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The Living Temple

A DESIGNED IMPROVEMENT OF THAT NOTION,
THAT A GOOD MAN IS THE TEMPLE OF GOD

JOHN HOWE

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by John Howe

TABLE OF CONTENTS

[To the Right Honourable William Lord Paget](#)

[Advertisement](#)

[Part I: Concerning God's Existence](#)

[Chapter I: This Notion Common](#)

[Chapter II: The two more principal grounds which a temple supposes](#)

[Chapter III: Wisdom asserted to belong to this Being](#)

[Chapter IV: all supposable perfection asserted of this Being](#)

[Chapter V: Demands in reference to what hath been hitherto
discoursed](#)

[Chapter VI: What is intended by God's conversableness with men](#)

[The Living Temple, Part II](#)

[Preface](#)

[Chapter VII](#)

[Chapter VIII](#)

[Chapter IX](#)

[Chapter X](#)

[Chapter XI](#)

[Chapter XII](#)

[Chapter XIII](#)

[Chapter XIV](#)

[Chapter XV](#)

[Chapter XVI](#)

[Chapter XVII](#)

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
WILLIAM LORD PAGET,
BARON OF BEUDESERT, IN THE
COUNTY OF STAFFORD

MY HONOURED LORD,

I have not the opportunity of begging your Lordship's foregoing leave to prefix your name to these papers, but despair not of your following pardon. Your name must be acknowledged great through two potent empires, Christian and Mohammedan, and the services greater which you have done to many that may perhaps not have heard the sound of your name. Your prudent and prosperous negotiations, in the Austrian and Ottoman courts, have obliged multitudes whose better genius hath taught them more to value themselves than to think they were born to slavery, from which you have found means, in great part, to save Europe; somewhere, by charming great power so as to conquer the inclination to use it to so ill a purpose; elsewhere, by preventing its increase where that inclination was invincible. And hereby you have dignified England, in letting it be seen what it can signify in the world, when it is so happy as to have its interest managed by a fit and able hand.

Yet that knowledge your Lordship hath heretofore allowed me to have of you cannot suffer me to think you will account your name too great to patronize the cause asserted in the following discourse. That it is unpolished will not affect your Lordship—let that rest where it ought—the subject and design will, I doubt not, have your Lordship's countenance. And the rather, that it is not the temple of this or that party that is here defended, which would little agree to the amplitude of your Lordship's large mind, and your great knowledge of the world, but that wherein mankind have a common concern. A temple that is the seat of serious, living religion, is the more venerable and the more extensive, the more defensible; and the more worthy to be defended, by how much it is the less appropriate to this or that sect and sort of men, or distinguished by this or that affected, modifying form; that which, according to its primitive designation, may be hoped and ought to be the resort of all nations, which it is vain to imagine any one of this or that external form, not prescribed by God

himself, can ever be; unless we should suppose it possible that one and the same human prince or power could ever come to govern the world. Such uniformity must certainly suppose such a universal monarchy as never was, and we easily apprehend can never be. Therefore, the belief that the Christian religion shall ever become the religion of the world, and the Christian church become the common universal temple of mankind; that "the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and all nations flow to it," as, besides that, many other texts of holy scripture do plainly speak, and an intemperate contentious zeal for one external, human form of God's temple on earth, are downright inconsistencies. That belief and this zeal must destroy one another, especially, that which makes particular temples engines to batter down each other, because they agree not in some human additions, though all may be charitably supposed to have somewhat of divine life in them. Therefore we plainly see that this universal, Christian living temple, must be formed and finished, not by human might or power, but by the Spirit of the living God, which Spirit, poured forth, shall instruct the princes and potentates of the world to receive and cherish among their subjects the great essentials of Christian religion, and whatsoever is of plain divine revelation, wherein all may agree, rejecting or leaving arbitrary, the little human additions about which there is so much disagreement.

Heaven did favour us with such a King, and thanks be to God that he hath given us such a Queen, who is not for destroying any temples that may have true vital religion in them, because they neither all have or have not the same pinnacles or other pieces of ornament alike. God grant all Christian princes and powers may herein equally imitate them both, as many do seriously lament the loss of the former.

It has been long the honour of your family to have had great esteem and reverence for such a temple; and I doubt not but its having spread its branches into divers other worthy families of the Hampdens, Foleys, Ashhursts, Hunts, has given your Lordship much the more grateful and complacential view, for the affinity to your own in this respect. A temple so truly, and even only, august and great, spreads a glory over the families, kingdoms, and nations where it can have place. What is here written is a mean oblation for the service of this temple, but acceptable, as even goats' hair was, by being consecrated with a sincere mind, for the use of the tabernacle of old.

The First Part betakes itself to your Lordship as an orphan, upon the decease of its former patron, in hope of some sort of a postliminary reception. And for the Second Part, it is, as your Lordship shall vouchsafe to receive it, originally and entirely yours.

The former, your Lordship will see, had a former dedication, and I cannot think it will be displeasing to your Lordship that I let it stand. For though it may seem somewhat uncouth and unusual to have two such epistles come so near one another, yet the unfashionableness hereof, I conceive, will, in your Lordship's judgment, be overbalanced by considerations of a preponderating weight that are suggested to the reader. While, in the meantime, I cannot suppose it unacceptable to your Lordship, that a person of true worth in his time, related to the same county in which your Lordship hath so considerable concerns, and not altogether unrelated to yourself, should have had a participation with you in the same sort of patronage; with whom your Lordship hath also a true participation in all the honour, esteem, and sincere prayers that ever were conceived for him by

Your Lordship's most obedient,
And most devoted, humble servant,

JOHN HOWE.

