearance, only to ſerve our vanity. The ſure and only way to get true knowledge, is to form in our minds clear ſettled notions of things, with names annexed to thoſe determined ideas. Theſe we are to conſider, with their ſeveral relations and habitudes, and not amuſe ourſelves with floating names, and words of indetermined ſignification, which we can uſe in ſeveral ſenſes to ſerve a turn. It is in the perception of the habitudes and reſpects our ideas have one to another, that real knowledge conſiſts; and when a man once perceives how far they agree or diſagree one with another, he will be able to judge of what other people ſay, and will not need to be led by the arguments of others, which are many of them nothing but plauſible ſophiſtry. This will teach him to ſtate the queſtion right, and ſee whereon it turns; and thus he will ſtand upon his own legs, and know by his own underſtanding. Whereas by collecting and learning arguments by heart, he will be but a retainer to others; and when any one queſtions the foundations they are built upon, he will be at a nonplus, and be fain to give up his implicit knowledge.

Haſte. §. 16. Labour for labour-ſake is againſt nature. The underſtanding, as well as all the other faculties, chooſes always the ſhorteſt way to its end, would preſently obtain the knowledge it is about, and then ſet upon ſome new inquiry. But this, whether lazineſs or haſte, often miſleads it, and makes it content itſelf with improper ways of ſearch, and ſuch as will not ſerve the turn: ſometimes it reſts upon teſ-

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timony, when teſtimony of right has nothing to do, becauſe it is eaſier to believe than to be ſcientifically inſtructed: ſometimes it contents itſelf with one argument, and reſts ſatisfied with that, as it were a demonſtration, whereas the thing under proof is not capable of demonſtration, and therefore muſt be ſubmitted to the trial of probabilities, and all the material arguments pro and con be examined and brought to a balance. In ſome caſes the mind is determined by probable topics in inquiries where demonſtration may be had. All theſe, and ſeveral others, which lazineſs, impatience, cuſtom, and want of uſe and attention lead men into, are miſapplications of the underſtanding in the ſearch of truth. In every queſtion the nature and manner of the proof it is capable of ſhould be conſidered, to make our inquiry ſuch as it ſhould be. This would ſave a great deal of frequently miſemployed pains, and lead us ſooner to that diſcovery and poſſeſſion of truth we are capable of. The multiplying variety of arguments, eſpecially frivolous ones, ſuch as are all that are merely verbal, is not only loſt labour, but cumbers the memory to no purpoſe, and ſerves only to hinder it from ſeizing and holding of the truth in all thoſe caſes which are capable of demonſtration. In ſuch a way of proof the truth and certainty is ſeen, and the mind fully poſſeſſes itſelf of it; when in the other way of aſſent it only hovers about it, is amuſed with uncertainties. In this ſuperficial way, indeed, the mind is capable of more variety of plauſible talk, but is not enlarged, as it ſhould be, in its knowledge. It is to this ſame haſte and impatience of the mind alſo, that a not due tracing of the arguments to their true foundation is owing; men ſee a little, preſume a great deal, and ſo jump to the concluſion. This is a ſhort way to fancy and conceit, and (if firmly embraced) to opinionatry, but is certainly the fartheſt way about to knowledge. For he that will know, muſt by the connexion of the proofs ſee the truth, and the ground it ſtands on; and therefore, if he has for haſte ſkipt over what he ſhould have examined, he muſt begin and go over all again, or elſe he will never come to knowledge.

Deſultory. §. 17. Another fault of as ill conſequence as this, which proceeds alſo from lazineſs, with a mixture of vanity, is the ſkipping from one ſort of knowledge to another. Some men's tempers are quickly weary of any one thing. Conſtancy and aſſiduity is what they cannot bear: the ſame ſtudy long continued in, is as intolerable to them, as the appearing long in the ſame clothes, or faſhion, is to a courtlady.

Smattering. §. 18. Others, that they may ſeem univerſally knowing, get a little ſmattering in every thing. Both theſe may fill their heads with ſuperficial notions of things, but are very much out of the way of attaining truth or knowledge.

Univerſality. §. 19. I do not here ſpeak againſt the taking a taſte of every ſort of knowledge; it is certainly very uſeful and neceſſary to form the mind; but then it muſt be done in a different way, and to a different end. Not for talk and vanity to fill the head with ſhreds of all kinds, that he who is poſſeſſed of ſuch a frippery, may be able to match the diſcourſes of all he ſhall meet with, as if nothing could come amiſs to him; and his head was ſo well ſtored a magazine, that nothing could be propoſed which he was not maſter of, and was readily furniſhed to entertain any one on. This is an excellency, indeed, and a great one too, to have a real and true knowledge in all, or moſt of the objects of contemplation. But it is what the mind of one and the ſame man can hardly attain unto; and the inſtances are ſo few of thoſe who have, in any meaſure, approached towards it, that I know not whether they are to be propoſed as examples in the ordinary conduct of the underſtanding. For a man to underſtand fully the buſineſs of his particular calling in the commonwealth, and of religion, which is his calling as he is a man in the world, is uſually enough to take up his whole time; and there are few that inform themſelves in theſe, which is every man's proper and peculiar buſineſs, ſo to the bottom as they ſhould do. But though this be ſo, and there are very few men that extend their thoughts towards univerſal knowledge; yet I do not doubt, but

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if the right way were taken, and the methods of inquiry were ordered as they ſhould be, men of little buſineſs and great leiſure might go a great deal farther in it than is uſually done. To turn to the buſineſs in hand; the end and uſe of a little inſight in thoſe parts of knowledge, which are not a man's proper buſineſs, is to accuſtom our minds to all ſorts of ideas, and the proper ways of examining their habitudes and relations. This gives the mind a freedom, and the exerciſing the underſtanding in the ſeveral ways of inquiry and reaſoning, which the moſt ſkilful have made uſe of, teaches the mind ſagacity and warineſs, and a ſupplineſs to apply itſelf more cloſely and dexterouſly to the bents and turns of the matter in all its reſearches. Beſides, this univerſal taſte of all the ſciences, with an indifferency before the mind is poſſeſſed with any one in particular, and grown into love and admiration of what is made its darling, will prevent another evil, very commonly to be obſerved in thoſe who have from the beginning been ſeaſoned only by one part of knowledge. Let a man be given up to the contemplation of one ſort of knowledge, and that will become every thing. The mind will take ſuch a tincture from a familiarity with that object, that every thing elſe, how remote ſoever, will be brought under the ſame view. A metaphyſician will bring plowing and gardening immediately to abſtract notions: the hiſtory of nature ſhall ſignify nothing to him. An alchemiſt, on the contrary, ſhall reduce divinity to the maxims of his laboratory: explain morality by ſal, ſulphur and mercury; and allegoriſe the ſcripture itſelf, and the ſacred myſteries thereof, into the philoſopher's ſtone. And I heard once a man, who had a more than ordinary excellency in muſic, ſeriouſly accommodate Moſes's ſeven days of the firſt week to the notes of muſic, as if from thence had been taken the meaſure and method of the creation. It is of no ſmall conſequence to keep the mind from ſuch a poſſeſſion, which I think is beſt done by giving it a fair and equal view of the whole intellectual world, wherein it may ſee the order, rank, and beauty of the whole, and give a juſt allow-

ance to the diſtinct provinces of the ſeveral ſciences in the due order and uſefulneſs of each of them.

If this be that which old men will not think neceſſary, nor be eaſily brought to; it is fit, at leaſt, that it ſhould be practiſed in the breeding of the young. The buſineſs of education, as I have already obſerved, is not, as I think, to make them perfect in any one of the ſciences, but ſo to open and diſpoſe their minds, as may beſt make them capable of any, when they ſhall apply themſelves to it. If men are, for a long time, accuſtomed only to one ſort or method of thoughts, their minds grow ſtiff in it, and do not readily turn to another. It is, therefore, to give them this freedom, that I think they ſhould be made to look into all ſorts of knowledge, and exerciſe their underſtandings in ſo wide a variety and ſtock of knowledge. But I do not propoſe it as a variety and ſtock of knowledge, but a variety and freedom of thinking, as an increaſe of the powers and activity of the mind, not as an enlargement of its poſſeſſions.

Reading.

§. 20. This is that which I think great readers are apt to be miſtaken in. Thoſe who have read of every thing, are thought to underſtand every thing too; but it is not always ſo. Reading furniſhes the mind only with materials of knowledge, it is thinking makes what we read ours. We are of the ruminating kind, and it is not enough to cram ourſelves with a great load of collections; unleſs we chew them over again, they will not give us ſtrength and nouriſhment. There are, indeed, in ſome writers viſible inſtances of deep thoughts, cloſe and acute reaſoning, and ideas well purſued. The light theſe would give would be of great uſe, if their reader would obſerve and imitate them; all the reſt at beſt are but particulars fit to be turned into knowledge; but that can be done only by our own meditation, and examining the reach, force and coherence of what is ſaid; and then, as far as we apprehend and ſee the connexion of ideas, ſo far it is ours; without that, it is but ſo much looſe matter floating in our brain. The memory may be ſtored, but the judgment is little better, and the ſtock of knowledge not

not increaſed, by being able to repeat what others have ſaid, or produce the arguments we have found in them. Such a knowledge as this is but knowledge by hear-ſay, and the oſtentation of it is at beſt but talking by rote, and very often upon weak and wrong principles. For all that is to be found in books, is not built upon true foundations, nor always rightly deduced from the principles it is pretended to be built on. Such an examen as is requiſite to diſcover that, every reader's mind is not forward to make; eſpecially in thoſe who have given themſelves up to a party, and only hunt for what they can ſcrape together, that may favour and ſupport the tenets of it. Such men wilfully exclude themſelves from truth, and from all true benefit to be received by reading. Others of more indifferency often want attention and induſtry. The mind is backward in itſelf to be at the pains to trace every argument to its original, and to ſee upon what baſis it ſtands, and how firmly; but yet it is this that gives ſo much the advantage to one man more than another in reading. The mind ſhould by ſevere rules be tyed down to this, at firſt, uneaſy taſk; uſe and exerciſe will give it facility. So that thoſe who are accuſtomed to it, readily, as it were with one caſt of the eye, take a view of the argument, and preſently, in moſt caſes, ſee where it bottoms. Thoſe who have got this faculty, one may ſay, have got the true key of books, and the clue to lead them through the mizmaze of variety of opinions and authors to truth and certainty. This young beginners ſhould be entered in, and ſhowed the uſe of, that they might profit by their reading. Thoſe who are ſtrangers to it, will be apt to think it too great a clog in the way of men's ſtudies, and they will ſuſpect they ſhall make but ſmall progreſs, if, in the books they read, they muſt ſtand to examine and unravel every argument, and follow it ſtep by ſtep up to its original.

I anſwer, this is a good objection, and ought to weigh with thoſe whoſe reading is deſigned for much talk and little knowledge, and I have nothing to ſay to it. But I am here inquiring into the conduct of the underſtanding in its progreſs towards knowledge; and to thoſe

who aim at that, I may ſay, that he who fair and ſoftly goes ſteadily forward in a courſe that points right, will ſooner be at his journey's end, than he that runs after every one he meets, though he gallop all day full-ſpeed.

To which let me add, that this way of thinking on, and profiting by, what we read, will be a clog and rub to any one only in the beginning: when cuſtom and exerciſe has made it familiar, it will be diſpatched, on moſt occaſions, without reſting or interruption in the courſe of our reading. The motions and views of a mind exerciſed that way, are wonderfully quick; and a man uſed to ſuch ſort of reflections, ſees as much at one glimpſe as would require a long diſcourſe to lay before another, and make out in an entire and gradual deduction. Beſides that, when the firſt difficulties are over, the delight and ſenſible advantage it brings, mightily encourages and enlivens the mind in reading, which without this is very improperly called ſtudy.

Intermediate principles.

§. 21. As an help to this, I think it may be propoſed, that for the ſaving the long progreſſion of the thoughts to remote and firſt principles in every caſe, the mind ſhould provide it ſeveral ſtages; that is to ſay, intermediate principles, which it might have recourſe to in the examining thoſe poſitions that come in its way. Theſe, though they are not ſelf-evident principles, yet if they have been made out from them by a wary and unqueſtionable deduction, may be depended on as certain and infallible truths, and ſerve as unqueſtionable truths to prove other points depending on them by a nearer and ſhorter view than remote and general maxims. Theſe may ſerve as landmarks to ſhow what lies in the direct way of truth, or is quite beſides it. And thus mathematicians do, who do not in every new problem run it back to the firſt axioms, through all the whole train of intermediate propoſitions. Certain theorems, that they have ſettled to themſelves upon ſure demonſtration, ſerve to reſolve to them multitudes of propoſitions which depend on them, and are as firmly made out from thence, as if the mind went afreſh over every link of the whole chain that ties them to firſt ſelf-evident principles. Only in other

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ſciences great care is to be taken, that they eſtabliſh thoſe intermediate principles with as much caution, exactneſs, and indifferency, as mathematicians uſe in the ſettling any of their great theorems. When this is not done, but men take up the principles in this or that ſcience upon credit, inclination, intereſt, &c. in haſte, without due examination, and moſt unqueſtionable proof, they lay a trap for themſelves, and, as much as in them lies, captivate their underſtandings to miſtake, falſhood and errour.

Partiality.

§. 22. As there is a partiality to opinions, which, as we have already obſerved, is apt to miſlead the underſtanding; ſo there is often a partiality to ſtudies, which is prejudicial alſo to knowledge and improvement. Thoſe ſciences which men are particularly verſed in, they are apt to value and extol, as if that part of knowledge which every one has acquainted himſelf with, were that alone which was worth the having, and all the reſt were idle and empty amuſements, comparatively of no uſe or importance. This is the effect of ignorance, and not knowledge, the being vainly puffed up with a flatulency, ariſing from a weak and narrow comprehenſion. It is not amiſs that every one ſhould reliſh the ſcience that he has made his peculiar ſtudy; a view of its beauties, and a ſenſe of its uſefulneſs, carries a man on with the more delight and warmth in the purſuit and improvement of it. But the contempt of all other knowledge, as if it were nothing in compariſon of law or phyſic, of aſtronomy or chemiſtry, or perhaps ſome yet meaner part of knowledge, wherein I have got ſome ſmattering, or am ſomewhat advanced, is not only the mark of a vain or little mind; but does this prejudice in the conduct of the underſtanding, that it coops it up within narrow bounds, and hinders it from looking abroad into other provinces of the intellectual world, more beautiful poſſibly, and more fruitful than that which it had, till then, laboured in; wherein it might find, beſides new knowledge, ways or hints whereby it might be enabled the better to cultivate its own.

Theology. §. 23. There is, indeed, one ſcience (as they are now diſtinguiſhed) incomparably above all the reſt, where it is not by corruption narrowed into a trade or faction, for mean or ill ends, and ſecular intereſts; I mean theology, which, containing the knowledge of God and his creatures, our duty to him and our fellow-creatures, and a view of our preſent and future ſtate, is the comprehenſion of all other knowledge directed to its true end; i. e. the honour and veneration of the Creator, and the happineſs of mankind. This is that noble ſtudy which is every man's duty, and every one that can be called a rational creature is capable of. The works of nature, and the words of revelation, diſplay it to mankind in characters ſo large and viſible, that thoſe who are not quite blind may in them read and ſee the firſt principles and moſt neceſſary parts of it; and from thence, as they have time and induſtry, may be enabled to go on to the more abſtruſe parts of it, and penetrate into thoſe infinite depths filled with the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge. This is that ſcience which would truly enlarge men's minds, were it ſtudied, or permitted to be ſtudied, every where, with that freedom, love of truth and charity which it teaches, and were not made, contrary to its nature, the occaſion of ſtrife, faction, malignity, and narrow impoſitions. I ſhall ſay no more here of this, but that it is undoubtedly a wrong uſe of my underſtanding, to make it the rule and meaſure of another man's; a uſe which it is neither fit for, nor capable of.

Partiality. §. 24. This partiality, where it is not permitted an authority to render all other ſtudies inſignificant or contemptible, is often indulged ſo far as to be relied upon, and made uſe of in other parts of knowledge, to which it does not at all belong, and wherewith it has no manner of affinity. Some men have ſo uſed their heads to mathematical figures; that, giving a preference to the methods of that ſcience, they introduce lines and diagrams into their ſtudy of divinity, or politic inquiries, as if nothing could be known without them; and others accuſtomed to retired ſpeculations, run natural philoſophy into metaphyſical notions, and

and the abſtract generalities of logic; and how often may one meet with religion and morality treated of in the terms of the laboratory, and thought to be improved by the methods and notions of chemiſtry? But he that will take care of the conduct of his underſtanding, to direct it right to the knowledge of things, muſt avoid thoſe undue mixtures, and not, by a fondneſs for what he has found uſeful and neceſſary in one, transfer it to another ſcience, where it ſerves only to perplex and confound the underſtanding. It is a certain truth, that "res nolunt malè adminiſtrari;" it is no leſs certain "res nolunt malè intelligi." Things themſelves are to be conſidered as they are in themſelves, and then they will ſhow us in what way they are to be underſtood. For to have right conceptions about them, we muſt bring our underſtandings to the inflexible natures, and unalterable relations of things, and not endeavour to bring things to any preconceived notions of our own.

There is another partiality very commonly obſervable in men of ſtudy, no leſs prejudicial, nor ridiculous, than the former; and that is a fantaſtical and wild attributing all knowledge to the ancients alone, or to the moderns. This raving upon antiquity in matter of poetry, Horace has wittily deſcribed and expoſed in one of his ſatires. The ſame ſort of madneſs may be found in reference to all the other ſciences. Some will not admit an opinion not authoriſed by men of old, who were then all giants in knowledge. Nothing is to be put into the treaſury of truth, or knowledge, which has not the ſtamp of Greece, or Rome, upon it; and ſince their days will ſcarce allow, that men have been able to ſee, think or write. Others, with a like extravagancy, contemn all that the ancients have left us, and being taken with the modern inventions and diſcoveries, lay by all that went before, as if whatever is called old muſt have the decay of time upon it, and truth, too, were liable to mould and rottenneſs. Men, I think, have been much the ſame for natural endowments, in all times. Faſhion, diſcipline, and education, have put eminent differences in the ages of ſeveral countries, and made one generation much differ from another in arts and ſciences: but

truth

truth is always the ſame; time alters it not, nor is it the better, or worſe, for being of ancient or modern tradition. Many were eminent in former ages of the world for their diſcovery and delivery of it; but though the knowledge they have left us be worth our ſtudy, yet they exhauſted not all its treaſure; they left a great deal for the induſtry and ſagacity of after-ages, and ſo ſhall we. That was once new to them, which any one now receives with veneration for its antiquity, nor was it the worſe for appearing as a novelty; and that which is now embraced for its newneſs, will to poſterity be old, but not thereby be leſs true, or leſs genuine. There is no occaſion, on this account, to oppoſe the ancients and the moderns to one another, or to be ſqueamiſh on either ſide. He that wiſely conducts his mind in the purſuit of knowledge, will gather what lights, and get what helps he can, from either of them, from whom they are beſt to be had, without adoring the errours, or rejecting the truths, which he may find mingled in them.

Another partiality may be obſerved, in ſome to vulgar, in others, to heterodox tenets: ſome are apt to conclude, that what is the common opinion cannot but be true; ſo many men's eyes they think cannot but ſee right; ſo many men's underſtandings of all ſorts cannot be deceived; and, therefore, will not venture to look beyond the received notions of the place and age, nor have ſo preſumptuous a thought as to be wiſer than their neighbours. They are content to go with the crowd, and ſo go eaſily, which they think is going right, or at leaſt ſerves them as well. But however "vox populi vox Dei" has prevailed as a maxim; yet I do not remember where ever God delivered his oracles by the multitude; or nature, truths by the herd. On the other ſide, ſome fly all common opinions as either falſe or frivolous. The title of many-headed beaſt is a ſufficient reaſon to them to conclude, that no truths of weight or conſequence can be lodged there. Vulgar opinions are ſuited to vulgar capacities, and adapted to the ends of thoſe that govern. He that will know the truth of things, muſt leave the common and beaten track, which none but weak and ſervile minds are

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ſatisfied to trudge along continually in. Such nice palates reliſh nothing but ſtrange notions quite out of the way: Whatever is commonly received, has the mark of the beaſt on it; and they think it a leſſening to them to hearken to it, or receive it; their mind runs only after paradoxes; theſe they ſeek, theſe they embrace, theſe alone they vent; and ſo, as they think, diſtinguiſh themſelves from the vulgar. But common or uncommon are not the marks to diſtinguiſh truth or falſhood, and therefore ſhould not be any bias to us in our inquiries. We ſhould not judge of things by men's opinions, but of opinions by things. The multitude reaſon but ill, and therefore may be well ſuſpected, and cannot be relied on, nor ſhould be followed, as a ſure guide; but philoſophers, who have quitted the orthodoxy of the community, and the popular doctrines of their countries, have fallen into as extravagant and as abſurd opinions as ever common reception countenanced. It would be madneſs to refuſe to breathe the common air, or quench one's thirſt with water, becauſe the rabble uſe them to theſe purpoſes; and if there are conveniences of life which common uſe reaches not, it is not reaſon to reject them, becauſe they are not grown into the ordinary faſhion of the country, and every villager doth not know them.

Truth, whether in or out of faſhion, is the meaſure of knowledge, and the buſineſs of the underſtanding; whatſoever is beſides that, however authoriſed by conſent, or recommended by rarity, is nothing but ignorance, or ſomething worſe.

Another ſort of partiality there is, whereby men impoſe upon themſelves, and by it make their reading little uſeful to themſelves; I mean the making uſe of the opinions of writers, and laying ſtreſs upon their authorities, wherever they find them to favour their own opinions.

There is nothing almoſt has done more harm to men dedicated to letters, than giving the name of ſtudy to reading, and making a man of great reading to be the ſame with a man of great knowledge, or at leaſt to be a

title

title of honour. All that can be recorded in writing are only facts or reaſonings. Facts are of three ſorts;

1. Merely of natural agents, obſervable in the ordinary operations of bodies one upon another, whether in the viſible courſe of things left to themſelves, or in experiments made by them, applying agents and patients to one another, after a peculiar and artificial manner.

2. Of voluntary agents, more eſpecially the actions of men in ſociety, which makes civil and moral hiſtory.

3. Of opinions.

In theſe three conſiſts, as it ſeems to me, that which commonly has the name of learning; to which perhaps ſome may add a diſtinct head of critical writings, which indeed at bottom is nothing but matter of fact; and reſolves itſelf into this, that ſuch a man, or ſet of men, uſed ſuch a word, or phraſe, in ſuch a ſenſe; i. e. that they made ſuch ſounds the marks of ſuch ideas.

Under reaſonings I comprehend all the diſcoveries of general truths made by human reaſon, whether found by intuition, demonſtration, or probable deductions. And this is that which is, if not alone knowledge, (becauſe the truth or probability of particular propoſitions may be known too) yet is, as may be ſuppoſed, moſt properly the buſineſs of thoſe who pretend to improve their underſtandings, and make themſelves knowing by reading.

Books and reading are looked upon to be the great helps of the underſtanding, and inſtruments of knowledge, as it muſt be allowed that they are; and yet I beg leave to queſtion whether theſe do not prove an hindrance to many, and keep ſeveral bookiſh men from attaining to ſolid and true knowledge. This, I think, I may be permitted to ſay, that there is no part wherein the underſtanding needs a more careful and wary conduct than in the uſe of books; without which they will prove rather innocent amuſements, than profitable employments of our time, and bring but ſmall additions to our knowledge.

There is not ſeldom to be found, even amongſt thoſe who aim at knowledge, who with an unwearied induſtry employ their whole time in books, who ſcarce allow them-

themſelves time to eat or ſleep, but read, and read, and read on, yet make no great advances in real knowledge, though there be no defect in their intellectual faculties, to which their little progreſs can be imputed. The miſtake here is, that it is uſually ſuppoſed, that by reading, the author's knowledge is transfuſed into the reader's underſtanding; and ſo it is, but not by bare reading, but by reading and underſtanding what he writ. Whereby I mean, not barely comprehending what is affirmed or denied in each propoſition (though that great readers do not always think themſelves concerned preciſely to do) but to ſee and follow the train of his reaſonings, obſerve the ſtrength and clearneſs of their connexion, and examine upon what they bottom. Without this a man may read the diſcourſes of a very rational author, writ in a language, and in propoſitions, that he very well underſtands, and yet acquire not one jot of his knowledge; which conſiſting only in the perceived, certain, or probable connexion of the ideas made uſe of in his reaſonings, the reader's knowledge is nò farther increaſed than he perceives that; ſo much as he ſees of this connexion, ſo much he knows of the truth, or probability, of that author's opinions.

All that he relies on, without this perception, he takes upon truſt, upon the author's credit, without any knowledge of it at all. This makes me not at all wonder to ſee ſome men ſo abound in citations, and build ſo much upon authorities, it being the ſole foundation on which they bottom moſt of their own tenets; ſo that, in effect, they have but a ſecond-hand, or implicit knowledge; i. e. are in the right, if ſuch an one from whom they borrowed it, were in the right in that opinion which they took from him; which indeed is no knowledge at all. Writers of this or former ages may be good witneſſes of matters of fact which they deliver, which we may do well to take upon their authority; but their credit can go no farther than this; it cannot at all affect the truth and falſhood of opinions, which have no other ſort of trial but reaſon and proof, which they themſelves made uſe of to make themſelves knowing, and ſo muſt others too, that will partake in their know-

ledge. Indeed it is an advantage that they have been at the pains to find out the proofs, and lay them in that order that may show the truth or probability of their conclusions; and for this we owe them great acknowledgments for saving us the pains in searching out those proofs which they have collected for us, and which possibly, after all our pains, we might not have found, nor been able to have set them in so good a light as that which they left them us in. Upon this account we are mightily beholden to judicious writers of all ages, for those discoveries and discourses they have left behind them for our instruction, if we know how to make a right use of them; which is not to run them over in an hasty perusal, and perhaps lodge their opinions, or some remarkable passages in our memories; but to enter into their reasonings, examine their proofs, and then judge of the truth or falshood, probability or improbability, of what they advance; not by any opinion we have entertained of the author; but by the evidence he produces, and the conviction he affords us, drawn from things themselves. Knowing is seeing, and if it be so, it is madness to persuade ourselves that we do so by another man's eyes, let him use ever so many words to tell us, that what he asserts is very visible. Till we ourselves see it with our own eyes, and perceive it by our own understandings, we are as much in the dark, and as void of knowledge as before, let us believe any learned author as much as we will.

Euclid and Archimedes are allowed to be knowing, and to have demonstrated what they say; and yet whoever shall read over their writings without perceiving the connexion of their proofs, and seeing what they show, though he may understand all their words, yet he is not the more knowing: he may believe, indeed, but does not know what they say; and so is not advanced one jot in mathematical knowledge, by all his reading of those approved mathematicians.

Haste. §. 25. The eagerness and strong bent of the mind after knowledge, if not warily regulated, is often an hindrance to it. It still presses into farther discoveries and new objects, and catches at the

variety of knowledge; and therefore often stays not long enough on what is before it, to look into it as it should, for haste to pursue what is yet out of sight. He that rides post through a country, may be able, from the transient view, to tell how in general the parts lie, and may be able to give some loose description of here a mountain, and there a plain; here a morass, and there a river; woodland in one part, and savannahs in another. Such superficial ideas and observations as these he may collect in galloping over it: but the more useful observations of the soil, plants, animals, and inhabitants, with their several sorts and properties, must necessarily escape him; and it is seldom men ever discover the rich mines without some digging. Nature commonly lodges her treasure and jewels in rocky ground. If the matter be knotty, and the sense lies deep, the mind must stop and buckle to it, and stick upon it with labour and thought, and close contemplation; and not leave it till it has mastered the difficulty, and got possession of truth. But here care must be taken to avoid the other extreme: a man must not stick at every useless nicety, and expect mysteries of science in every trivial question, or scruple, that he may raise. He that will stand to pick up and examine every pebble that comes in his way, is as unlikely to return enriched and loaden with jewels, as the other that travelled full speed. Truths are not the better nor the worse for their obviousness or difficulty, but their value is to be measured by their usefulness and tendency. Insignificant observations should not take up any of our minutes, and those that enlarge our view, and give light towards farther and useful discoveries, should not be neglected, though they stop our course, and spend some of our time in a fixed attention.

There is another haste that does often, and will mislead the mind if it be left to itself, and its own conduct. The understanding is naturally forward, not only to learn its knowledge by variety (which makes it skip over one to get speedily to another part of knowledge) but also eager to enlarge its views, by running too fast into general observations and conclusions, without a due exa-

examination of particulars enough whereon to found thoſe general axioms. This ſeems to enlarge their ſtock, but it is of fancies, not realities; ſuch theories built upon narrow foundations ſtand but weakly, and, if they fall not of themſelves, are at leaſt very hardly to be ſupported againſt the aſſaults of oppoſition. And thus men being too haſty to erect to themſelves general notions and ill-grounded theories, find themſelves deceived in their ſtock of knowledge, when they come to examine their haſtily aſſumed maxims themſelves, or to have them attacked by others. General obſervations drawn from particulars, are the jewels of knowledge, comprehending great ſtore in a little room; but they are therefore to be made with the greater care and caution, leſt, if we take counterfeit for true, our loſs and ſhame be the greater when our ſtock comes to a ſevere ſcrutiny. One or two particulars may ſuggeſt hints of inquiry, and they do well to take thoſe hints; but if they turn them into concluſions, and make them preſently general rules, they are forward indeed, but it is only to impoſe on themſelves by propoſitions aſſumed for truths without ſufficient warrant. To make ſuch obſervations is, as has been already remarked, to make the head a magazine of materials, which can hardly be called knowledge; or at leaſt it is but like a collection of lumber not reduced to uſe or order; and he that makes every thing an obſervation, has the ſame uſeleſs plenty and much more falſhood mixed with it. The extremes on both ſides are to be avoided, and he will be able to give the beſt account of his ſtudies who keeps his underſtanding in the right mean between them.

Anticipation.

§. 26. Whether it be a love of that which brings the firſt light and information to their minds, and want of vigour and induſtry to inquire; or elſe that men content themſelves with any appearance of knowledge, right or wrong; which, when they have once got, they will hold faſt: this is viſible, that many men give themſelves up to the firſt anticipations of their minds, and are very tenacious of the opinions that firſt poſſeſs them; they are often as fond of their firſt conceptions as of their firſt-born, and will

will by no means recede from the judgment they have once made, or any conjecture or conceit which they have once entertained. This is a fault in the conduct of the understanding, since this firmness or rather stiffness of the mind is not from an adherence to truth, but a submission to prejudice. It is an unreasonable homage paid to prepossession, whereby we show a reverence, not to (what we pretend to seek) truth, but what by haphazard we chance to light on, be it what it will. This is visibly a preposterous use of our faculties, and is a downright prostituting of the mind to resign it thus, and put it under the power of the first comer. This can never be allowed, or ought to be followed, as a right way to knowledge, till the understanding (whose business it is to conform itself to what it finds in the objects without) can, by its own opinionatry, change that, and make the unalterable nature of things comply with its own hasty determinations, which will never be. Whatever we fancy, things keep their course; and the habitudes, correspondencies, and relations, keep the same to one another.

Resignation.

§. 27. Contrary to these, but by a like dangerous excess, on the other side, are those who always resign their judgment to the last man they heard or read. Truth never sinks into these men's minds, nor gives any tincture to them; but, cameleon-like, they take the colour of what is laid before them, and as soon lose and resign it to the next that happens to come in their way. The order wherein opinions are proposed, or received by us, is no rule of their rectitude, nor ought to be a cause of their preference. First or last in this case, is the effect of chance, and not the measure of truth or falshood. This every one must confess, and therefore should, in the pursuit of truth, keep his mind free from the influence of any such accidents. A man may as reasonably draw cuts for his tenets, regulate his persuasion by the cast of a dye, as take it up for its novelty, or retain it because it had his first assent, and he was never of another mind. Well-weighed reasons are to determine the judgment; those the mind should be always ready to hearken and submit to, and

by their testimony and suffrage, entertain or reject any tenet indifferently, whether it be a perfect stranger, or an old acquaintance.

Practice. §. 28. Though the faculties of the mind are improved by exercise, yet they must not be put to a stress beyond their strength. "Quid valeant "humeri, quid ferre recusent," must be made the measure of every one's understanding, who has a desire not only to perform well, but to keep up the vigour of his faculties; and not to baulk his understanding by what is too hard for it. The mind, by being engaged in a task beyond its strength, like the body, strained by lifting at a weight too heavy, has often its force broken, and thereby gets an unaptness, or an aversion, to any vigorous attempt ever after. A sinew cracked seldom recovers its former strength, or at least the tenderness of the sprain remains a good while after, and the memory of it longer; and leaves a lasting caution in the man, not to put the part quickly again to any robust employment. So it fares in the mind once jaded by an attempt above its power; it either is disabled for the future; or else checks at any vigorous undertaking ever after; at least is very hardly brought to exert its force again on any subject that requires thought and meditation. The understanding should be brought to the difficult and knotty parts of knowledge, that try the strength of thought, and a full bent of the mind, by insensible degrees; and in such a gradual proceeding nothing is too hard for it. Nor let it be objected, that such a slow progress will never reach the extent of some sciences. It is not to be imagined how far constancy will carry a man; however, it is better walking slowly in a rugged way, than to break a leg and be a cripple. He that begins with the calf may carry the ox; but he that will at first go to take up an ox, may so disable himself, as not to be able to lift up a calf after that. When the mind, by insensible degrees, has brought itself to attention and close thinking, it will be able to cope with difficulties, and master them without any prejudice to itself, and then it may go on roundly. Every abstruse problem, every intricate question, will not baffle, discourage, or break

break it. But though putting the mind unprepared upon an unusual stress, that may discourage or damp it for the future, ought to be avoided; yet this must not run it, by an over-great shyness of difficulties, into a lazy sauntering about ordinary and obvious things, that demand no thought or application. This debases and enervates the understanding, makes it weak and unfit for labour. This is a sort of hovering about the surface of things, without any insight into them or penetration; and when the mind has been once habituated to this lazy recumbency and satisfaction on the obvious surface of things, it is in danger to rest satisfied there, and go no deeper; since it cannot do it without pains and digging. He that has for some time accustomed himself to take up with what easily offers itself at first view, has reason to fear he shall never reconcile himself to the fatigue of turning and tumbling things in his mind, to discover their more retired and more valuable secrets.

It is not strange that methods of learning which scholars have been accustomed to in their beginning and entrance upon the sciences, should influence them all their lives, and be settled in their minds by an overruling reverence; especially if they be such as universal use has established. Learners must at first be believers, and their master's rules having been once made axioms to them, it is no wonder they should keep that dignity, and by the authority they have once got, mislead those who think it sufficient to excuse them, if they go out of their way in a well-beaten track.

Words.

§. 29. I have copiously enough spoken of the abuse of words in another place, and therefore shall upon this reflection, that the sciences are full of them, warn those that would conduct their understandings right, not to take any term, howsoever authorised by the language of the schools, to stand for any thing till they have an idea of it. A word may be of frequent use, and great credit, with several authors, and be by them made use of as if it stood for some real being; but yet, if he that reads cannot frame any distinct idea of that being, it is certainly to him a mere empty sound without a meaning; and he learns no more by all

that is ſaid of it, or attributed to it, than if it were affirmed only of that bare empty ſound. They who would advance in knowledge, and not deceive and ſwell themſelves with a little articulated air, ſhould lay down this as a fundamental rule, not to take words for things, nor ſuppoſe that names in books ſignify real entities in nature, till they can frame clear and diſtinct ideas of thoſe entities. It will not perhaps be allowed, if I ſhould ſet down "ſubſtantial forms" and "intentional ſpecies," as ſuch that may juſtly be ſuſpected to be of this kind of inſignificant terms. But this I am ſure, to one that can form no determined ideas of what they ſtand for, they ſignify nothing at all; and all that he thinks he knows about them, is to him ſo much knowledge about nothing, and amounts at moſt but to be a learned ignorance. It is not without all reaſon ſuppoſed, that there are many ſuch empty terms to be found in ſome learned writers, to which they had recourſe to etch out their ſyſtems, where their underſtandings could not furniſh them with conceptions from things. But yet I believe the ſuppoſing of ſome realities in nature, anſwering thoſe and the like words, have much perplexed ſome, and quite miſled others in the ſtudy of nature. That which in any diſcourſe ſignifies, "I know not what," ſhould be conſidered "I know not when." Where men have any conceptions, they can, if they are never ſo abſtruſe or abſtracted, explain them, and the terms they uſe for them. For our conceptions being nothing but ideas, which are all made up of ſimple ones: if they cannot give us the ideas their words ſtand for, it is plain they have none. To what purpoſe can it be, to hunt after his conceptions, who has none, or none diſtinct? He that knew not what he himſelf meant by a learned term, cannot make us know any thing by his uſe of it, let us beat our heads about it never ſo long. Whether we are able to comprehend all the operations of nature, and the manners of them, it matters not to inquire; but this is certain, that we can comprehend no more of them, than we can diſtinctly conceive; and therefore to obtrude terms where we have no diſtinct conceptions, as if they did contain, or rather conceal

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something; is but an artifice of learned vanity to cover a defect in an hypothesis or our understandings. Words are not made to conceal, but to declare and show something; where they are by those, who pretend to instruct, otherwise used, they conceal indeed something; but that that they conceal is nothing but the ignorance, errour, or sophistry of the talker; for there is, in truth, nothing else under them.

Wandering.

§. 30. That there is a constant succession and flux of ideas in our minds, I have observed in the former part of this essay; and every one may take notice of it in himself. This, I suppose, may deserve some part of our care in the conduct of our understandings; and I think it may be of great advantage, if we can by use get that power over our minds, as to be able to direct that train of ideas, that so, since there will new ones perpetually come into our thoughts by a constant succession, we may be able by choice so to direct them, that none may come in view, but such as are pertinent to our present inquiry, and in such order as may be most useful to the discovery we are upon; or at least, if some foreign and unsought ideas will offer themselves, that yet we might be able to reject them, and keep them from taking off our minds from its present pursuit, and hinder them from running away with our thoughts quite from the subject in hand. This is not, I suspect, so easy to be done, as perhaps may be imagined; and yet, for aught I know, this may be, if not the chief, yet one of the great differences that carry some men in their reasoning so far beyond others, where they seem to be naturally of equal parts. A proper and effectual remedy for this wandering of thoughts I would be glad to find. He that shall propose such an one, would do great service to the studious and contemplative part of mankind, and perhaps help unthinking men to become thinking. I must acknowledge that hitherto I have discovered no other way to keep our thoughts close to their business, but the endeavouring as much as we can, and by frequent attention and application, getting the habit of attention and application. He that will observe children, will find, that even when they

endeavour their utmoſt, they cannot keep their minds from ſtraggling. The way to cure it, I am ſatisfied, is not angry chiding or beating, for that preſently fills their heads with all the ideas that fear, dread, or confuſion can offer to them. To bring back gently their wandering thoughts, by leading them into the path, and going before them in the train they ſhould purſue, without any rebuke, or ſo much as taking notice (where it can be avoided) of their roving, I ſuppoſe would ſooner reconcile and inure them to attention, than all thoſe rougher methods which more diſtract their thought, and hindering the application they would promote, introduce a contrary habit.

Diſtinction. §. 31. Diſtinction and diviſion are (if I miſtake not the import of the words) very different things; the one being the perception of a difference that nature has placed in things; the other, our making a diviſion where there is yet none; at leaſt, if I may be permitted to conſider them in this ſenſe, I think I may ſay of them, that one of them is the moſt neceſſary and conducive to true knowledge that can be; the other, when too much made uſe of, ſerves only to puzzle and confound the underſtanding. To obſerve every the leaſt difference that is in things argues a quick and clear ſight; and this keeps the underſtanding ſteady, and right in its way to knowledge. But though it be uſeful to diſcern every variety that is to be found in nature, yet it is not convenient to conſider every difference that is in things, and divide them into diſtinct claſſes under every ſuch difference. This will run us, if followed, into particulars, (for every individual has ſomething that differences it from another) and we ſhall be able to eſtabliſh no general truths, or elſe at leaſt ſhall be apt to perplex the mind about them. The collection of ſeveral things into ſeveral claſſes, gives the mind more general and larger views; but we muſt take care to unite them only in that, and ſo far as, they do agree, for ſo far they may be united under the conſideration: for entity itſelf, that comprehends all things, as general as it is, may afford us clear and rational conceptions. If we would weigh and keep in our minds what it is we

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are conſidering, that would beſt inſtruct us when we ſhould, or ſhould not branch into farther diſtinctions, which are to be taken only from a due contemplation of things; to which there is nothing more oppoſite than the art of verbal diſtinctions, made at pleaſure in learned and arbitrarily invented terms, to be applied at a venture, without comprehending or conveying any diſtinct notions; and ſo altogether fitted to artificial talk, or empty noiſe in diſpute, without any clearing of difficulties, or advance in knowledge. Whatſoever ſubject we examine and would get knowledge in, we ſhould, I think, make as general and as large as it will bear; nor can there be any danger of this, if the idea of it be ſettled and determined: For if that be ſo, we ſhall eaſily diſtinguiſh it from any other idea, though comprehended under the ſame name. For it is to fence againſt the intanglements of equivocal words, and the great art of ſophiſtry which lies in them, that diſtinctions have been multiplied, and their uſe thought ſo neceſſary. But had every diſtinct abſtract idea a diſtinct known name, there would be little need of theſe multiplied ſcholaſtic diſtinctions, though there would be nevertheleſs as much need ſtill of the mind's obſerving the differences that are in things, and diſcriminating them thereby one from another. It is not therefore the right way to knowledge, to hunt after, and fill the head with abundance of artificial and ſcholaſtic diſtinctions, wherewith learned men's writings are often filled: we ſometimes find what they treat of ſo divided and ſubdivided, that the mind of the moſt attentive reader loſes the ſight of it, as it is more than probable the writer himſelf did; for in things crumbled into duſt, it is in vain to affect or pretend order, or expect clearneſs. To avoid confuſion by too few or too many diviſions, is a great ſkill in thinking as well as writing, which is but the copying our thoughts; but what are the boundaries of the mean between the two vicious exceſſes on both hands, I think is hard to ſet down in words: clear and diſtinct ideas is all that I yet know able to regulate it. But as to verbal diſtinctions received and applied to common terms, i. e. equivocal words, they are more properly, I think, the buſi-

neſs of criticiſms and dictionaries than of real knowledge and philoſophy; ſince they, for the moſt part, explain the meaning of words, and give us their ſeveral ſignifications. The dexterous management of terms, and being able to fend and prove with them, I know has and does paſs in the world for a great part of learning; but it is learning diſtinct from knowledge; for knowledge conſiſts only in perceiving the habitudes and relations of ideas one to another, which is done without words; the intervention of a ſound helps nothing to it. And hence we ſee that there is leaſt uſe of diſtinctions where there is moſt knowledge; I mean in mathematics, where men have determined ideas without known names to them; and ſo there being no room for equivocations, there is no need of diſtinctions. In arguing, the opponent uſes as comprehenſive and equivocal terms as he can, to involve his adverſary in the doubtfulneſs of his expreſſions: this is expected, and therefore the anſwerer on his ſide makes it his play to diſtinguiſh as much as he can, and thinks he can never do it too much; nor can he indeed in that way wherein victory may be had without truth and without knowledge. This ſeems to me to be the art of diſputing. Uſe your words as captiouſly as you can in your arguing on one ſide, and apply diſtinctions as much as you can on the other ſide to every term, to nonplus your opponent; ſo that in this ſort of ſcholarſhip, there being no bounds ſet to diſtinguiſhing, ſome men have thought all acuteneſs to have lain in it; and therefore in all they have read or thought on, their great buſineſs has been to amuſe themſelves with diſtinctions, and multiply to themſelves diviſions; at leaſt, more than the nature of the thing required. There ſeems to me, as I ſaid, to be no other rule for this, but a due and right conſideration of things as they are in themſelves. He that has ſettled in his mind determined ideas, with names affixed to them, will be able both to diſcern their differences one from another; which is really diſtinguiſhing: and, where the penury of words affords not terms anſwering every diſtinct idea, will be able to apply proper diſtinguiſhing terms to the comprehenſive and equivocal names he is

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forced to make use of. This is all the need I know of distinguishing terms; and in such verbal distinctions, each term of the distinction, joined to that whose signification it distinguishes, is but a distinct name for a distinct idea. Where they are so, and men have clear and distinct conceptions that answer their verbal distinctions, they are right, and are pertinent as far as they serve to clear any thing in the subject under consideration. And this is that which seems to me the proper and only measure of distinctions and divisions; which he that will conduct his understanding right, must not look for in the acuteness of invention, nor the authority of writers, but will find only in the consideration of things themselves, whether he is led into it by his own meditations, or the information of books.

An aptness to jumble things together, wherein can be found any likeness, is a fault in the understanding on the other side, which will not fail to mislead it, and by thus lumping of things, hinder the mind from distinct and accurate conceptions of them.

Similies.

§. 32. To which let me here add another near of kin to this, at least in name, and that is letting the mind, upon the suggestion of any new notion, run immediately after similies to make it the clearer to itself; which, though it may be a good way, and useful in the explaining our thoughts to others; yet it is by no means a right method to settle true notions of any thing in ourselves, because similies always fail in some part, and come short of that exactness which our conceptions should have to things, if we would think aright. This indeed makes men plausible talkers; for those are always most acceptable in discourse who have the way to let their thoughts into other men's minds with the greatest ease and facility; whether those thoughts are well formed and correspond with things, matters not; few men care to be instructed but at an easy rate. They, who in their discourse strike the fancy, and take the hearers conceptions along with them as fast as their words flow, are the applauded talkers, and go for the only men of clear thoughts. Nothing contributes so much to this as similies, whereby men think they themselves

ſelves underſtand better, becauſe they are the better underſtood. But it is one thing to think right, and another thing to know the right way to lay our thoughts before others with advantage and clearneſs, be they right or wrong. Well-choſen ſimilies, metaphors, and allegories, with method and order, do this the beſt of any thing, becauſe being taken from objects already known, and familiar to the underſtanding, they are conceived as faſt as ſpoken; and the correſpondence being concluded, the thing they are brought to explain and elucidate is thought to be underſtood too. Thus fancy paſſes for knowledge, and what is prettily ſaid is miſtaken for ſolid. I ſay not this to decry metaphor, or with deſign to take away that ornament of ſpeech; my buſineſs here is not with rhetoricians and orators, but with philoſophers and lovers of truth; to whom I would beg leave to give this one rule whereby to try whether, in the application of their thoughts to any thing for the improvement of their knowledge, they do in truth comprehend the matter before them really ſuch as it is in itſelf. The way to diſcover this is to obſerve whether, in the laying it before themſelves or others, they make uſe only of borrowed repreſentations, and ideas foreign to the things, which are applied to it by way of accommodation, as bearing ſome proportion or imagined likeneſs to the ſubject under conſideration. Figured and metaphorical expreſſions do well to illuſtrate more abſtruſe and unfamiliar ideas which the mind is not yet thoroughly accuſtomed to; but then they muſt be made uſe of to illuſtrate ideas that we already have, not to paint to us thoſe which we yet have not. Such borrowed and alluſive ideas may follow real and ſolid truth, to ſet it off when found; but muſt by no means be ſet in its place, and taken for it. If all our ſearch has yet reached no farther than ſimilie and metaphor, we may aſſure ourſelves we rather fancy than know, and have not yet penetrated into the inſide and reality of the thing, be it what it will, but content ourſelves with what our imaginations, not things themſelves, furniſh us with.

§. 33.

§. 33. In the whole conduct of the underſtanding, there is nothing of more moment than to know when and where, and how far to give aſſent; and poſſibly there is nothing harder. It is very eaſily ſaid, and nobody queſtions it, that giving and with-holding our aſſent, and the degrees of it, ſhould be regulated by the evidence which things carry with them; and yet we ſee men are not the better for this rule; ſome firmly embrace doctrines upon ſlight grounds, ſome upon no grounds, and ſome contrary to appearance: ſome admit of certainty, and are not to be moved in what they hold: others waver in every thing, and there want not thoſe that reject all as uncertain. What then ſhall a novice, an inquirer, a ſtranger do in the caſe? I anſwer, uſe his eyes. There is a correſpondence in things, and agreement and diſagreement in ideas, diſcernible in very different degrees, and there are eyes in men to ſee them, if they pleaſe: only their eyes may be dimmed or dazzled, and the diſcerning ſight in them impaired or loſt. Intereſt and paſſion dazzles; the cuſtom of arguing on any ſide, even againſt our perſuaſions, dims the underſtanding, and makes it by degrees loſe the faculty of diſcerning clearly between truth and falſhood, and ſo of adhering to the right ſide. It is not ſafe to play with errour, and dreſs it up to ourſelves or others in the ſhape of truth. The mind by degrees loſes its natural reliſh of real ſolid truth, is reconciled inſenſibly to any thing that can be dreſſed up into any feint appearance of it; and if the fancy be allowed the place of judgment at firſt in ſport, it afterwards comes by uſe to uſurp it; and what is recommended by this flatterer (that ſtudies but to pleaſe) is received for good. There are ſo many ways of fallacy, ſuch arts of giving colours, appearances and reſemblances by this court-dreſſer, the fancy, that he who is not wary to admit nothing but truth itſelf, very careful not to make his mind ſubſervient to any thing elſe, cannot but be caught. He that has a mind to believe, has half aſſented already; and he that by often arguing againſt his own ſenſe, impoſes falſhood on others, is not far from believing himſelf. This takes away the great diſtance there is betwixt truth

Aſſent.

and

and falſhood; it brings them almoſt together, and makes it no great odds, in things that approach ſo near, which you take; and when things are brought to that paſs, paſſion, or intereſt, &c. eaſily, and without being perceived, determine which ſhall be the right.

Indifferency. §. 34. I have ſaid above, that we ſhould keep a perfect indifferency for all opinions, not wiſh any of them true, or try to make them appear ſo; but being indifferent, receive and embrace them according as evidence, and that alone, gives the atteſtation of truth. They that do thus, i. e. keep their minds indifferent to opinions, to be determined only by evidence, will always find the underſtanding has perception enough to diſtinguiſh between evidence and no evidence, betwixt plain and doubtful; and if they neither give nor refuſe their aſſent but by that meaſure, they will be ſafe in the opinions they have. Which being perhaps but few, this caution will have alſo this good in it, that it will put them upon conſidering, and teach them the neceſſity of examining more than they do; without which the mind is but a receptacle of inconſiſtencies, not the ſtore-houſe of truths. They that do not keep up this indifferency in themſelves for all but truth, not ſuppoſed, but evidenced in themſelves, put coloured ſpectacles before their eyes, and look on things through falſe glaſſes, and then think themſelves excuſed in following the falſe appearances, which they themſelves put upon them. I do not expect that by this way the aſſent ſhould in every one be proportioned to the grounds and clearneſs wherewith every truth is capable to be made out; or that men ſhould be perfectly kept from errour: that is more than human nature can by any means be advanced to; I aim at no ſuch unattainable privilege; I am only ſpeaking of what they ſhould do, who would deal fairly with their own minds, and make a right uſe of their faculties in the purſuit of truth; we fail them a great deal more than they fail us. It is miſmanagement more than want of abilities that men have reaſon to complain of, and which they actually do complain of in thoſe that differ from them. He that by indifferency for all but truth, ſuffers not his aſſent

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to go faſter than his evidence, nor beyond it; will learn to examine, and examine fairly inſtead of preſuming, and nobody will be at a loſs, or in danger for want of embracing thoſe truths which are neceſſary in his ſtation and circumſtances. In any other way but this, all the world are born to orthodoxy; they imbibe at firſt the allowed opinions of their country and party, and ſo never queſtioning their truth, not one of an hundred ever examines. They are applauded for preſuming they are in the right. He that conſiders is a foe to orthodoxy, becauſe poſſibly he may deviate from ſome of the received doctrines there. And thus men, without any induſtry or acquiſition of their own, inherit local truths (for it is not the ſame every where) and are inured to aſſent without evidence. This influences farther than is thought; for what one of an hundred of the zealous bigots in all parties, ever examined the tenets he is ſo ſtiff in; or ever thought it his buſineſs or duty ſo to do? It is ſuſpected of luke-warmneſs to ſuppoſe it neceſſary, and a tendency to apoſtacy to go about it. And if a man can bring his mind once to be poſitive and fierce for poſitions, whoſe evidence he has never once examined, and that in matters of greateſt concernment to him; what ſhall keep him from this ſhort and eaſy way of being in the right in caſes of leſs moment? Thus we are taught to clothe our minds as we do our bodies, after the faſhion in vogue, and it is accounted fantaſticalneſs, or ſomething worſe, not to do ſo. This cuſtom (which who dares oppoſe?) makes the ſhort-ſighted bigots, and the warier ſceptics, as far as it prevails: and thoſe that break from it are in danger of hereſy: for taking the whole world, how much of it doth truth and orthodoxy poſſeſs together? Though it is by the laſt alone (which has the good luck to be every where) that errour and hereſy are judged of: for argument and evidence ſignify nothing in the caſe, and excuſe no where, but are ſure to be borne down in all ſocieties by the infallible orthodoxy of the place. Whether this be the way to truth and right aſſent, let the opinions, that take place and preſcribe in the ſeveral habitable parts of the earth, declare. I never ſaw any reaſon yet why truth might not be

be truſted on its own evidence: I am ſure if that be not able to ſupport it, there is no fence againſt errour; and then truth and falſhood are but names that ſtand for the ſame things. Evidence therefore is that by which alone every man is (and ſhould be) taught to regulate his aſſent, who is then, and then only, in the right way, when he follows it.

Men deficient in knowledge are uſually in one of theſe three ſtates; either wholly ignorant, or as doubting of ſome propoſition they have either embraced formerly, or are at preſent inclined to; or laſtly, they do with aſſurance hold and profeſs without ever having examined, and being convinced by well-grounded arguments.

The firſt of theſe are in the beſt ſtate of the three, by having their minds yet in their perfect freedom and indifferency; the likelier to purſue truth the better, having no bias yet clapped on to miſlead them.

§. 35. For ignorance, with an indifferency for truth, is nearer to it than opinion with ungrounded inclination, which is the great ſource of errour; and they are more in danger to go out of the way, who are marching under the conduct of a guide, that it is an hundred to one will miſlead them, than he that has not yet taken a ſtep, and is likelier to be prevailed on to inquire after the right way. The laſt of the three ſorts are in the worſt condition of all; for if a man can be perſuaded and fully aſſured of any thing for a truth, without having examined, what is there that he may not embrace for truth? and if he has given himſelf up to believe a lye, what means is there left to recover one who can be aſſured without examining? To the other two this I crave leave to ſay, that as he that is ignorant is in the beſt ſtate of the two, ſo he ſhould purſue truth in a method ſuitable to that ſtate; i. e. by inquiring directly into the nature of the thing itſelf, without minding the opinions of others, or troubling himſelf with their queſtions or diſputes about it; but to ſee what he himſelf can, ſincerely ſearching after truth, find out. He that proceeds upon other principles in his inquiry into any ſciences, though he be reſolved to examine them and judge of them freely, does yet at leaſt put himſelf on

that

that ſide, and poſt himſelf in a party which he will not quit till he be beaten out; by which the mind is inſenſibly engaged to make what defence it can, and ſo is unawares biaſſed. I do not ſay but a man ſhould embrace ſome opinion when he has examined, elſe he examines to no purpoſe; but the ſureſt and ſafeſt way is to have no opinion at all till he has examined, and that without any the leaſt regard to the opinions or ſyſtems of other men about it. For example, were it my buſineſs to underſtand phyſic, would not the ſafe and readier way be to conſult nature herſelf, and inform myſelf in the hiſtory of diſeaſes and their cures; than eſpouſing the principles of the dogmatiſts, methodiſts, or chemiſts, to engage in all the diſputes concerning either of thoſe ſyſtems, and ſuppoſe it to be true, till I have tried what they can ſay to beat me out of it? Or, ſuppoſing that Hippocrates, or any other book, infallibly contains the whole art of phyſic; would not the direct way be to ſtudy, read, and conſider that book, weigh and compare the parts of it to find the truth, rather than eſpouſe the doctrines of any party? who, though they acknowledge his authority, have already interpreted and wire-drawn all his text to their own ſenſe; the tincture whereof, when I have imbibed, I am more in danger to miſunderſtand his true meaning, than if I had come to him with a mind unprepoſſeſſed by doctors and commentators of my ſect; whoſe reaſonings, interpretation, and language, which I have been uſed to, will of courſe make all chime that way, and make another, and perhaps the genuine meaning of the author ſeem harſh, ſtrained, and uncouth to me. For words having naturally none of their own, carry that ſignification to the hearer, that he is uſed to put upon them, whatever be the ſenſe of him that uſes them. This, I think, is viſibly ſo; and if it be, he that begins to have any doubt of any of his tenets, which he received without examination, ought, as much as he can, to put himſelf wholly into this ſtate of ignorance in reference to that queſtion; and throwing wholly by all his former notions, and the opinions of others, examine, with a perfect indifferency, the queſtion in its ſource; without any inclination to either ſide, or any

regard to his or others unexamined opinions. This I own is no eaſy thing to do; but I am not inquiring the eaſy way to opinion, but the right way to truth; which they muſt follow who will deal fairly with their own underſtandings and their own ſouls.

Queſtion.

§. 36. The indifferency that I here propoſe will alſo enable them to ſtate the queſtion right, which they are in doubt about, without which they can never come to a fair and clear deciſion of it.

Perſeverance.

§. 37. Another fruit from this indifferency, and the conſidering things in themſelves abſtract from our own opinions and other men's notions and diſcourſes on them, will be, that each man will purſue his thoughts in that method which will be moſt agreeable to the nature of the thing, and to his apprehenſion of what it ſuggeſts to him; in which he ought to proceed with regularity and conſtancy, until he come to a well-grounded reſolution wherein he may acquieſce. If it be objected that this will require every man to be a ſcholar, and quit all his other buſineſs, and betake himſelf wholly to ſtudy; I anſwer, I propoſe no more to any one than he has time for. Some men's ſtate and condition requires no great extent of knowledge; the neceſſary proviſion for life ſwallows the greateſt part of their time. But one man's want of leiſure is no excuſe for the oſcitancy and ignorance of thoſe who have time to ſpare; and every one has enough to get as much knowledge as is required and expected of him, and he that does not that, is in love with ignorance, and is accountable for it.

Preſumption.

§. 38. The variety of diſtempers in men's minds is as great as of thoſe in their bodies; ſome are epidemic, few ſcape them; and every one too, if he would look into himſelf, would find ſome defect of his particular genius. There is ſcarce any one without ſome idioſyncraſy that he ſuffers by. This man preſumes upon his parts, that they will not fail him at time of need; and ſo thinks it ſuperfluous labour to make any proviſion before-hand. His underſtanding is to him like Fortunatus's purſe, which is always to furniſh him, without ever putting any thing into

into it before-hand; and so he sits still satisfied, without endeavouring to store his understanding with knowledge. It is the spontaneous product of the country, and what need of labour in tillage? Such men may spread their native riches before the ignorant; but they were best not come to stress and trial with the skilful. We are born ignorant of every thing. The superficies of things that surround them, make impressions on the negligent, but nobody penetrates into the inside without labour, attention, and industry. Stones and timber grow of themselves, but yet there is no uniform pile with symmetry and convenience to lodge in without toil and pains. God has made the intellectual world harmonious and beautiful without us; but it will never come into our heads all at once; we must bring it home piece-meal, and there set it up by our own industry, or else we shall have nothing but darkness and a chaos within, whatever order and light there be in things without us.

Despondency.

§. 39. On the other side, there are others that depress their own minds, despond at the first difficulty, and conclude that the getting an insight in any of the sciences, or making any progress in knowledge farther than serves their ordinary business, is above their capacities. These sit still, because they think they have not legs to go; as the others I last mentioned do, because they think they have wings to fly, and can soar on high when they please. To these latter one may for answer apply the proverb, "Use legs and have legs." Nobody knows what strength of parts he has till he has tried them. And of the understanding one may most truly say, that its force is greater generally than it thinks, till it is put to it. "Viresque acquirit eundo."

And therefore the proper remedy here is but to set the mind to work, and apply the thoughts vigorously to the business; for it holds in the struggles of the mind as in those of war, "Dum putant se vincere vicêre;" A persuasion that we shall overcome any difficulties that we meet with in the sciences, seldom fails to carry us through them. Nobody knows the strength of his

mind, and the force of ſteady and regular application, till he has tried. This is certain, he that ſets out upon weak legs, will not only go farther, but grow ſtronger too than one, who with a vigorous conſtitution and firm limbs, only ſits ſtill.

Something of kin to this, men may obſerve in themſelves, when the mind frights itſelf (as it often does) with any thing reflected on in groſs, and tranſiently viewed confuſedly, and at a diſtance. Things thus offered to the mind, carry the ſhow of nothing but difficulty in them, and are thought to be wrapt up in impenetrable obſcurity. But the truth is, theſe are nothing but ſpectres that the underſtanding raiſes to itſelf to flatter its own lazineſs. It ſees nothing diſtinctly in things remote, and in a huddle; and therefore concludes too faintly, that there is nothing more clear to be diſcovered in them. It is but to approach nearer, and that miſt of our own raiſing that inveloped them will remove; and thoſe that in that miſt appeared hideous giants not to be grappled with, will be found to be of the ordinary and natural ſize and ſhape. Things, that in a remote and confuſed view ſeem very obſcure, muſt be approached by gentle and regular ſteps; and what is moſt viſible, eaſy and obvious in them firſt conſidered. Reduce them into their diſtinct parts; and then in their due order bring all that ſhould be known concerning every one of thoſe parts into plain and ſimple queſtions; and then what was thought obſcure, perplexed, and too hard for our weak parts, will lay itſelf open to the underſtanding in a fair view, and let the mind into that which before it was awed with, and kept at a diſtance from, as wholly myſterious. I appeal to my reader's experience, whether this has never happened to him, eſpecially when, buſy on one thing, he has occaſionally reflected on another. I aſk him whether he has never thus been ſcared with a ſudden opinion of mighty difficulties, which yet have vaniſhed, when he has ſeriouſly and methodically applied himſelf to the conſideration of this ſeeming terrible ſubject; and there has been no other matter of aſtoniſhment left, but that he amuſed himſelf with ſo diſcouraging a proſpect of his own raiſing,

ing, about a matter, which in the handling was found to have nothing in it more ſtrange nor intricate than ſeveral other things which he had long ſince, and with eaſe maſtered. This experience would teach us how to deal with ſuch bugbears another time, which ſhould rather ſerve to excite our vigour than enervate our induſtry. The ſureſt way for a learner in this, as in all other caſes, is not to advance by jumps and large ſtrides; let that which he ſets himſelf to learn next, be indeed the next; i. e. as nearly conjoined with what he knows already as is poſſible; let it be diſtinct but not remote from it: Let it be new, and what he did not know before, that the underſtanding may advance; but let it be as little at once as may be, that its advances may be clear and ſure. All the ground that it gets this way it will hold. This diſtinct gradual growth in knowledge is firm and ſure; it carries its own light with it in every ſtep of its progreſſion in an eaſy and orderly train; than which there is nothing of more uſe to the underſtanding. And though this perhaps may ſeem a very ſlow and lingering way to knowledge; yet I dare confidently affirm, that whoever will try it in himſelf, or any one he will teach, ſhall find the advances greater in this method, than they would in the ſame ſpace of time have been in any other he could have taken. The greateſt part of true knowledge lies in a diſtinct perception of things in themſelves diſtinct. And ſome men give more clear light and knowledge by the bare diſtinct ſtating of a queſtion, than others by talking of it in groſs, whole hours together. In this, they who ſo ſtate a queſtion, do no more but ſeparate and diſentangle the parts of it one from another, and lay them, when ſo diſentangled, in their due order. This often, without any more ado, reſolves the doubt, and ſhows the mind where the truth lies. The agreement or diſagreement of the ideas in queſtion, when they are once ſeparated and diſtinctly conſidered, is, in many caſes, preſently perceived, and thereby clear and laſting knowledge gained; whereas things in groſs taken up together, and ſo lying together in confuſion, can produce in the mind but a confuſed, which in effect is no, knowledge; or at leaſt, when it

comes to be examined and made use of, will prove little better than none. I therefore take the liberty to repeat here again what I have said elsewhere, that in learning any thing as little should be proposed to the mind at once as is possible; and, that being understood and fully mastered, to proceed to the next adjoining part yet unknown; simple, unperplexed proposition belonging to the matter in hand, and tending to the clearing what is principally designed.

Analogy. §. 40. Analogy is of great use to the mind in many cases, especially in natural philosophy; and that part of it chiefly which consists in happy and successful experiments. But here we must take care that we keep ourselves within that wherein the analogy consists. For example, the acid oil of vitriol is found to be good in such a case, therefore the spirit of nitre or vinegar may be used in the like case. If the good effect of it be owing wholly to the acidity of it, the trial may be justified; but if there be something else besides the acidity in the oil of vitriol, which produces the good we desire in the case; we mistake that for analogy, which is not, and suffer our understanding to be misguided by a wrong supposition of analogy where there is none.

Association. §. 41. Though I have, in the second book of my essay concerning human understanding, treated of the association of ideas; yet having done it there historically, as giving a view of the understanding in this as well as its several other ways of operating, rather than designing there to inquire into the remedies that ought to be applied to it; it will, under this latter consideration, afford other matter of thought to those who have a mind to instruct themselves thoroughly in the right way of conducting their understandings; and that the rather, because this, if I mistake not, is as frequent a cause of mistake and errour in us, as perhaps any thing else that can be named; and is a disease of the mind as hard to be cured as any; it being a very hard thing to convince any one that things are not so, and naturally so, as they constantly appear to him.

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By this one easy and unheeded miscarriage of the understanding, sandy and loose foundations become infallible principles, and will not suffer themselves to be touched or questioned; such unnatural connexions become by custom as natural to the mind as sun and light, fire and warmth go together, and so seem to carry with them as natural an evidence as self-evident truths themselves. And where then shall one with hopes of success begin the cure? Many men firmly embrace falshood for truth; not only because they never thought otherwise; but also because, thus blinded as they have been from the beginning, they never could think otherwise; at least without a vigour of mind able to contest the empire of habit, and look into its own principles; a freedom which few men have the notion of in themselves, and fewer are allowed the practice of by others; it being the great art and business of the teachers and guides in most sects to suppress, as much as they can, this fundamental duty which every man owes himself, and is the first steady step towards right and truth in the whole train of his actions and opinions. This would give one reason to suspect, that such teachers are conscious to themselves of the falshood or weakness of the tenets they profess, since they will not suffer the grounds whereon they are built to be examined; whereas those who seek truth only, and desire to own and propagate nothing else, freely expose their principles to the test; are pleased to have them examined; give men leave to reject them if they can; and if there be any thing weak and unsound in them, are willing to have it detected, that they themselves, as well as others, may not lay any stress upon any received proposition beyond what the evidence of its truths will warrant and allow.

There is, I know, a great fault among all sorts of people of principling their children and scholars; which at last, when looked into, amounts to no more, but making them imbibe their teacher's notions and tenets by an implicit faith, and firmly to adhere to them whether true or false. What colours may be given to this, or of what use it may be when practised upon the vulgar, destined to labour, and given up to the service of

their bellies, I will not here inquire. But as to the ingenuous part of mankind, whoſe condition allows them leiſure, and letters, and inquiry after truth; I can ſee no other right way of principling them, but to take heed, as much as may be, that in their tender years, ideas, that have no natural coheſion, come not to be united in their heads; and that this rule be often inculcated to them to be their guide in the whole courſe of their lives and ſtudies, viz. that they never ſuffer any ideas to be joined in their underſtandings, in any other or ſtronger combination than what their own nature and correſpondence give them; and that they often examine thoſe that they find linked together in their minds; whether this aſſociation of ideas be from the viſible agreement that is in the ideas themſelves, or from the habitual and prevailing cuſtom of the mind joining them thus together in thinking.

This is for caution againſt this evil, before it be thoroughly riveted by cuſtom in the underſtanding; but he, that would cure it when habit has eſtabliſhed it, muſt nicely obſerve the very quick and almoſt imperceptible motions of the mind in its habitual actions. What I have ſaid in another place about the change of the ideas of ſenſe into thoſe of judgment, may be proof of this. Let any one not ſkilled in painting be told when he ſees bottles and tobacco-pipes, and other things ſo painted, as they are in ſome places ſhown; that he does not ſee protuberances, and you will not convince him but by the touch: He will not believe that by an inſtantaneous legerdemain of his own thoughts, one idea is ſubſtituted for another. How frequent inſtances may one meet with of this in the arguings of the learned, who not ſeldom, in two ideas that they have been accuſtomed to join in their minds, ſubſtitute one for the other; and, I am apt to think, often without perceiving it themſelves? This, whilſt they are under the deceit of it, makes them incapable of conviction, and they applaud themſelves as zealous champions for truth, when indeed they are contending for errour. And the confuſion of two different ideas, which a cuſtomary connexion of them in their minds hath made to them almoſt

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one, fills their head with false views, and their reasonings with false consequences.

§. 42. Right understanding consists in the discovery and adherence to truth, and that in the perception of the visible or probable agreement or disagreement of ideas, as they are affirmed and denied one of another. From whence it is evident, that the right use and conduct of the understanding, whose business is purely truth and nothing else, is, that the mind should be kept in a perfect indifferency, not inclining to either side, any farther than evidence settles it by knowledge, or the overbalance of probability gives it the turn of assent and belief; but yet it is very hard to meet with any discourse wherein one may not perceive the author not only maintain (for that is reasonable and fit) but inclined and biassed to one side of the question, with marks of a desire that that should be true. If it be asked me, how authors who have such a bias and lean to it may be discovered? I answer, by observing how in their writings or arguings they are often led by their inclinations to change the ideas of the question, either by changing the terms, or by adding and joining others to them, whereby the ideas under consideration are so varied, as to be more serviceable to their purpose, and to be thereby brought to an easier and nearer agreement, or more visible and remoter disagreement one with another. This is plain and direct sophistry; but I am far from thinking, that wherever it is found it is made use of with design to deceive and mislead the readers. It is visible that men's prejudices and inclinations by this way impose often upon themselves; and their affection for truth, under their prepossession in favour of one side, is the very thing that leads them from it. Inclination suggests and slides into their discourse favourable terms, which introduce favourable ideas; till at last by this means that is concluded clear and evident, thus dressed up, which, taken in its native state, by making use of none but the precise determined ideas, would find no admittance at all. The putting these glosses on what they affirm, these, as they are thought, handsome, easy and graceful explications of

Fallacies.

what they are discoursing on, is so much the character of what is called and esteemed writing well, that it is very hard to think that authors will ever be persuaded to leave what serves so well to propagate their opinions, and procure themselves credit in the world, for a more jejune and dry way of writing, by keeping to the same terms precisely annexed to the same ideas; a sour and blunt stiffness tolerable in mathematicians only, who force their way, and make truth prevail by irresistible demonstration.

But yet if authors cannot be prevailed with to quit the looser, though more insinuating ways of writing; if they will not think fit to keep close to truth and instruction by unvaried terms, and plain unsophisticated arguments; yet it concerns readers not to be imposed on by fallacies, and the prevailing ways of insinuation. To do this, the surest and most effectual remedy is to fix in the mind the clear and distinct ideas of the question stripped of words; and so likewise in the train of argumentation, to take up the author's ideas, neglecting his words, observing how they connect or separate those in the question. He that does this will be able to cast off all that is superfluous; he will see what is pertinent, what coherent, what is direct to, what slides by, the question. This will readily show him all the foreign ideas in the discourse, and where they were brought in; and though they perhaps dazzled the writer; yet he will perceive that they give no light nor strength to his reasonings.

This, though it be the shortest and easiest way of reading books with profit, and keeping one's self from being misled by great names or plausible discourses; yet it being hard and tedious to those who have not accustomed themselves to it; it is not to be expected that every one (amongst those few who really pursue truth) should this way guard his understanding from being imposed on by the wilful, or at least undesigned sophistry, which creeps into most of the books of argument. They, that write against their conviction, or that, next to them, are resolved to maintain the tenets of a party they are engaged in, cannot be supposed to reject any arms

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that may help to defend their cause, and therefore such should be read with the greatest caution. And they, who write for opinions they are sincerely persuaded of, and believe to be true, think they may so far allow themselves to indulge their laudable affection to truth, as to permit their esteem of it to give it the best colours, and set it off with the best expressions and dress they can, thereby to gain it the easiest entrance into the minds of their readers, and fix it deepest there.

One of those being the state of mind we may justly suppose most writers to be in, it is fit their readers, who apply to them for instruction, should not lay by that caution which becomes a sincere pursuit of truth, and should make them always watchful against whatever might conceal or misrepresent it. If they have not the skill of representing to themselves the author's sense by pure ideas separated from sounds, and thereby divested of the false lights and deceitful ornaments of speech; this yet they should do, they should keep the precise question steadily in their minds, carry it along with them through the whole discourse, and suffer not the least alteration in the terms, either by addition, subtraction, or substituting any other. This every one can do who has a mind to it; and he that has not a mind to it, it is plain, makes his understanding only the warehouse of other men's lumber; I mean false and unconcluding reasonings, rather than a repository of truth for his own use; which will prove substantial, and stand him in stead, when he has occasion for it. And whether such an one deals fairly by his own mind, and conducts his own understanding right, I leave to his own understanding to judge.

Fundamental verities.

§. 43. The mind of man being very narrow, and so slow in making acquaintance with things, and taking in new truths, that no one man is capable, in a much longer life than ours, to know all truths; it becomes our prudence, in our search after knowledge, to employ our thoughts about fundamental and material questions, carefully avoiding those that are trifling, and not suffering ourselves to be diverted from our main even purpose, by those that are

merely

merely incidental. How much of many young men's time is thrown away in purely logical inquiries, I need not mention. This is no better than if a man, who was to be a painter, ſhould ſpend all his time in examining the threads of the ſeveral cloths he is to paint upon, and counting the hairs of each pencil and bruſh he intends to uſe in the laying on of his colours. Nay, it is much worſe than for a young painter to ſpend his apprenticeſhip in ſuch uſeleſs niceties; for he, at the end of all his pains to no purpoſe, finds that it is not painting, nor any help to it, and ſo is really to no purpoſe: whereas men deſigned for ſcholars have often their heads ſo filled and warmed with diſputes on logical queſtions, that they take thoſe airy uſeleſs notions for real and ſubſtantial knowledge, and think their underſtandings ſo well furniſhed with ſcience, that they need not look any farther into the nature of things, or deſcend to the mechanical drudgery of experiment and inquiry. This is ſo obvious a miſmanagement of the underſtanding, and that in the profeſſed way to knowledge, that it could not be paſſed by; to which might be joined abundance of queſtions, and the way of handling of them in the ſchools. What faults in particular of this kind, every man is, or may be guilty of, would be infinite to enumerate; it ſuffices to have ſhown that ſuperficial and ſlight diſcoveries and obſervations that contain nothing of moment in themſelves, nor ſerve as clues to lead us into farther knowledge, ſhould not be thought worth our ſearching after.

There are fundamental truths that lie at the bottom, the baſis upon which a great many others reſt, and in which they have their conſiſtency. Theſe are teeming truths, rich in ſtore, with which they furniſh the mind, and, like the lights of heaven, are not only beautiful and entertaining in themſelves, but give light and evidence to other things, that without them could not be ſeen or known. Such is that admirable diſcovery of Mr. Newton, that all bodies gravitate to one another, which may be counted as the baſis of natural philoſophy; which, of what uſe it is to the underſtanding of the great frame of our ſolar ſyſtem, he has to the aſtoniſhment

niſhment of the learned world ſhown; and how much farther it would guide us in other things, if rightly purſued, is not yet known. Our Saviour's great rule, that "we ſhould love our neighbour as ourſelves," is ſuch a fundamental truth for the regulating human ſociety, that, I think, by that alone, one might without difficulty determine all the caſes and doubts in ſocial morality. Theſe and ſuch as theſe are the truths we ſhould endeavour to find out, and ſtore our minds with. Which leads me to another thing in the conduct of the underſtanding that is no leſs neceſſary, viz.

Bottoming.

§. 44. To accuſtom ourſelves, in any queſtion propoſed, to examine and find out upon what it bottoms. Moſt of the difficulties that come in our way, when well conſidered and traced, lead us to ſome propoſition, which, known to be true, clears the doubt, and gives an eaſy ſolution of the queſtion; whilſt topical and ſuperficial arguments, of which there is ſtore to be found on both ſides, filling the head with variety of thoughts, and the mouth with copious diſcourſe, ſerve only to amuſe the underſtanding, and entertain company without coming to the bottom of the queſtion, the only place of reſt and ſtability for an inquiſitive mind, whoſe tendency is only to truth and knowledge.

For example, if it be demanded, whether the grand ſeignior can lawfully take what he will from any of his people? This queſtion cannot be reſolved without coming to a certainty, whether all men are naturally equal; for upon that it turns; and that truth well ſettled in the underſtanding, and carried in the mind through the various debates concerning the various rights of men in ſociety, will go a great way in putting an end to them, and ſhowing on which ſide the truth is.

Transferring of thoughts.

§. 45. There is ſcarce any thing more for the improvement of knowledge, for the eaſe of life, and the diſpatch of buſineſs, than for a man to be able to diſpoſe of his own thoughts; and there is ſcarce any thing harder in the whole conduct of the underſtanding than to get a full maſtery over it. The mind, in a waking man, has always ſome

object

object that it applies itself to; which, when we are lazy or unconcerned, we can easily change, and at pleasure transfer our thoughts to another, and from thence to a third, which has no relation to either of the former. Hence men forwardly conclude, and frequently say, nothing is so free as thought, and it were well it were so; but the contrary will be found true in several instances; and there are many cases wherein there is nothing more resty and ungovernable than our thoughts: They will not be directed what objects to pursue, nor be taken off from those they have once fixed on; but run away with a man in pursuit of those ideas they have in view, let him do what he can.

I will not here mention again what I have above taken notice of, how hard it is to get the mind, narrowed by a custom of thirty or forty years standing to a scanty collection of obvious and common ideas, to enlarge itself to a more copious stock, and grow into an acquaintance with those that would afford more abundant matter of useful contemplation; it is not of this I am here speaking. The inconveniency I would here represent, and find a remedy for, is the difficulty there is sometimes to transfer our minds from one subject to another, in cases where the ideas are equally familiar to us.

Matters, that are recommended to our thoughts by any of our passions, take possession of our minds with a kind of authority, and will not be kept out or dislodged; but, as if the passion that rules were, for the time, the sheriff of the place, and came with all the posse, the understanding is seized and taken with the object it introduces, as if it had a legal right to be alone considered there. There is scarce any body, I think, of so calm a temper who hath not some time found this tyranny on his understanding, and suffered under the inconvenience of it. Who is there almost, whose mind, at some time or other, love or anger, fear or grief, has not so fastened to some clog, that it could not turn itself to any other object? I call it a clog, for it hangs upon the mind so as to hinder its vigour and activity in the pursuit of other contemplations; and advances itself little or not at all in the knowledge of the thing which it so closely hugs and

and conſtantly pores on. Men thus poſſeſſed, are ſometimes as if they were ſo in the worſt ſenſe, and lay under the power of an inchantment. They ſee not what paſſes before their eyes; hear not the audible diſcourſe of the company; and when by any ſtrong application to them they are rouſed a little, they are like men brought to themſelves from ſome remote region; whereas in truth they come no farther than their ſecret cabinet within, where they have been wholly taken up with the puppet, which is for that time appointed for their entertainment. The ſhame that ſuch dumps cauſe to well-bred people, when it carries them away from the company, where they ſhould bear a part in the converſation, is a ſufficient argument, that it is a fault in the conduct of our underſtanding, not to have that power over it as to make uſe of it to thoſe purpoſes, and on thoſe occaſions wherein we have need of its aſſiſtance. The mind ſhould be always free and ready to turn itſelf to the variety of objects that occur, and allow them as much conſideration as ſhall for that time be thought fit. To be engroſſed ſo by one object, as not to be prevailed on to leave it for another that we judge fitter for our contemplation, is to make it of no uſe to us. Did this ſtate of mind remain always ſo, every one would, without ſcruple, give it the name of perfect madneſs; and whilſt it does laſt, at whatever intervals it returns, ſuch a rotation of thoughts about the ſame object no more carries us forward towards the attainment of knowledge, than getting upon a mill-horſe *whilſt he jogs on in his circular* track would carry a man a journey.

I grant ſomething muſt be allowed to legitimate paſſions, and to natural inclinations. Every man, beſides occaſional affections, has beloved ſtudies, and thoſe the mind will more cloſely ſtick to; but yet it is beſt that it ſhould be always at liberty, and under the free diſpoſal of the man, and to act how and upon what he directs. This we ſhould endeavour to obtain, unleſs we would be content with ſuch a flaw in our underſtanding, that ſometimes we ſhould be as it were without it; for it is very little better than ſo in caſes where we cannot make

uſe

uſe of it to thoſe purpoſes we would, and which ſtand in preſent need of it.

But before fit remedies can be thought on for this diſeaſe, we muſt know the ſeveral cauſes of it, and thereby regulate the cure, if we will hope to labour with ſucceſs.

One we have already inſtanced in, whereof all men that reflect have ſo general a knowledge, and ſo often an experience in themſelves, that nobody doubts of it. A prevailing paſſion ſo pins down our thoughts to the object and concern of it, that a man paſſionately in love cannot bring himſelf to think of his ordinary affairs, or a kind mother, drooping under the loſs of a child, is not able to bear a part as ſhe was wont in the diſcourſe of the company or converſation of her friends.

But though paſſion be the moſt obvious and general, yet it is not the only cauſe that binds up the underſtanding, and confines it for the time to one object, from which it will not be taken off.

Beſides this, we may often find that the underſtanding, when it has a while employed itſelf upon a ſubject which either chance, or ſome ſlight accident, offered to it, without the intereſt or recommendation of any paſſion; works itſelf into a warmth, and by degrees gets into a career, wherein, like a bowl down a hill, it increaſes its motion by going, and will not be ſtopped or diverted; though, when the heat is over, it ſees all this earneſt application was about a trifle not worth a thought, and all the pains employed about it loſt labour.

There is a third ſort, if I miſtake not, yet lower than this; it is a ſort of childiſhneſs, if I may ſo ſay, of the underſtanding, wherein, during the fit, it plays with and dandles ſome inſignificant puppet to no end, nor with any deſign at all, and yet cannot eaſily be got off from it. Thus ſome trivial ſentence, or a ſcrap of poetry, will ſometimes get into men's heads, and make ſuch a chiming there, that there is no ſtilling of it; no peace to be obtained, nor attention to any thing elſe, but this impertinent gueſt will take up the mind and poſſeſs the thoughts in ſpite of all endeavours to get rid of it. Whether every one hath experimented in them-

themselves this troublesome intrusion of some frisking ideas which thus importune the understanding, and hinder it from being better employed, I know not. But persons of very good parts, and those more than one, I have heard speak and complain of it themselves. The reason I have to make this doubt, is from what I have known in a case something of kin to this, though much odder, and that is of a sort of visions that some people have lying quiet, but perfectly awake, in the dark, or with their eyes shut. It is a great variety of faces, most commonly very odd ones, that appear to them in a train one after another; so that having had just the sight of the one, it immediately passes away to give place to another, that the same instant succeeds, and has as quick an exit as its leader; and so they march on in a constant succession; nor can any one of them by any endeavour be stopped or retained beyond the instant of its appearance, but is thrust out by its follower, which will have its turn. Concerning this fantastical phænomenon I have talked with several people, whereof some have been perfectly acquainted with it, and others have been so wholly strangers to it, that they could hardly be brought to conceive or believe it. I knew a lady of excellent parts, who had got past thirty without having ever had the least notice of any such thing; she was so great a stranger to it, that when she heard me and another talking of it, could scarce forbear thinking we bantered her; but some time after drinking a large dose of dilute tea, (as she was ordered by a physician) going to bed, she told us at next meeting, that she had now experimented what our discourse had much ado to persuade her of. She had seen a great variety of faces in a long train, succeeding one another, as we had described; they were all strangers and intruders, such as she had no acquaintance with before, nor sought after then; and as they came of themselves they went too; none of them stayed a moment, nor could be detained by all the endeavours she could use, but went on in their solemn procession, just appeared and then vanished. This odd phænomenon seems to have a mechanical cause, and to depend

upon

upon the matter and motion of the blood or animal ſpirits.

When the fancy is bound by paſſion, I know no way to ſet the mind free and at liberty, to proſecute what thoughts the man would make choice of, but to allay the preſent paſſion, or counterbalance it with another; which is an art to be got by ſtudy, and acquaintance with the paſſions.

Thoſe who find themſelves apt to be carried away with the ſpontaneous current of their own thoughts, not excited by any paſſion or intereſt, muſt be very wary and careful in all the inſtances of it to ſtop it, and never humour their minds in being thus triflingly buſy. Men know the value of their corporeal liberty, and therefore ſuffer not willingly fetters and chains to be put upon them. To have the mind captivated is, for the time, certainly the greater evil of the two, and deſerves our utmoſt care and endeavours to preſerve the freedom of our better part. In this caſe our pains will not be loſt; ſtriving and ſtruggling will prevail, if we conſtantly, on all ſuch occaſions, make uſe of it. We muſt never indulge theſe trivial attentions of thought; as ſoon as we find the mind makes itſelf a buſineſs of nothing, we ſhould immediately diſturb and check it, introduce new and more ſerious conſiderations, and not leave till we have beaten it off from the purſuit it was upon. This, at firſt, if we have let the contrary practice grow to an habit, will perhaps be difficult; but conſtant endeavours will by degrees prevail, and at laſt make it eaſy. And when a man is pretty well advanced, and can command his mind off at pleaſure from incidental and undeſigned purſuits, it may not be amiſs for him to go on farther, and make attempts upon meditations of greater moment, that at the laſt he may have a full power over his own mind, and be ſo fully maſter of his own thoughts, as to be able to transfer them from one ſubject to another, with the ſame eaſe that he can lay by any thing he has in his hand, and take ſomething elſe that he has a mind to in the room of it. This liberty of mind is of great uſe both in buſineſs and ſtudy,

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and he that has got it will have no ſmall advantage of eaſe and diſpatch in all that is the choſen and uſeful employment of his underſtanding.

The third and laſt way which I mentioned the mind to be ſometimes taken up with, I mean the chiming of ſome particular words or ſentence in the memory, and, as it were, making a noiſe in the head, and the like, ſeldom happens but when the mind is lazy, or very looſely and negligently employed. It were better indeed to be without ſuch impertinent and uſeleſs repetitions: any obvious idea, when it is roving careleſsly at a venture, being of more uſe, and apter to ſuggeſt ſomething worth conſideration, than the inſignificant buzz of purely empty ſounds. But ſince the rouſing of the mind, and ſetting the underſtanding on work with ſome degrees of vigour, does for the moſt part preſently ſet it free from theſe idle companions; it may not be amiſs, whenever we find ourſelves troubled with them, to make uſe of ſo profitable a remedy that is always at hand.

SOME THOUGHTS

CONCERNING

READING AND STUDY

FOR A

GENTLEMAN.

SOME THOUGHTS

CONCERNING

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GENTLEMAN.

READING is for the improvement of the underſtanding.

The improvement of the underſtanding is for two ends; firſt, for our own increaſe of knowledge; ſecondly, to enable us to deliver and make out that knowledge to others.

The latter of theſe, if it be not the chief end of ſtudy in a gentleman; yet it is at leaſt equal to the other, ſince the greateſt part of his buſineſs and uſefulneſs in the world is by the influence of what he ſays, or writes to others.

The extent of our knowledge cannot exceed the extent of our ideas. Therefore he, who would be univerſally knowing, muſt acquaint himſelf with the objects of all ſciences. But this is not neceſſary to a gentleman, whoſe proper calling is the ſervice of his country; and ſo is moſt properly concerned in moral and political knowledge; and thus the ſtudies, which more immediately belong to his calling, are thoſe which treat of virtues and vices, of civil ſociety, and the arts of government; and will take in alſo law and hiſtory.

It is enough for a gentleman to be furniſhed with the ideas belonging to his calling, which he will find in the books that treat of the matters above-mentioned.

But the next ſtep towards the improvement of his underſtanding, muſt be, to obſerve the connexion of theſe ideas in the propoſitions, which thoſe books hold forth, and pretend to teach as truths; which till a man can judge, whether they be truths or no, his underſtanding is but little improved; and he doth but think and talk after the books that he hath read, without having any knowledge thereby. And thus men of much reading are greatly learned, but may be little knowing.

The third and laſt ſtep therefore, in improving the underſtanding, is to find out upon what foundation any propoſition advanced bottoms; and to obſerve the connexion of the intermediate ideas, by which it is joined to that foundation, upon which it is erected, or that principle, from which it is derived. This, in ſhort, is right reaſoning; and by this way alone true knowledge is to be got by reading and ſtudying.

When a man, by uſe, hath got this faculty of obſerving and judging of the reaſoning and coherence of what he reads, and how it proves what it pretends to teach; he is then, and not till then, in the right way of improving his underſtanding, and enlarging his knowledge by reading.

But that, as I have ſaid, being not all that a gentleman ſhould aim at in reading, he ſhould farther take care to improve himſelf in the art alſo of ſpeaking, that ſo he may be able to make the beſt uſe of what he knows.

The art of ſpeaking well conſiſts chiefly in two things, viz. perſpicuity and right reaſoning.

Perſpicuity conſiſts in the uſing of proper terms for the ideas or thoughts, which he would have paſs from his own mind into that of another man. It is this, that gives them an eaſy entrance; and it is with delight, that men hearken to thoſe, whom they eaſily underſtand; whereas what is obſcurely ſaid, dying as it is ſpoken, is uſually not only loſt, but creates a prejudice in the hearer, as if he that ſpoke knew not what he ſaid, or was afraid to have it underſtood.

The way to obtain this, is to read ſuch books as are allowed to be writ with the greateſt clearneſs and propriety,

priety, in the language that a man uſes. An author excellent in this faculty, as well as ſeveral others, is Dr. Tillotſon, late archbiſhop of Canterbury, in all that is publiſhed of his. I have choſen rather to propoſe this pattern, for the attainment of the art of ſpeaking clearly, than thoſe who give rules about it; ſince we are more apt to learn by example, than by direction. But if any one hath a mind to conſult the maſters in the art of ſpeaking and writing, he may find in Tully "De Oratore," and another treatiſe of his called, Orator; and in Quintilian's Inſtitutions; and Boileau's "Traité du Sublime" *; *inſtructions concerning this*, and the other parts of ſpeaking well.

Beſides perſpicuity, there muſt be alſo right reaſoning; without which, perſpicuity ſerves but to expoſe the ſpeaker. And for the attaining of this, I ſhould propoſe the conſtant reading of Chillingworth, who by his example will teach both perſpicuity, and the way of right reaſoning, better than any book that I know; and therefore will deſerve to be read upon that account over and over again; not to ſay any thing of his argument.

Beſides theſe books in Engliſh, Tully, Terence, Virgil, Livy, and Cæſar's Commentaries, may be read to form one's mind to a reliſh of a right way of ſpeaking and writing.

The books I have hitherto mentioned have been in order only to writing and ſpeaking well; not but that they will deſerve to be read upon other accounts.

The ſtudy of morality, I have above mentioned as that that becomes a gentleman; not barely as a man, but in order to his buſineſs as a gentleman. Of this there are books enough writ both by antient and modern philoſophers; but the morality of the goſpel doth ſo exceed them all, that, to give a man a full knowledge of true morality, I ſhall ſend him to no other book, but the New Teſtament. But if he hath a mind to ſee how far the heathen world carried that ſcience, and whereon they bottomed their ethics, he will be delightfully and

* That treatiſe is a tranſlation from Longinus.

profitably entertained in Tully's Treatiſes "De Officiis."

Politics contains two parts, very different the one from the other. The one, containing the original of ſocieties, and the riſe and extent of political power; the other, the art of governing men in ſociety.

The firſt of theſe hath been ſo bandied amongſt us, for theſe ſixty years backward, that one can hardly miſs books of this kind. Thoſe, which I think are moſt talked of in Engliſh, are the firſt book of Mr. Hooker's "Eccleſiaſtical Polity," and Mr. Algernon Sydney's "Diſcourſes concerning Government." The latter of theſe I never read. Let me here add, "Two Treatiſes of Government," printed in 1690 *; and a Treatiſe of "Civil Polity," printed this year †. To theſe one may add, Puffendorf "De Officio Hominis & Civis," and "De Jure Naturali & Gentium;" which laſt is the beſt book of that kind.

As to the other part of politics, which concerns the art of government; that, I think, is beſt to be learned by experience and hiſtory, eſpecially that of a man's own country. And therefore I think an Engliſh gentleman ſhould be well verſed in the hiſtory of England, taking his riſe as far back as there are any records of it; joining with it the laws that were made in the ſeveral ages, as he goes along in his hiſtory; that he may obſerve from thence the ſeveral turns of ſtate, and how they have been produced. In Mr. Tyrrel's Hiſtory of England, he will find all along thoſe ſeveral authors which have treated of our affairs, and which he may have recourſe to, concerning any point, which either his curioſity or judgment ſhall lead him to inquire into.

With the hiſtory, he may alſo do well to read the antient lawyers; ſuch as Bracton, "Fleta," Henningham, "Mirror of Juſtice," my lord Coke's "Second Inſtitutes," and the "Modus tenendi Parliamentum;" and others of that kind which he may find quoted in

* Theſe two treatiſes are written by Mr. Locke himſelf.

† "Civil Polity. A treatiſe concerning the nature of government," &c. London 1703, in 8vo. Written by Peter Paxton, M. D.

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the late controverſies between Mr. Petit, Mr. Tyrrel, Mr. Atwood, &c. with Dr. Brady; as alſo, I ſuppoſe, in Sedler's Treatiſe of "Rights of the Kingdom, and "Cuſtoms of our Anceſtors," whereof the firſt edition is the beſt; wherein he will find the antient conſtitution of the government of England.

There are two volumes of "State Tracts" printed ſince the revolution, in which there are many things relating to the government of England *.

As for general hiſtory, Sir Walter Raleigh, and Dr. Howel, are books to be had. He, who hath a mind to launch farther into that ocean, may conſult Whear's "Methodus legendi Hiſtorias," of the laſt edition; which will direct him to the authors he is to read, and the method wherein he is to read them.

To the reading of hiſtory, chronology and geography are abſolutely neceſſary.

In geography, we have two general ones in Engliſh, Heylin and Moll; which is the beſt of them, I know not; having not been much converſant in either of them. But the laſt, I ſhould think to be of moſt uſe; becauſe of the new diſcoveries that are made every day, tending to the perfection of that ſcience. Though, I believe, that the countries, which Heylin mentions, are better treated of by him, bating what new diſcoveries ſince his time have added.

Theſe two books contain geography in general, but whether an Engliſh gentleman would think it worth his time to beſtow much pains upon that; though without it he cannot well underſtand a Gazette; it is certain he cannot well be without Camden's "Britannia," which is much enlarged in the laſt Engliſh edition. A good collection of maps is alſo neceſſary.

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* We have now two collections of ſtate tracts; one, in two volumes in folio, printed in 1689 and 1692, contains "ſeveral treatiſes relating to the government from the year 1660 to 1689; and the other, in three volumes in folio, printed in 1705, 1706, and 1707, is a "Collection of tracts, publiſhed on occaſion of the late revolution in 1688, and during the reign of K. William III." Theſe collections might have been made more complete and more convenient; eſpecially the firſt, which is extremely defective and incorrect.

To

To geography, books of travels may be added. In that kind, the collections made by our countrymen, Hackluyt and Purchas, are very good. There is alſo a very good collection made by Thevenot in folio, in French; and by Ramuzio, in Italian; whether tranſlated into Engliſh or no, I know not. There are alſo ſeveral good books of travels of Engliſhmen publiſhed, as Sandys, Roe, Brown, Gage, and Dampier.

There are alſo ſeveral voyages in French, which are very good, as Pyrard *, Bergeron †, Sagard ‡, Bernier ‖, &c. whether all of them are tranſlated into Engliſh, I know not.

There is at preſent a very good "collection of voyages and travels," never before in Engliſh, and ſuch as are out of print; now printing by Mr. Churchill ¶.

There are beſides theſe a vaſt number of other travels; a ſort of books that have a very good mixture of delight and uſefulneſs. To ſet them down all, would take up too much time and room. Thoſe I have mentioned are enough to begin with.

As to chronology, I think Helvicus the beſt for common uſe; which is not a book to be read, but to lie by, and be conſulted upon occaſion. He that hath a mind to look farther into chronology, may get Tallent's "Tables," and Strauchius's "Breviarium Temporum," and may to thoſe add Scaliger "De Emendatione Temporum," and Petavius, if he hath a mind to engage deeper in that ſtudy.

Thoſe, who are accounted to have writ beſt particular parts of our Engliſh hiſtory, are Bacon, of Henry

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* "Voyage de Francois Pyrard de Laval. Contenant ſa navigation aux Indes Orientales, Maldives, Moluques, Breſil." Paris 1619, 8vo, 3d edit.

† "Relation des voyages en Tartarie, &c. Le tout recueilli par Pierre Bergeron. Paris 1634, 8vo."

‡ "Le grand voyage des Hurons, ſitués en l'Amerique, &c. Par F. Gab. Sagard Theodat." Paris 1632, 8vo.

‖ "Memoires de l'empire du Grand Mogol, &c. par Francois Bernier. Paris 1670 & 1671, 3 vol. in 12mo.

¶ That collection of voyages and travels was publiſhed an. 1704, in 4 vol. in fol.

VII;

VII; and Herbert of Henry VIII. Daniel alſo is commended; and Burnet's "Hiſtory of the Reformation."

Mariana's "Hiſtory of Spain," and Thuanus's "Hiſtory of his own Time," and Philip de Comines; are of great and deſerved reputation.

There are alſo ſeveral French and Engliſh memoirs and collections, ſuch as la Rochefoucault, Melvil, Ruſhworth, &c. which give a great light to thoſe who have a mind to look into what hath paſt in Europe this laſt age.

To fit a gentleman for the conduct of himſelf, whether as a private man, or as intereſted in the government of his country, nothing can be more neceſſary than the knowledge of men; which, though it be to be had chiefly from experience, and, next to that, from a judicious reading of hiſtory; yet there are books that of purpoſe treat of human nature, which help to give an inſight into it. Such are thoſe treating of the paſſions, and how they are moved; whereof Ariſtotle in his ſecond book of Rhetoric hath admirably diſcourſed, and that in a little compaſs. I think this Rhetoric is tranſlated into Engliſh; if not, it may be had in Greek and Latin together.

La Bruyere's "Characters" are alſo an admirable piece of painting; I think it is alſo tranſlated out of French into Engliſh.

Satyrical writings alſo, ſuch as Juvenal, and Perſius, and above all Horace; though they paint the deformities of men, yet they thereby teach us to know them.

There is another uſe of reading, which is for diverſion and delight. Such are poetical writings, eſpecially dramatic, if they be free from prophaneneſs, obſcenity, and what corrupts good manners; for ſuch pitch ſhould not be handled.

Of all the books of fiction, I know none that equals "Cervantes's Hiſtory of Don Quixote" in uſefulneſs, pleaſantry, and a conſtant decorum. And indeed no writings can be pleaſant, which have not nature at the bottom, and are not drawn after her copy.

There is another ſort of books, which I had almoſt forgot, with which a gentleman's ſtudy ought to be well

ſur-

furnished, viz. dictonaries of all kinds. For the Latin tongue, Littleton, Cooper, Calepin, and Robert Stephens's "Thesaurus Linguæ Latinæ," and "Vossii "Etymologicum Linguæ Latinæ." Skinner's "Lexi-"con Etymologicum," is an excellent one of that kind, for the English tongue. Cowel's "Interpreter" is useful for the law terms. Spelman's "Glossary" is a very useful and learned book. And Selden's "Titles of "Honour," a gentleman should not be without. Baudrand hath a very good "Geographical Dictionary." And there are several historical ones, which are of use; as Lloyd's, Hoffman's, Moreri's. And Bayle's incomparable dictionary, is something of the same kind. He that hath occasion to look into books written in Latin since the decay of the Roman empire, and the purity of the Latin tongue, cannot be well without Du Cange's "Glossarium mediæ & infimæ Latinitatis."

Among the books above set down, I mentioned Vossius's "Etymologicum Linguæ Latinæ;" all his works are lately printed in Holland in six tomes. They are fit books for a gentleman's library, containing very learned discourses concerning all the sciences.

E I E.

E L E M E N T S

OF

NATURAL PHILOSOPHY.

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ELEMENTS

OF

NATURAL PHILOSOPHY.

CHAP. I.

Of Matter and Motion.

MATTER is an extended ſolid ſubſtance; which being comprehended under diſtinct ſurfaces, makes ſo many particular diſtinct bodies.

Motion is ſo well known by the ſight and touch, that to uſe words to give a clear idea of it, would be in vain.

Matter, or body, is indifferent to motion, or reſt.

There is as much force required to put a body, which is in motion, at reſt; as there is to ſet a body, which is at reſt, into motion.

No parcel of matter can give itſelf either motion or reſt, and therefore a body at reſt will remain ſo eternally, except ſome external cauſe puts it in motion; and a body in motion will move eternally, unleſs ſome external cauſe ſtops it.

A body in motion will always move on in a ſtraight line, unleſs it be turned out of it by ſome external cauſe; becauſe a body can no more alter the determination of its motion, than it can begin it, alter or ſtop its motion itſelf.

The ſwitneſs of motion is meaſured by diſtance of place, and length of time wherein it is performed. For inſtance, if A and B, bodies of equal or different bigneſs, move each of them an inch in the ſame time; their motions are equally ſwift; but if A moves two inches, in

in the time whilst B is moving one inch; the motion of A is twice as swift as that of B.

The quantity of motion is measured by the swiftness of the motion, and the quantity of the matter moved, taken together. For instance, if A, a body equal to B, moves as swift as B; then it hath an equal quantity of motion. If A hath twice as much matter as B, and moves equally as swift, it hath double the quantity of motion; and so in proportion.

It appears, as far as human observation reaches, to be a settled law of nature, that all bodies have a tendency, attraction, or gravitation towards one another.

The same force, applied to two different bodies, produces always the same quantity of motion in each of them. For instance, let a boat which with its lading is one ton, be tied at a distance to another vessel, which with its lading is twenty-six tons; if the rope that ties them together be pulled, either in the less or bigger of these vessels, the less of the two, in their approach one to another, will move twenty-six feet, while the other moves but one foot.

Wherefore the quantity of matter in the earth being twenty-six times more than in the moon; the motion in the moon towards the earth, by the common force of attraction, by which they are impelled towards one another, will be twenty-six times as fast as in the earth; that is, the moon will move twenty-six miles towards the earth, for every mile the earth moves towards the moon.

Hence it is, that, in this natural tendency of bodies towards one another, that in the lesser is considered as gravitation; and that in the bigger as attraction; because the motion of the lesser body (by reason of its much greater swiftness) is alone taken notice of.

This attraction is the strongest, the nearer the attracting bodies are to each other; and, in different distances of the same bodies, is reciprocally in the duplicate proportion of those distances. For instance, if two bodies, at a given distance, attract each other with a certain force, at half the distance, they will attract each other

other with four times that force; at one third of the distance, with nine times that force; and so on.

Two bodies at a distance will put one another into motion by the force of attraction; which is inexplicable by us, though made evident to us by experience, and so to be taken as a principle in natural philosophy.

Supposing then the earth the sole body in the universe, and at rest; if God should create the moon, at the same distance that it is now from the earth; the earth and the moon would presently begin to move one towards another in a straight line by this motion of attraction or gravitation.

If a body, that by the attraction of another would move in a straight line towards it, receives a new motion any ways oblique to the first; it will no longer move in a straight line, according to either of those directions; but in a curve that will partake of both. And this curve will differ, according to the nature and quantity of the forces that concurred to produce it; as, for instance, in many cases it will be such a curve as ends where it began, or recurs into itself; that is, makes up a circle, or an ellipsis or oval very little differing from a circle.

CHAP. II.

Of the Universe.

TO any one, who looks about him in the world, there are obvious several distinct masses of matter, separate from one another; some whereof have discernible motions. These are the sun, the fixt stars, the comets and the planets, amongst which this earth, which we inhabit, is one. All these are visible to our naked eyes.

Besides these, telescopes have discovered several fixt stars, invisible to the naked eye; and several other bodies moving about some of the planets; all which were invisible and unknown, before the use of perspective-glasses were found.

The vast distances between these great bodies, are called intermundane spaces; in which though there may be some fluid matter, yet it is so thin and subtile, and there is so little of that in respect of the great masses that move in those spaces, that it is as much as nothing.

These masses of matter are either luminous, or opake or dark.

Luminous bodies, are such as give light of themselves; and such are the sun and the fixt stars.

Dark or opake bodies, are such as emit no light of themselves, though they are capable of reflecting of it, when it is cast upon them from other bodies; and such are the planets.

There are some opake bodies, as for instance the comets, which, besides the light that they may have from the sun, seem to shine with a light that is nothing else but an accension, which they receive from the sun, in their near approaches to it, in their respective revolutions.

The fixt stars are called fixt, because they always keep the same distance one from another.

The sun, at the same distance from us that the fixt stars are, would have the appearance of one of the fixt stars.

C H A P. III.

Of our Solar System.

OUR solar system consists of the sun, and the planets and comets moving about it.

The planets are bodies, which appear to us like stars; not that they are luminous bodies, that is, have light in themselves; but they shine by reflecting the light of the sun.

They are called planets from a Greek word, which signifies wandering; because they change their places, and do not always keep the same distance with one another, nor with the fixt stars, as the fixt stars do.

The planets are either primary, or secondary.

There

There are six primary planets, viz. Mercury, Venus, the Earth, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn.

All these move round the sun, which is, as it were, the centre of their motions.

The secondary planets move round about other planets. Besides the moon, which moves about the earth, four moons move about Jupiter, and five about Saturn, which are called their satellites.

The middle distances of the primary planets from the sun are as follows:

Mercury	Is distant from the sun's centre, about	32,000,000	Statute miles, each 5280 English and 4943 French feet.
Venus		59,000,000	
The Earth		81,000,000	
Mars		123,000,000	
Jupiter		424,000,000	
Saturn		777,000,000	

The orbits of the planets, and their respective distances from the sun, and from one another, together with the orbit of a comet, may be seen in the figure of the solar system hereunto annexed.

The periodical times of each planet's revolution about the sun are as follows:

		Y.	D.	H.	M.
Mercury	Revolves about the Sun, in the space of	0	88	0	0
Venus		0	225	0	0
The Earth		0	365	5	49
Mars		1	322	0	0
Jupiter		11	319	0	0
Saturn		29	138	0	0

The planets move round about the sun from west to east in the zodiac; or, to speak plainer, are always found amongst some of the stars of those constellations, which make the twelve signs of the zodiac.

The motion of the planets about the sun is not perfectly circular, but rather elliptical.

The reason of their motions in curve lines, is the attraction of the sun, or their gravitations towards the sun,

(call it which you pleaſe); and an oblique or ſide-long impulſe or motion.

Theſe two motions or tendencies, the one always endeavouring to carry them in a ſtraight line from the circle they move in, and the other endeavouring to draw them in a ſtraight line to the ſun, makes that curve line they revolve in.

The motion of the comets about the ſun is in a very long ſlender oval: whereof one of the focuſes is the centre of the ſun, and the other very much beyond the ſphere of Saturn.

The moon moves about the earth, as the earth doth about the ſun. So that it hath the centre of its motion in the earth; as the earth hath the centre of its revolution in the ſun, about which it moves.

The moon makes its ſynodical motion about the earth, in 29 days, 12 hours, and about 44 minutes.

It is full moon, when, the earth being between the ſun and the moon, we ſee all the enlightened part of the moon; new moon, when, the moon being between us and the ſun, its enlightened part is turned from us; and half moon, when the moon being in the quadratures, as the aſtronomers call it, we ſee but half the enlightened part.

An eclipſe of the moon is, when the earth, being between the ſun and the moon, hinders the light of the ſun from falling upon, and being reflected by, the moon. If the light of the ſun is kept off from the whole body of the moon, it is a total eclipſe; if from a part only, it is a partial one.

An eclipſe of the ſun is, when the moon, being between the ſun and the earth, hinders the light of the ſun from coming to us. If the moon hides from us the whole body of the ſun, it is a total eclipſe; if not, a partial one.

Our ſolar ſyſtem is diſtant from the fixt ſtars 20,000,000,000 ſemi-diameters of the earth; or, as Mr. Huygens expreſſes the diſtance, in his Coſmotheoros *: the fixt ſtars are ſo remote from the earth, that,

* Chriſtiani Huygenii ΚΟΣΜΟΘΕΩΡΟΣ, ſive de terris cœleſtibus earumque ornatu, conjecturæ, &c. p. m. 137.

if a cannon-bullet ſhould come from one of the fixt ſtars with as ſwift a motion as it hath when it is ſhot out of the mouth of a cannon, it would be 700,000 years in coming to the earth.

This vaſt diſtance ſo much abates the attraction to thoſe remote bodies, that its operation upon thoſe of our ſyſtem is not at all ſenſible, nor would draw away or hinder the return of any of our ſolar comets; though ſome of them ſhould go ſo far from the ſun, as not to make the revolution about it in leſs than 1000 years.

It is more ſuitable to the wiſdom, power, and greatneſs of God, to think that the fixt ſtars are all of them ſuns, with ſyſtems of inhabitable planets moving about them, to whoſe inhabitants he diſplays the marks of his goodneſs as well as to us; rather than to imagine that thoſe very remote bodies, ſo little uſeful to us, were made only for our ſake.

CHAP. IV.

Of the Earth, conſidered as a Planet.

THE earth, by its revolution about the ſun in 365 days, 5 hours, 49 minutes, makes that ſpace of time we call a year.

The line, which the centre of the earth deſcribes in its annual revolution about the ſun, is called ecliptic.

The annual motion of the earth about the ſun, is in the order of the ſigns of the zodiac; that is, ſpeaking vulgarly, from weſt to eaſt.

Beſides this annual revolution of the earth about the ſun in the ecliptic, the earth turns round upon its own axis in 24 hours.

The turning of the earth upon its own axis every 24 hours, whilſt it moves round the ſun in a year, we may conceive by the running of a bowl on a bowling-green; in which not only the centre of the bowl hath a progreſſive motion on the green; but the bowl in its going forward, from one part of the green to another, turns round about its own axis.

The turning of the earth on its own axis, makes the difference of day and night; it being day in those parts of the earth which are turned towards the sun; and night in those parts which are in the shade, or turned from the sun.

The annual revolution of the earth in the ecliptic, is the cause of the different seasons, and of the several lengths of days and nights, in every part of the world, in the course of the year.

The reason of it, is the earth's going round its own axis in the ecliptic, but at the same time keeping every where its axis equally inclined to the plane of the ecliptic, and parallel to itself. For the plane of the ecliptic inclining to the plane of the equator, 23 degrees and an half, makes that the earth, moving round in the ecliptic, hath sometimes one of its poles, and sometimes the other, nearer the sun.

If the diameter of the sun be to the diameter of the earth, as 48 to 1, as by some it is accounted; then the disk of the sun, speaking "numero rotundo," is above 2000 times bigger than the disk of the earth; and the globe of the sun is above 100,000 times bigger than the globe of the earth.

The distance of the earth's orbit from the sun, is above 200,000 semi-diameters of the earth.

If a cannon-bullet should come from the sun, with the same velocity it hath when it is shot out of the mouth of a cannon, it would be 25 years in coming to the earth.

CHAP. V.

Of the Air and Atmosphere.

WE have already considered the earth as a planet, or one of the great masses of matter moving about the sun; we shall now consider it as it is made up of its several parts, abstractedly from its diurnal and annual motions.

The

The exterior part of this our habitable world is the air or atmosphere; a light, thin fluid, or springy body, that encompasses the solid earth on all sides.

The height of the atmosphere, above the surface of the solid earth, is not certainly known; but that it doth reach but to a very small part of the distance betwixt the earth and the moon, may be concluded from the refraction of the rays coming from the sun, moon, and other luminous bodies.

Though considering that the air we are in, being near 1000 times lighter than water; and that the higher it is, the less it is compressed by the superior incumbent air, and so consequently being a springy body the thinner it is; and considering also that a pillar of air of any diameter is equal in weight to a pillar of quicksilver of the same diameter of between 29 and 30 inches height; we may infer that the top of the atmosphere is not very near the surface of the solid earth.

It may be concluded, that the utmost extent of the atmosphere reaches upwards, from the surface of the solid earth that we walk on, to a good distance above us; first, if we consider that a column of air of any given diameter is equiponderant to a column of quicksilver of between 29 and 30 inches height. Now quicksilver being near 14 times heavier than water, if air was as heavy as water, the atmosphere would be about 14 times higher than the column of quicksilver, i. e. about 35 feet.

Secondly, if we consider that air is 1000 times lighter than water, then a pillar of air equal in weight to a pillar of quicksilver of 30 inches high will be 35000 feet; whereby we come to know that the air or atmosphere is 35000 feet, i. e. near seven miles high.

Thirdly, if we consider that the air is a springy body, and that that, which is nearest the earth, is compressed by the weight of all the atmosphere that is above it, and rests perpendicularly upon it; we shall find that the air here, near the surface of the earth, is much denser and thicker than it is in the upper parts. For example, if upon a fleece of wool you lay another; the under one will be a little compressed by the weight of that which

lies upon it; and so both of them by a third, and so on; so that, if 10000 were piled one upon another, the under one would by the weight of all the rest be very much compressed, and all the parts of it be brought abundantly closer together, than when there was no other upon it; and the next to that a little less compressed, the third a little less than the second, and so on till it came to the uppermost, which would be in its full expansion, and not compressed at all. Just so it is in the air; the higher you go in it, the less it is compressed, and consequently the less dense it is; and so the upper part being exceedingly thinner than the lower part, which we breathe in (which is that that is 1000 times lighter than water); the top of the atmosphere is probably much higher than the distance above assigned.

That the air near the surface of the earth will mightily expand itself, when the pressure of the incumbent atmosphere is taken off, may be abundantly seen in the experiments made by Mr. Boyle in his pneumatic engine. In his "Physico-mechanical Experiments," concerning the air, he declares * it probable that the atmosphere may be several hundred miles high; which is easy to be admitted, when we consider what he proves in another part of the same treatise, viz. that the air here about the surface of the earth, when the pressure is taken from it, will dilate itself about 152 times.

The atmosphere is the scene of the meteors; and therein is collected the matter of rain, hail, snow, thunder, and lightning; and a great many other things observable in the air.

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* New Experiments Physico-mechanical, touching the spring of the air, and its effects; (made for the most part in a new pneumatical engine) written .... by the honourable ROBERT BOYLE, Esq; experiment xxxvi, p. 155, Oxford, 1662, in 4to.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Of Meteors in general.

BESIDES the springy particles of pure air, the atmosphere is made up of several steams or minute particles of several sorts, rising from the earth and the waters, and floating in the air, which is a fluid body, and though much finer and thinner, may be considered in respect of its fluidity to be like water, and so capable, like other liquors, of having heterogeneous particles floating in it.

The most remarkable of them are, first, the particles of water raised into the atmosphere, chiefly by the heat of the sun, out of the sea and other waters, and the surface of the earth; from whence it falls in dew, rain, hail, and snow.

Out of the vapours rising from moisture, the clouds are principally made.

Clouds do not consist wholly of watery parts; for, besides the aqueous vapours that are raised into the air, there are also sulphureous and saline particles that are raised up, and in the clouds mixed with the aqueous particles, the effects whereof are sometimes very sensible; as particularly in lightning and thunder, when the sulphureous and nitrous particles firing break out with that violence of light and noise, which is observable in thunder, and very much resembles gun-powder.

That there are nitrous particles raised into the air is evident from the nourishment which rain gives to vegetables more than any other water; and also by the collection of nitre or salt-petre in heaps of earth, out of which it has been extracted, if they be exposed to the air, so as to be kept from rain; not to mention other efforts, wherein the nitrous spirit in the air shows itself.

Clouds are the greatest and most considerable of all the meteors, as furnishing matter and plenty to the earth. They consist of very small drops of water, and are elevated a good distance above the surface of the earth;

earth; for a cloud is nothing but a mist flying high in the air, as a mist is nothing but a cloud here below.

How vapours are raised into the air in invisible steams by the heat of the sun out of the sea, and moist parts of the earth, is easily understood; and there is a visible instance of it in ordinary distillations. But how these steams are collected into drops, which bring back the water again, is not so easy to determine.

To those that will carefully observe, perhaps it will appear probable, that it is by that, which the chymists call precipitation; to which it answers in all its parts.

The air may be looked on as a clear and pellucid menstruum, in which the insensible particles of dissolved matter float up and down, without being discerned, or troubling the pellucidity of the air; when on a sudden, as if it were by a precipitation, they gather into the very small but visible misty drops that make clouds.

This may be observed sometimes in a very clear sky; when, there not appearing any cloud, or any thing opake, in the whole horizon, one may see on a sudden clouds gather, and all the hemisphere overcast; which cannot be from the rising of the new aqueous vapours at that time, but from the precipitation of the moisture, that in invisible particles floated in the air, into very small, but very visible drops, which by a like cause being united into greater drops, they become too heavy to be sustained in the air, and so fall down in rain.

Hail seems to be the drops of rain frozen in their falling.

Snow is the small particles of water frozen before they unite into drops.

The regular figures, which branch out in flakes of snow, seem to show that there are some particles of salt mixed with the water, which makes them unite in certain angles.

The rain-bow is reckoned one of the most remarkable meteors, though really it be no meteor at all; but the reflection of the sun-beams from the smallest drops of a cloud or mist, which are placed in a certain angle made by the concurrence of two lines, one drawn from the sun, and the other from the eye to these little drops in the

the cloud, which reflect the ſun-beams; ſo that two people, looking upon a rainbow at the ſame time, do not ſee exactly the ſame rainbow.

CHAP. VII.

Of Springs, Rivers, and the Sea.

PART of the water that falls down from the clouds, runs away upon the ſurface of the earth into channels, which convey it to the ſea; and part of it is imbibed in the ſpungy ſhell of the earth, from whence ſinking lower by degrees, it falls down into ſubterranean channels, and ſo under ground paſſes into the ſea; or elſe, meeting with beds of rock or clay, it is hindered from ſinking lower, and ſo breaks out in ſprings, which are moſt commonly in the ſides, or at the bottom of hilly ground.

Springs make little rivulets; thoſe united make brooks; and thoſe coming together make rivers, which empty themſelves into the ſea.

The ſea is a great collection of waters in the deep valleys of the earth. If the earth were all plain, and had not thoſe deep hollows, the earth would be all covered with water; becauſe the water, being lighter than the earth, would be above the earth, as the air is above the water.

The moſt remarkable thing in the ſea is that motion of the water called tides. It is a riſing and falling of the water of the ſea. The cauſe of this is the attraction of the moon, whereby the part of the water in the great ocean, which is neareſt the moon, being moſt ſtrongly attracted, is raiſed higher than the reſt; and the part oppoſite to it on the contrary ſide, being leaſt attracted, is alſo higher than the reſt. And theſe two oppoſite riſes of the ſurface of the water in the great ocean, following the motion of the moon from eaſt to weſt, and ſtriking againſt the large coaſts of the continents that lie in its way; from thence rebounds back again, and ſo makes floods and ebbs in narrow ſeas, and rivers remote

remote from the great ocean. Herein we also see the reason of the times of the tides, and why they so constantly follow the course of the moon.

CHAP. VIII.

Of several sorts of Earth, Stones, Metals, Minerals, and other Fossils.

THIS solid globe we live upon is called the earth, though it contains in it a great variety of bodies, several whereof are not properly earth; which word, taken in a more limited sense, signifies such parts of this globe as are capable, being exposed to the air, to give rooting and nourishment to plants, so that they may stand and grow in it. With such earth as this, the greatest part of the surface of this globe is covered; and it is as it were the store-house, from whence all the living creatures of our world have originally their provisions; for from thence all the plants have their sustenance, and some few animals, and from these all the other animals.

Of earth, taken in this sense, there are several sorts, v. g. common mould, or garden earth, clay of several kinds, sandy soils.

Besides these, there is medicinal earth; as that which is called terra lemnia, bolus armena, and divers others.

After the several earths, we may consider the parts of the surface of this globe, which is barren; and such, for the most, are sand, gravel, chalk, and rocks, which produce nothing, where they have no earth mixt amongst them. Barren sands are of divers kinds, and consist of several little irregular stones without any earth; and of such there are great deserts to be seen in several parts of the world.

Besides these, which are most remarkable on the surface of the earth, there are found deeper, in this globe, many other bodies, which, because we discover by digging into the bowels of the earth, are called by one common name, fossils; under which are comprehended metals,

metals, minerals, or half metals, stones of divers kinds, and sundry bodies that have the texture between earth and stone.

To begin with those fossils which come nearest the earth; under this head we may reckon the several sorts of oker, chalk, that which they call black-lead, and other bodies of this kind, which are harder than earth, but have not the consistency and hardness of perfect stone.

Next to these may be considered stones of all sorts; whereof there is almost an infinite variety. Some of the most remarkable, either for beauty or use, are these: marble of all kinds, porphyry, granate, free-stone, &c. flints, agates, cornelians, pebbles, under which kind come the precious stones, which are but pebbles of an excessive hardness, and when they are cut and polished, they have an extraordinary lustre. The most noted and esteemed are, diamonds, rubies, amethysts, emeralds, topazes, opals.

Besides these, we must not omit those which, though of not so much beauty, yet are of greater use, viz. load-stones, whetstones of all kinds, limestones, calamine, or lapis calaminaris; and abundance of others.

Besides these, there are found in the earth several sorts of salts, as eating or common salt, vitriol, sal gemma, and others.

The minerals, or semi-metals, that are dug out of the bowels of the earth, are antimony, cinnabar, zink, &c. to which may be added brimstone.

But the bodies of most use, that are sought for out of the depths of the earth, are the metals; which are distinguished from other bodies by their weight, fusibility, and malleableness; of which there are these sorts, gold, silver, copper, tin, lead, and, the most valuable of them all, iron; to which one may join that anomalous body quicksilver, or mercury.

He that desires to be more particularly informed concerning the qualities and properties of these subterraneous bodies, may consult natural historians and chymists.

What lies deeper towards the centre of the earth we know not, but a very little beneath the surface of this

globe; and whatever we fetch from under ground is only what is lodged in the ſhell of the earth.

All ſtones, metals, and minerals, are real vegetables; that is, grow organically from proper ſeeds, as well as plants.

CHAP. IX.

Of Vegetables, or Plants.

NEXT to the earth itſelf, we may conſider thoſe that are maintained on its ſurface; which, though they are faſtened to it, yet are very diſtinct from it; and thoſe are the whole tribe of vegetables or plants. Theſe may be divided into three ſorts, herbs, ſhrubs, and trees.

Herbs are thoſe plants whoſe ſtalks are ſoft, and have nothing woody in them, as graſs, ſowthiſtle, and hemlock. Shrubs and trees have all wood in them; but with this difference, that ſhrubs grow not to the height of trees, and uſually ſpread into branches near the ſurface of the earth; whereas trees generally ſhoot up in one great ſtem or body, and then, at a good diſtance from the earth, ſpread into branches; thus gooſeberries, and currants, are ſhrubs; oaks, and cherries, are trees.

In plants, the moſt conſiderable parts are theſe, the root, the ſtalk, the leaves, the flower, and the ſeed. There are very few of them that have not all theſe parts, though ſome there are that have no ſtalk; others that have no leaves; and others that have no flowers. But without ſeed or root I think there are none.

In vegetables, there are two things chiefly to be conſidered, their nouriſhment and propagation.

Their nouriſhment is thus: the ſmall and tender fibres of the roots, being ſpread under ground, imbibe, from the moiſt earth, juice fit for their nouriſhment; this is conveyed by the ſtalk up into the branches, and leaves, through little, and, in ſome plants, imperceptible tubes, and from thence, by the bark, returns again to the root; ſo that there is in vegetables, as well as animals, a circulation of the vital liquor. By what

impulſe

impulse it is moved, is somewhat hard to discover. It seems to be from the difference of day and night, and other changes in the heat of the air; for the heat dilating, and the cold contracting those little tubes, supposing there be valves in them, it is easy to be conceived how the circulation is performed in plants, where it is not required to be so rapid and quick as in animals.

Nature has provided for the propagation of the species of plants several ways. The first and general is by seed. Besides this, some plants are raised from any part of the root set in the ground; others by new roots that are propagated from the old one, as in tulips; others by offsets, and in others, the branches set in the ground will take root and grow; and last of all, grafting and inoculation, in certain sorts, are known ways of propagation. All these ways of increasing plants make one good part of the skill of gardening; and from the books of gardeners may be best learnt.

CHAP. X.

Of Animals.

THERE is another sort of creatures belonging to this our earth, rather as inhabitants than parts of it. They differ in this from plants, that they are not fixed to any one place, but have a freedom of motion up and down, and, besides, have sense to guide them in their motions.

Man and brute, divide all the animals of this our globe.

Brutes may be considered as either aerial, terrestrial, aquatic, or amphibious. I call those aerial, which have wings, wherewith they can support themselves in the air. Terrestrial, are those, whose only place of rest is upon the earth. Aquatic, are those, whose constant abode is upon the water. Those are called amphibious, which live freely in the air upon the earth, and yet are observed to live long upon the water, as if they were natural inhabitants of that element; though it be worth

the examination to know, whether any of those creatures that live at their ease, and by choice, a good while or at any time upon the earth, can live a long time together perfectly under water.

Aerial animals may be subdivided into birds, and flies.

Fishes, which are the chief part of aquatic animals, may be divided into shell-fishes, scaly fishes, and those that have neither apparent scales nor shells.

And the terrestrial animals may be divided into quadrupeds or beasts, reptiles, which have many feet, and serpents, which have no feet at all.

Insects, which in their several changes belong to several of the before-mentioned divisions, may be considered together as one great tribe of animals. They are called insects, from a separation in the middle of their bodies, whereby they are, as it were, cut into two parts, which are joined together by a small ligature; as we see in wasps, common flies, and the like.

Besides all these, there are some animals that are not perfectly of these kinds, but placed, as it were, in the middle betwixt two of them, by something of both; as bats, which have something of beasts and birds in them.

Some reptiles of the earth, and some of aquatics, want one or more of the senses, which are in perfecter animals; as worms, oysters, cockles, &c.

Animals are nourished by food, taken in at the mouth, digested in the stomach, and thence by fit vessels distributed over the whole body, as is described in books of anatomy.

The greatest part of animals have five senses, viz. seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, and feeling. These, and the way of nourishment of animals, we shall more particularly consider; because they are common to man with beasts.

The way of nourishment of animals, particularly of man, is by food taken in at the mouth, which being chewed there, is broken and mixed with the saliva, and thereby prepared for an easier and better digestion in the stomach.

When the stomach has performed its office upon the food, it protrudes it into the guts, by whose peristaltic motion

motion it is gently conveyed along through the guts, and, as it passes, the chyle, which is the nutritive part, is separated from the excrementitious, by the lacteal veins; and from thence conveyed into the blood, with which it circulates till itself be concocted into blood. The blood, being by the vena cava brought into the right ventricle of the heart, by the contraction of that muscle, is driven through the arteria pulmonaris into the lungs; where the constantly inspired air mixing with it, enlivens it; and from thence being conveyed by the vena pulmonaris into the left ventricle of the heart, the contraction of the heart forces it out, and, by the arteries, distributes it into all parts of the body; from whence it returns by the veins into the right ventricle of the heart, to take the same course again. This is called the circulation of the blood; by which life and heat are communicated to every part of the body.

In the circulation of the blood, a good part of it goes up into the head; and by the brains are separated from it, or made out of it, the animal spirits; which, by the nerves, impart sense and motion to all parts of the body.

The instruments of motion are the muscles; the fibres whereof contracting themselves, move the several parts of the body.

This contraction of the muscles is, in some of them, by the direction of the mind, and in some of them without it; which is the difference between voluntary and involuntary motions, in the body.

CHAP. XI.

Of the Five Senses.

OF SEEING.

THE organ of seeing is the eye; consisting of variety of parts wonderfully contrived, for the admitting and refracting the rays of light; so that those that come from the same point of the object, and fall upon different parts of the pupil, are brought to meet

again at the bottom of the eye, whereby the whole object is painted on the retina that is spread there.

That which immediately affects the sight, and produces in us that sensation which we call seeing, is light.

Light may be considered either, first, as it radiates from luminous bodies directly to our eyes; and thus we see luminous bodies themselves, as the sun, or a flame, &c. or secondly, as it is reflected from other bodies; and thus we see a man, or a picture, by the rays of light reflected from them to our eyes.

Bodies, in respect of light, may be divided into three sorts; first, those that emit rays of light, as the sun and fixt stars; secondly, those that transmit the rays of light, as the air; thirdly, those that reflect the rays of light, as iron, earth, &c. The first are called luminous; the second pellucid; and the third opake.

The rays of light themselves are not seen; but by them the bodies, from which they originally come; as the sun, or a fixt star; or the bodies, from which they are reflected; as a horse, or a tulip. When the moon shines, we do not see the rays which come from the sun to the moon, but by them we see the moon, from whence they are reflected.

If the eye be placed in the medium, through which the rays pass to it, the medium is not seen at all; for instance, we do not see the air through which the rays come to our eyes. But if a pellucid body, through which the light comes, be at a distance from our eye, we see that body, as well as the bodies, from whence the rays come that pass through them to come to our eyes. For instance, we do not only see bodies through a pair of spectacles, but we see the glass itself. The reason whereof is, that pellucid bodies being bodies, the surfaces of which reflect some rays of light from their solid parts; these surfaces, placed at a convenient distance from the eye, may be seen by those reflected rays; as, at the same time, other bodies beyond those pellucid ones may be seen by the transmitted rays.

Opake bodies are of two sorts, specular, or not specular. Specular bodies, or mirrours, are such opake bodies, whose surfaces are polished; whereby they, reflecting

ing the rays in the same order as they come from other bodies, show us their images.

The rays that are reflected from opake bodies, always bring with them to the eye the idea of colour; and this colour is nothing else, in the bodies, but a disposition to reflect to the eye more copiously one sort of rays than another. For particular rays are originally endowed with particular colours; some are red, others blue, others yellow, and others green, &c.

Every ray of light, as it comes from the sun, seems a bundle of all these several sorts of rays; and as some of them are more refrangible than others; that is, are more turned out of their course, in passing from one medium to another; it follows, that after such refraction they will be separated, and their distinct colour observed. Of these, the most refrangible are violet, and the least red; and the intermediate ones, in order, are indigo, blue, green, yellow, and orange. This separation is very entertaining, and will be observed with pleasure in holding a prism in the beams of the sun.

As all these rays differ in refrangibility, so they do in reflexibility; that is, in the property of being more easily reflected from certain bodies, than from others; and hence arise, as hath been said, all the colours of bodies; which are, in a manner, infinite, as an infinite number of compositions and proportions, of the original colours, may be imagined.

The whiteness of the sun's light is compounded of all the original colours, mixed in a due proportion.

Whiteness, in bodies, is but a disposition to reflect all colours of light, nearly in the proportion they are mixed in the original rays; as, on the contrary, blackness is only a disposition to absorb or stifle, without reflection, most of the rays of every sort that fall on the bodies.

Light is successively propagated with an almost inconceivable swiftness; for it comes from the sun, to this our earth, in about seven or eight minutes of time, which distance is about 80,000,000 English miles.

Besides colour, we are supposed to see figure; but, in truth, that which we perceive when we see figure, as perceiveable by sight, is nothing but the termination of colour.

OF HEARING.

NEXT to seeing, hearing is the most extensive of our senses. The ear is the organ of hearing, whose curious structure is to be learnt from anatomy.

That which is conveyed into the brain by the ear is called sound; though, in truth, till it come to reach and affect the perceptive part, it be nothing but motion.

The motion, which produces in us the perception of sound, is a vibration of the air, caused by an exceeding short, but quick, tremulous motion of the body, from which it is propagated; and therefore we consider and denominate them as bodies sounding.

That sound is the effect of such a short, brisk, vibrating motion of bodies, from which it is propagated, may be known from what is observed and felt in the strings of instruments, and the trembling of bells, as long as we perceive any sound come from them; for as soon as that vibration is stopt, or ceases in them, the perception ceases also.

The propagation of sound is very quick, but not approaching that of light. Sounds move about 1140 English feet in a second of time; and in seven or eight minutes of time, they move about one hundred English miles.

OF SMELLING.

SMELLING is another sense, that seems to be wrought on by bodies at a distance; though that, which immediately affects the organ, and produces in us the sensation of any smell, are effluvia, or invisible particles, that, coming from bodies at a distance, immediately affect the olfactory nerves.

Smelling bodies seem perpetually to send forth effluvia, or steams, without sensibly wasting at all. Thus a grain of musk will send forth odoriferous particles for scores of years together, without its being spent; whereby one would conclude that these particles are very small; and

and yet it is plain, that they are much groſſer than the rays of light, which have a free paſſage through glaſs; and groſſer alſo than the magnetic effluvia, which paſs freely through all bodies, when thoſe that produce ſmell will not paſs through the thin membranes of a bladder, and many of them ſcarce ordinary white paper.

There is a great variety of ſmells, though we have but a few names for them; ſweet, ſtinking, ſour, rank, and muſty, are almoſt all the denominations we have for odours; though the ſmell of a violet, and of muſk, both called ſweet, are as diſtinct as any two ſmells whatſoever.

OF TASTE.

Taste is the next ſenſe to be conſidered.

The organ of taſte is the tongue and palate.

Bodies that emit light, ſounds, and ſmells, are ſeen, heard, and ſmelt at a diſtance; but bodies are not taſted, but by immediate application to the organ; for till our meat touch our tongues, or palates, we taſte it not, how near ſoever it be.

It may be obſerved of taſtes, that though there be a great variety of them, yet, as in ſmells, they have only ſome few general names; as ſweet, bitter, ſour, harſh, rank, and ſome few others.

OF TOUCH.

The fifth and laſt of our ſenſes is touch; a ſenſe ſpread over the whole body, though it be moſt eminently placed in the ends of the fingers.

By this ſenſe the tangible qualities of bodies are diſcerned; as hard, ſoft, ſmooth, rough, dry, wet, clammy, and the like.

But the moſt conſiderable of the qualities, that are perceived by this ſenſe, are heat and cold.

The due temperament of thoſe two oppoſite qualities, is the great inſtrument of nature, that ſhe makes uſe of in moſt, if not all, her productions.

Heat is a very brisk agitation of the insensible parts of the object, which produces in us that sensation, from whence we denominate the object hot; so what in our sensation is heat, in the object is nothing but motion. This appears by the way whereby heat is produced; for we see that the rubbing of a brass nail upon a board will make it very hot; and the axle-trees of carts and coaches are often hot, and sometimes to a degree, that it sets them on fire, by the rubbing of the nave of the wheel upon it.

On the other side, the utmost degree of cold is the cessation of that motion of the insensible particles, which to our touch is heat.

Bodies are denominated hot and cold in proportion to the present temperament of that part of our body to which they are applied; so that feels hot to one, which seems cold to another; nay, the same body, felt by the two hands of the same man, may at the same time appear hot to the one, and cold to the other; because the motion of the insensible particles of it may be more brisk than that of the particles of the other.

Besides the objects before-mentioned, which are peculiar to each of our senses, as light, and colour of the sight; sound of hearing; odours of smelling; savours of tasting; and tangible qualities of the touch; there are two others that are common to all the senses; and those are pleasure and pain, which they may receive by and with their peculiar objects. Thus, too much light offends the eye; some sounds delight, and others grate the ear; heat in a certain degree is very pleasant, which may be augmented to the greatest torment; and so the rest.

These five senses are common to beasts with men; nay, in some of them, some brutes exceed mankind. But men are endowed with other faculties, which far excel any thing that is to be found in the other animals in this our globe.

Memory also brutes may be supposed to have, as well as men.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

Of the Understanding of Man.

THE understanding of man does so surpass that of brutes, that some are of opinion brutes are mere machines, without any manner of perception at all. But letting this opinion alone, as ill-grounded, we will proceed to the consideration of human understanding, and the distinct operations thereof.

The lowest degree of it consists in perception, which we have before in part taken notice of, in our discourse of the senses. Concerning which it may be convenient farther to observe, that, to conceive a right notion of perception, we must consider the distinct objects of it, which are simple ideas; v. g. such as are those signified by these words, scarlet, blue, sweet, bitter, heat, cold, &c. from the other objects of our senses; to which we may add the internal operations of our minds, as the objects of our own reflection, such as are thinking, willing, &c.

Out of these simple ideas are made, by putting them together, several compounded or complex ideas; as those signified by the words pebble, marygold, horse.

The next thing the understanding doth in its progress to knowledge, is to abstract its ideas, by which abstraction they are made general.

A general idea is an idea in the mind, considered there as separated from time and place; and so capable to represent any particular being that is conformable to it. Knowledge, which is the highest degree of the speculative faculties, consists in the perception of the truth of affirmative, or negative, propositions.

This perception is either immediate, or mediate. Immediate perception of the agreement, or disagreement, of two ideas, is when, by comparing them together in our minds, we see, or, as it were, behold, their agreement, or disagreement. This therefore is called intuitive knowledge. Thus we see that red is not green;

that the whole is bigger than a part; and that two and two are equal to four.

The truth of these, and the like propositions, we know by a bare simple intuition of the ideas themselves, without any more ado; and such propositions are called self-evident.

The mediate perception of the agreement, or disagreement, of two ideas, is when, by the intervention of one or more other ideas, their agreement, or disagreement, is shown. This is called demonstration, or rational knowledge. For instance: The inequality of the breadth of two windows, or two rivers, or any two bodies that cannot be put together, may be known by the intervention of the same measure, applied to them both; and so it is in our general ideas, whose agreement or disagreement may be often shown by the intervention of some other ideas, so as to produce demonstrative knowledge; where the ideas in question cannot be brought together, and immediately compared, so as to produce intuitive knowledge.

The understanding doth not know only certain truth; but also judges of probability, which consists in the likely agreement, or disagreement, of ideas.

The assenting to any proposition as probable is called opinion, or belief.

We have hitherto considered the great and visible parts of the universe, and those great masses of matter, the stars, planets, and particularly this our earth, together with the inanimate parts, and animate inhabitants of it; it may be now fit to consider what these sensible bodies are made of, and that is of unconceivably small bodies, or atoms, out of whose various combinations bigger moleculæ are made: and so, by a greater and greater composition, bigger bodies; and out of these the whole material world is constituted.

By the figure, bulk, texture, and motion, of these small and insensible corpuscles, all the phænomena of bodies may be explained.

A NEW

A NEW

METHOD

OF A

COMMON-PLACE-BOOK.

TRANSLATED OUT OF THE FRENCH FROM THE SECOND VOLUME OF THE BIBLIOTHEQUE UNIVERSELLE.

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	o		o
	u		u
B	a	G	a
	e		e
	i		i
	o		o
	u		u
C	a	H	a 12. 16.
	e		e
	i		i
	o 14.		o
	u		u
D	a	I	a
	e		e
	i		i
	o		o
	u		u
E	a	L	a
	e		e
	i 2. 10.		i
	o		o
	u		u

M	a	S	a
	e		e
	i		i
	o		o
	u		u
N	a	T	a
	e		e
	i		i
	o		o
	u		u
O	a	U	a
	e		e
	i		i
	o		o
	u		u
P	a	X	a
	e		e
	i		i
	o		o
	u		u
R	a	Z	a
	e		e
	i		i
	o		o
	u	Q	u

EPISTOLA.]

EPISTOLA.] A letter from Mr. Locke to Mr. 2. Toignard, containing a new and easy method of a common-place-book, to which an index of two pages is sufficient.

AT length, sir, in obedience to you, I publish my "method of a common-place-book." I am ashamed that I deferred so long complying with your request; but I esteemed it so mean a thing, as not to deserve publishing, in an age so full of useful inventions, as ours is. You may remember, that I freely communicated it to you, and several others, to whom I imagined it would not be unacceptable: so that it was not to reserve the sole use of it to myself, that I declined publishing it. But the regard I had to the public discouraged me from presenting it with such a trifle. Yet my obligations to you, and the friendship between us, compel me now to follow your advice. Your last letter has perfectly determined me to it, and I am convinced that I ought not to delay publishing it, when you tell me, that an experience of several years has showed its usefulness, and several of your friends, to whom you have communicated it. There is no need I should tell you, how useful it has been to me, after five and twenty years experience, as I told you, eight years since, when I had the honour to wait on you at Paris, and when I might have been instructed, by your learned and agreeable discourse. What I aim at now, by this letter, is to testify publicly the esteem and respect I have for you, and to convince you how much I am, sir, your, &c.

Before I enter on my subject, it is fit to acquaint the reader, that this tract is disposed in the same manner that the common-place-book ought

3. ought to be diſpoſed. It will be underſtood by reading what follows, what is the meaning of the Latin titles on the top of the backſide of each leaf, and at the bottom [a little below the top] of this page.

EBIONITÆ.] In eorum evangelio, quod ſecundum Hebræos dicebatur, hiſtoria quæ habetur Matth. xix. 16. et alia quædam, erat interpolata in hunc modum: "Dixit ad eum alter divitum, magiſter, "quid bonum faciens vivam? Dixit ei Domi-"nus, legem & prophetas, fac. Reſpondit ad "eum, feci. Dixit ei: vade, vende omnia quæ "poſſides, & divide pauperibus, & veni, ſe-"quere me. Cœpit autem dives ſcalpere caput "ſuum, & non placuit ei. Et dixit ad eum "Dominus: quomodo dicis, legem feci & pro-"phetas? cùm ſcriptum ſit in lege, diliges "proximum tuum ſicut teipſum: & ecce multi "fratres tui filii Abrahæ amicti ſunt ſtercore, "morientes præ fame, & domus tua plena eſt "bonis multis, & non egreditur omnino aliquid "ex eâ ad eos. Et converſus, dixit Simoni, diſ-"cipulo ſuo, ſedenti apud ſe: Simon, fili Johan-"næ, facilius eſt camelum intrare per foramen "acûs, quam divitem in regnum cœlorum." Nimirum hæc ideo immutavit Ebion, quia Chriſtum nec Dei filium, nec νομοθέτην, ſed nudum interpretem legis per Moſem datæ agnoſcebat.

In the Goſpel of the Ebionites, which they called the Goſpel according to the Hebrews, the ſtory, that is in the xixth of St. Matth. and in the 16th and following verſes, was changed after this manner: "One of the rich men ſaid to him: "Maſter, what ſhall I do that I may have life? "Jeſus ſaid to him: Obey the law and the pro-"phets. He anſwered, I have done ſo. Jeſus "ſaid unto him, Go, ſell what thou haſt, divide "it among the poor, and then come and follow "me. Upon which the rich man began to "ſcratch his head, and to diſlike the advice of "Jeſus: and the Lord ſaid unto him, How can "you ſay you have done as the law and the pro-

ADVERSARIORUM METHODUS.] I take a paper book
4. of what ſize I pleaſe. I divide the two firſt pages that face one another by parallel lines into five and twenty equal parts, every fifth line black, the other red. I then cut them perpendicularly by other lines that I draw from the top to the bottom of the page, as you may ſee in the table prefixed. I put about the middle of each five ſpaces one of the twenty letters I deſign to make uſe of, and, a little forward in each ſpace, the five vowels, one below another, in their natural order. This is the index to the whole volume, how big ſoever it may be.

The index being made after this manner, I leave a margin in all the other pages of the book, of about the largeneſs of an inch, in a volume in folio, or a little larger; and, in a leſs volume, ſmaller in proportion.

If I would put any thing in my Common-Place-Book, I find out a head to which I may refer it. Each head ought to be ſome important and eſſential word to the matter in hand, and in that word regard is to be had to the firſt letter, and the vowel that follows it; for upon theſe two letters depends all the uſe of the index.

I omit three letters of the alphabet as of no uſe to me, viz. K. Y. W. which are ſupplied by C. I. U. that are equivalent to them. I put the letter Q. that is always followed with an u. in the fifth ſpace of Z. By throwing Q. laſt in my index, I preſerve the regularity of my index, and diminiſh not in the leaſt its extent; for it ſeldom happens that there is any head begins with Z. u. I have found none in the five and twenty years I have uſed this method. If nevertheleſs it be neceſſary, nothing hinders but that one may make a reference after Q. u. provided it be done with any kind of diſtinction; but for more exactneſs a place may be aſſigned

5. for Q. u. below the index, as I have formerly done. When I meet with any thing, that I think fit to put into my common-place-book, I first find a proper head. Suppose, for example, that the head be EPISTOLA, I look unto the index for the first letter and the following vowel, which in this instance are E. i. if in the space marked E. i. there is any number that directs me to the page designed for words that begin with an E. and whose first vowel, after the initial letter, is I; I must then write under the word Epistola, in that page, what I have to remark. I write the head in large letters, and begin a little way out into the margin, and I continue on the line, in writing what I have to say. I observe constantly this rule, that only the head appears in the margin, and that it be continued on, without ever doubling the line in the margin, by which means the heads will be obvious at first sight.

If I find no number in the index, in the space E. i. I look into my book for the first backside of a leaf that is not written in, which, in a book where there is yet nothing but the index, must be p. 2. I write then, in my index after E. i. the number 2. and the head Epistola at the top of the margin of the second page, and all that I put under that head, in the same page, as you see I have done in the second page of this method. From that time the class E. i. is wholly in possession of the second and third pages.

They are to be employed only on words that begin with an E, and whose nearest vowel is an I, as Ebionitæ (see the third page) Episcopus, Echinus, Edictum, Efficacia, &c. The reason, why I begin always at the top of the backside of a leaf, and assign to one class two pages, that face one another, rather than an entire leaf, is, because the heads of the class appear

ADVERSARIORUM METHODUS.] all at once, without the
V. trouble of turning over a leaf.
6.

Every time, that I would write a new head, I look first in my index for the characteristic letters of the words, and I see, by the number that follows, what the page is that is assigned to the class of that head. If there is no number, I must look for the first backside of a page that is blank. I then set down the number in the index, and design that page, with that of the right side of the following leaf, to this new class. Let it be, for example, the word Adversaria; if I see no number in the space A. e. I seek for the first backside of a leaf, which being at p. 4. I set down in the space A. e. the number 4. and in the fourth page the head ADVERSARIA, with all that I write under it, as I have already informed you. From this time the fourth page with the fifth that follows is reserved for the class A. e. that is to say, for the heads that begin with an A, and whose next vowel is an E; as for instance, Aer, Aera, Agesilaus, Acheron, &c.

When the two pages designed for one class are full, I look forwards for the next backside of a leaf, that is blank. If it be that which immediately follows, I write at the bottom of the margin, in the page that I have filled, the letter V, that is to say, Verte, turn over; as likewise the same at the top of the next page. If the pages, that immediately follow, are already filled by other classes, I write, at the bottom of the page last filled, V, and the number of the next empty backside of a page. At the beginning of that page I write down the head, under which I go on, with what I had to put in my common-place-book, as if it had been in the same page. At the top of this new backside of a leaf, I set down the number of the page I filled last. By these numbers which refer to one another, the first whereof is at the bottom of one page, and

7. the ſecond is at the beginning of another, one joins matter that is ſeparated, as if there was nothing between them. For, by this reciprocal reference of numbers, one may turn, as one leaf, all thoſe that are between the two, even as if they were paſted together. You have an example of this in the third and tenth pages.

Every time I put a number at the bottom of a page, I put it alſo into the index; but when I put only an V, I make no addition in the index; the reaſon whereof is plain.

If the head is a monoſyllable and begins with a vowel, that vowel is at the ſame time both the firſt letter of the word, and the characteriſtic vowel. Therefore I write the word Ars in A a and Os in O o.

You may ſee by what I have ſaid, that one is to begin to write each claſs of words, on the backſide of a page. It may happen, upon that account, that the backſide of all the pages may be full, and yet there may remain ſeveral pages, on the right hand, which are empty. Now if you have a mind to fill your book, you may aſſign theſe right ſides, which are wholly blank, to new claſſes.

If any one imagines that theſe hundred claſſes are not ſufficient to comprehend all ſorts of ſubjects without confuſion, he may follow the ſame method, and yet augment the number to five hundred, in adding a vowel. But having experienced both the one and the other method, I prefer the firſt; and uſage will convince thoſe, who ſhall try it, how well it will ſerve the purpoſe aimed at; eſpecially if one has a book for each ſcience, upon which one makes collections, or at leaſt two for the two heads, to which one may refer all our knowledge, viz. moral philoſophy, and natural.

You may add a third, which may be called the knowledge of ſigns, which relates to the uſe

V. of

ADVERSARIORUM METHODUS.] of words, and is of
V. much more extent than mere criticiſm.
8.

As to the language, in which one ought to expreſs the heads, I eſteem the Latin tongue moſt commodious, provided the nominative caſe be always kept to, for fear leſt in words of two ſyllables, or in monoſyllables that begin with the vowel, the change, which happens in oblique caſes, ſhould occaſion confuſion. But it is not of much conſequence what language is made uſe of, provided there be no mixture in the heads, of different languages.

To take notice of a place in an author, from whom I quote ſomething, I make uſe of this method: before I write any thing, I put the name of the author in my common-place-book, and under that name the title of the treatiſe, the ſize of the volume, the time and place of its edition, and (what ought never to be omitted) the number of pages that the whole book contains. For example, I put into the claſs M. a. "Mar-" ſhami Canon Chronicus Ægyptiacus, Græcus, " & diſquiſitiones fol." London 1672. p. 626. This number of pages ſerves me for the future to mark the particular treatiſe of this author, and the edition I make uſe of. I have no need to mark the place, otherwiſe than in ſetting down the number of the page from whence I have drawn what I have wrote, juſt above the number of pages contained in the whole volume. You will ſee an example in Acheruſia, where the number 259 is juſt above the number 626, that is to ſay, the number of the page, where I take my matter, is juſt above the number of pages of the whole volume. By this means I not only ſave myſelf the trouble of writing Canon Chronicus Ægyptiacus, &c. but am able by the rule of three to find out the ſame paſſage in any other edition, by looking for the number of its pages;

9. ſince the edition I have uſed, which contains 626, gives me 259. You will not indeed always light on the very page you want, becauſe of the breaches, that are made in different editions of books, and that are not always equal in proportion; but you are never very far from the place you want, and it is better to be able to find a paſſage, in turning over a few pages, than to be obliged to turn over a whole book to find it, as it happens, when the book has no index, or when the index is not exact.

ACHERON.] "*Pratum, ficta, mortuorum habitatio, eſt* "locus prope Memphin, juxta paludem, quam vocant Acheruſiam, &c." This is a paſſage out of D. Siculus, the ſenſe whereof is this: the fields, where they feign that the dead inhabit, are only a place near Memphis, near a marſh called Acheruſia, about which is a moſt delightful country, where one may behold lakes and foreſts of lotus and calamus. It is with reaſon, that Orpheus ſaid, the dead inhabit theſe places, becauſe there the Egyptians celebrate the greateſt part, and the moſt auguſt, of their funeral ſolemnities. They carry the dead over the Nile, and through the marſh of Acheruſia, and there put them into ſubterraneous vaults. There are a great many other fables, among the Greeks, touching the ſtate of the dead, which very well agree with what is at this day practiſed in Egypt. For they call the boat, in which the dead are tranſported, Baris; and a certain piece of money is given to the ferry-man for a paſſage, who, in their language, is called Charon. Near this place is a temple of Hecate in the ſhades, &c. and the gates of Cocytus and Lethe, ſhut up with bars of braſs. There are other gates, which are called the gates of truth, with the ſtatue of juſtice before them, which has no head. Marſham. $\frac{259}{650}$.

EBIONITÆ.] "phets direct you? since it is written in the
V. 3. "law, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself;
10. "and there are many of thy brethren, children
"of Abraham, who are almost naked, and who
"are ready to die with hunger, while thy house
"is full of good things, and yet thou givest
"them no help nor assistance. And turning
"himself towards Simon, his disciple, who sat
"near him: Simon, son of Johanna, said he,
"it is easier for a camel to go through the eye
"of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into
"the kingdom of heaven." Ebion changed this passage, because he did not believe Jesus Christ to be the son of God, nor a law-giver, but a mere interpreter of the law of Moses. Grotius $\frac{333}{1000}$.

II.

HÆRETICI.] " Noſtrum igitur fuit, eligere & optare
12. " meliora, ut ad veſtram correctionem auditum
" haberemus, non in contentione & æmulatione
" & perſecutionibus, ſed manſuetè conſolando,
" benevolè hortando, leniter diſputando, ſicut
" ſcriptum eſt, ſervum autem Domini not opor-
" tet litigare, ſed mitem eſſe ad omnes, docibi-
" lem, patientem, in modeſtia corripientem di-
" verſa ſentientes. Noſtrum ergo fuit velle has
" partes expetere: Dei eſt volentibus & peten-
" tibus donare quod bonum eſt. Illi in vos
" ſæviant qui neſciunt cum quo labore verum
" inveniatur, & quam difficile caveantur errores.
" Illi in vos ſæviant, qui neſciunt quam rarum
" & arduum ſit carnalia phantaſmata piæ mentis
" ſerenitate ſuperare. Illi in vos ſæviant, qui
" neſciunt cum quantâ difficultate ſanetur oculus
" interioris hominis, ut poſſit intueri ſolem
" ſuum;——Illi in vos ſæviant, qui neſciunt
" quibus ſuſpiriis & gemitibus fiat, ut ex quan-
" tulacunque parte poſſit intelligi Deus. Poſ-
" tremo, illi in vos ſæviant, qui nullo tali errore
" decepti ſunt, quali vos deceptos vident. In
" catholicâ enim eccleſiâ, ut omittam ſinceriſſi-
" mam ſapientiam, ad cujus cognitionem pauci
" ſpirituales in hâc vitâ perveniunt, ut eam ex
" minimâ quidem parte, quia homines ſunt, ſed
" tamen ſine dubitatione, cognoſcant: cæterum
" quippe turbam non intelligendi vivacitas, ſed
" credendi ſimplicitas tutiſſimam facit." Auguſtinus, Tom. vi. col. 116. fol. Baſiliæ 1542, contra Epiſt. Manichæi, quam vocant fundamenti.

" We were of opinion, that other methods
" were to be made choice of, and that, to re-
" cover you from your errours, we ought not to
" perſecute you with injuries and invectives, or
" any ill treatment, but endeavour to procure
" your attention, by ſoft words and exhorta-
" tions, which would ſhow the tenderneſs we
" have for you: according to that paſſage of
" holy

13. " holy writ, " the ſervant of the Lord ought
" not to love ſtrife and quarrels, but to be gen-
" tle, affable, and patient towards all mankind,
" and to reprove with modeſty thoſe who differ
" from him in opinion."—" Let them only treat
" you with rigour, who know not how difficult
" it is to find out the truth, and avoid errour.
" Let thoſe treat you with rigour, who are ig-
" norant how rare and painful a work it is calmly
" to diſſipate the carnal phantoms, that diſturb
" even a pious mind. Let thoſe treat you with
" rigour, who are ignorant of the extreme diffi-
" culty that there is to purify the eye of the in-
" ward man, to render him capable of ſeeing
" the truth, which is the ſun, or light of the
" ſoul. Let thoſe treat you with rigour, who
" have never felt the ſighs and groans that a ſoul
" muſt have before it can obtain any knowledge
" of the divine Being. To conclude, let thoſe
" treat you with rigour who never have been
" ſeduced into errours, near a-kin to thoſe you
" are engaged in. I paſs over in ſilence that
" pure wiſdom, which but a few ſpiritual men
" attain to in this life; ſo that though they know
" but in part, becauſe they are men; yet never-
" theleſs they know what they do know with
" certainty: for, in the catholic church, it is
" not penetration of mind, nor profound know-
" ledge, but ſimplicity of faith, which puts men
" in a ſtate of ſafety.

" Barbari quippe homines Romanæ, imò po-
" tius humanæ eruditionis expertes, qui nihil
" omnino ſciunt, niſi quod à doctoribus ſuis
" audiunt: quod audiunt hoc ſequuntur, ac ſic
" neceſſe eſt eos qui totius literaturæ ac ſcientiæ
" ignari, ſacramentum divinæ legis doctrina,
" magis quam lectione, cognoſcunt, doctrinam
" potius retinere, quam legem. Itaque eis tra-
" ditio magiſtrorum ſuorum & doctrina invete-
" rata, quaſi lex eſt, qui hoc ſciunt, quod do-

CONFESSIO FIDEI.] " Periculosum nobis admodum at-
14. " que etiam miserabile est, tot nunc fides ex-
" istere, quot voluntates: & tot nobis doctrinas
" esse, quot mores: & tot causas blasphemia-
" rum pullulare, quot vitia sunt: dum aut ita
" fides scribuntur, ut volumus, aut, ita ut volu-
" mus, intelliguntur. Et cum secundum unum
" Deum & unum Dominum, & unum baptisma,
" etiam fides una sit, excidimus ab eâ fide, quæ
" sola est: & dum plures fiant, id esse cœpe-
" runt, ne ulla sit; conscii enim nobis invicem
" sumus, post Nicæni conventûs synodum, nihil
" aliud quam fidem scribi. Dum in verbis
" pugna est, dum de novitatibus quæstio est,
" dum de ambiguis occasio est, dum de autori-
" bus querela est, dum de studiis certamen est,
" dum in consensu difficultas est, dum alter alteri
" anathema esse cæpit, prope jam nemo est
" Christi, &c. Jam vero proximi anni fides,
" quid jam de immutatione in se habet? Pri-
" mum, quæ homousion decernit taceri: sequens
" rursum, quæ homousion decernit & prædicat:
" Tertium deinceps, quæ ousiam simpliciter à
" patribus præsumptam, per indulgentiam ex-
" cusat. Postremum quartum, quæ non excu-
" sat, sed condemnat, &c. De similitudine au-
" tem filii Dei ad Deum patrem, quod misera-
" bilis nostri temporis est fides, ne non ex toto,
" sed tantum ex portione sit similis? Egregii
" scilicet arbitri cœlestium sacramentorum con-
" quisitores, invisibilium mysteriorum profes-
" sionibus de fide Dei calumniamur, annuas at-
" que menstruas de Deo fides decernimus, de-
" cretis pœnitemus, pœnitentes defendimus, de-
" fensos anathematizamus, aut in nostri aliena
" aut in alienis nostra damnamus, & mordentes
" inv cem, jam absumpti sumus invicem." Hilarius, p. 211. in lib. ad Constantium Augustum. Basil. 1550, fol.

" It is a thing equally deplorable and dange-
" rous, that there are at present as many creeds
" as

15. " as there are opinions among men, as many
" doctrines as inclinations; and as many four-
" ces of blasphemy, as there are faults among
" us; because we make creeds arbitrarily, and
" explain them as arbitrarily. And as there is
" but one faith; so there is but one only God,
" one Lord, and one baptism. We renounce
" this one faith, when we make so many diffe-
" rent creeds; and that diversity is the reason
" why we have no true faith among us. We
" cannot be ignorant that, since the council of
" Nice, we have done nothing but made creeds.
" And while we fight against words, litigate
" about new questions, dispute about equivocal
" terms, complain of authors, that every one
" may make his own party triumph; while we
" cannot agree, while we anathematise one an-
" other, there is hardly one that adheres to
" Jesus Christ. What change was there not in
" the creed last year! The first council ordained
" a silence upon the homousion; the second
" established it, and would have us speak; the
" third excuses the fathers of the council, and
" pretends they took the word ousia simply;
" the fourth condemns them, instead of excusing
" them. With respect to the likeness of the
" Son of God to the Father, which is the faith
" of our deplorable times, they dispute whether
" he is like in whole, or in part. These are rare
" folks to unravel the secrets of heaven. Ne-
" vertheless it is for these creeds, about invisible
" mysteries, that we calumniate one another,
" and for our belief in God. We make creeds
" every year, nay every moon we repent of what
" we have done, we defend those that repent, we
" anathematise those we defended. So we con-
" demn either the doctrine of others in ourselves,
" or our own in that of others, and, reciprocally
" tearing one another to pieces, we have been
" the cause of each other's ruin."

HÆRETICI.] " centur. Hæretici ergo ſunt, ſed non
V. 13. " ſcientes. Denique apud nos ſunt hæretici,
16. " apud ſe non ſunt. Nam in tantum ſe catho-
" licos eſſe judicant, ut nos ipſos titulo hæreticæ
" appellationis infament. Quod ergo illi nobis
" ſunt & hoc nos illis. Nos eos injuriam divinæ
" generationi facere certi ſumus, quod minorem
" patre filium dicant. Illi nos injurioſos patri
" exiſtimant, quia æquales eſſe credamus. Veritas
" apud nos eſt; ſed illi apud ſe eſſe præſumunt.
" Honor Dei apud nos eſt: ſed illi hoc arbi-
" trantur, honorem divinitatis eſſe quod credunt.
" Inofficioſi ſunt, ſed illis hoc eſt ſummum re-
" ligionis officium. Impii ſunt, ſed hoc putant
" eſſe veram pietatem. Errant ergo, ſed bono
" animo errant, non odio ſed affectu Dei, ho-
" norare ſe dominum atque amare credentes.
" Quamvis non habeant rectam fidem, illi ta-
" men hoc perfectam Dei æſtimant caritatem.
" Qualiter pro hoc ipſo falſæ opinionis errore
" in die judicii puniendi ſunt, nullus ſcire poteſt
" niſi judex. Interim idcirco eis, ut reor, pa-
" tientiam Deus commodat, quia videt eos, etſi
" non rectè credere, affectu tamen piæ opinio-
" nis errare. Salvinus. $\frac{162}{337}$.

This biſhop ſpeaks here of the Arian Goths and Vandals: " They are, ſays he, Barbarians,
" who have no tincture of the Roman politeneſs,
" and who are ignorant of what is very com-
" monly known among other men, and only
" know what their doctors have taught them,
" and follow what they have heard them ſay.
" Men ſo ignorant as theſe find themſelves un-
" der a neceſſity of learning the myſteries of the
" goſpel, rather by the inſtructions that are given
" them, than by books."

" The tradition of their doctors and the re-
" ceived doctrines are the only rule they follow,
" becauſe they know nothing but what they
" have taught them. They are then heretics,
" but they know it not. They are ſo in our
account,

17. " account, but they believe it not; and think
" themſelves ſo good catholics, that they treat
" us as heretics, judging of us as we do of them.
" We are perſuaded that they believe amiſs con-
" cerning the divine generation, when they
" maintain the ſon is inferior to the Father;
" and they imagine that we rob the Father of
" his glory who believe them both to be equal.
" We have the truth on our ſide, and they pre-
" tend it is on theirs. We give to God his due
" honour, and they think they honour him bet-
" ter. They fail in their duty, but they ima-
" gine they perform perfectly well; and they
" make true piety to conſiſt in what we call im-
" pious. They are in a miſtake, but with a
" great deal of ſincerity; and it is ſo far from
" being an effect of their hatred, that it is a
" mark of their love of God, ſince, by what they
" do, they imagine they ſhow the greateſt reſpect
" for the Lord, and zeal for his glory. There-
" fore, though they have not true faith, they
" nevertheleſs look upon that which they have
" as a perfect love of God. It belongs only to
" the judge of the univerſe to know how theſe
" men will be puniſhed for their errours at the
" laſt day. Yet I believe God will ſhow com-
" paſſion towards them, becauſe he ſees their
" heart is more right than their belief, and that,
" if they are miſtaken, it is their piety made
" them err.

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