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READER,

BE pleased to take notice, that the former part of this work was heretofore inscribed to that worthy person, Sir John Skeffington, of Fisherwick, in Staffordshire, Baronet: and who was at that time, also, Viscount Lord Masserene, governor of the county of Londonderry, and one of the Lords of his majesty Charles the Second's most honourable Privy Council in the kingdom of Ireland; and now, since, deceased.

I have, however, thought fit to let it be reprinted (the incongruity being, by this advertisement avoided, of making an address anew, in this new impression, to one no longer in our world), that the memory of a person so truly valuable may, so far as this can contribute thereto, be preserved; and because also, many things in this epistle may be useful, as a preface, to show the design of the following discourse. And as this purpose may be equally served by it as it is, the other purpose being also, thus, better served, I have not judged it necessary, though that had been easy, to alter the form; which was as follows.

ALTHOUGH I am not, my Lord, without the apprehension that a temple ought to have another sort of dedication, yet I have no such pique at the custom of former days, but that I can think it decent and just that a discourse concerning one conceived under your roof, though born out of your house, should openly own the relation which it thereby hath, and the author's great obligations to your Lordship; and upon this account I can easily persuade myself, though that custom hath much given place to this latter one, not to be so fashionable as even to write in masquerade.

It were indeed most unbecoming, in the service of so noble a cause, to act in disguise, or decline to tell one's name. And as the prefixing of one so obscure as that which the title-page bears, will be without suspicion of a design to recompense, by the authority of a name, any feared weakness of the cause itself; so were it very unworthy, having nothing better, to grudge the bringing even of so mean a thing, as a sacrifice to the door of the temple.

And although your Lordship's is of so incomparably greater value, yet also is it, as the equity of the case requires, exposed with less hazard; since in common account, the vouchsafement of pardon, whereof I cannot despair, for such assumed liberty, can with no justice be understood to import more than only a favourable aspect on the design, without any interest or participation in the disrepute of its ill management. So that your honour is in no more jeopardy than the main cause itself, which is but little concerned in the successfulness or miscarriage of this or that effort, which is made on behalf of it; and which, you are secure, can receive no real damage. For the foundations of this temple are more stable than those of heaven and earth, it being built upon that Rock against which the gates of hell can never prevail.

And if, in any unforeseen state of things, you should ever receive prejudice, or incur danger by any real service you should design unto the temple of God, your adventure would be the more honourable, by how much it were more hazardous. The Order of Templars, your Lordship well knows, was not, in former days, reckoned inglorious.

But as this temple is quite of another constitution and make than that at Jerusalem, and, to use those words of the sacred writer, ἀχειροποίητος τουτέστιν, οὐ ταύτης τῆς κτίσεως,—"not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building," Heb. 9:11; so what is requisite to the interest and service of it is much of another nature. Entire devotedness to God, sincerity, humility, charity, refinedness from the dross and baseness of the earth, strict sobriety, dominion of one's self, mastery over impotent and ignominious passions, love of justice, a steady propension to do good, delight in doing it, have contributed more to the security and beauty of God's temple on earth; conferred on it more majesty and lustre; done more to procure it room and reverence among men, than the most prosperous violence ever did: the building up of this temple, even to the laying on the top-stone, to be followed with the acclamations of Grace, grace, being that which must be done, not by might or power, but by the Spirit of the Lord. Which, inasmuch as the structure is spiritual, and to be situated and raised up in the mind or spirit of man, works, in order to it, in a way suitable thereto: that is, very much by soft and gentle insinuations, unto which are subservient the self-recommending amiableness and comely aspect of religion; the discernible gracefulness and uniform course of such in whom it bears rule, and is a settled, living law. Hereby the hearts of others are captivated and won to look towards it: made not only desirous to taste its delights, but, in order thereto, patient also of its rigours, and the rougher severities which their drowsy security and unmortified lusts do require should accompany it, the more deeply and

thoroughly to attemper and form them to it. Merely notional discourses about the temple of God, and the external forms belonging to it (how useful soever they be in their own kind and order), being unaccompanied with the life and power whereto they should be adjoined, either as subservient helps, or comely expressions thereof, do gain but little to it in the estimation of discerning men.

Much more have the apparently useless and unintelligible notions, with the empty formalities too arbitrarily affixed to it, by a very great, namely the unreformed, part of the Christian world, even there exposed it to contempt, where the professed, but most irrational and hopeless, design hath been to draw to it respect and veneration.

And when these have become matter of strife, and filled the world with noise and clamour, through the imperious violence of some, and the factious turbulency of others; it hath made it look with a frightful aspect, and rendered the divine presence, so represented, an undesired, dreadful thing. This may make that the language of fear with some, which is of enmity with the most, "Depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways."

Most of all; when a glorying in these things, and contention about them, are joined with gross immoralities; either manifest impiety, sensual debaucheries, acts of open injustice, or the no less criminal evil of a proud, wrathful, ungovernable temper of spirit; this hath made it a most hateful thing in the eyes of God and men, and turned that which should be the house of prayer unto all nations, into a den of robbers: hath cast the most opprobrious contumely upon Him whom they would entitle the owner of it. That is, when men will steal, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely, oppress the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow; and yet cry, "The temple of the Lord,

the temple of the Lord," &c.; it is as if they would make the world believe, that the holy God, the great lover and patron of purity and peace, had erected, on purpose, a house on earth, to be the common harbour and sanctuary of the vilest of men, the very pests of human society, and disturbers of mankind.

And if they were not the very worst, yet how absurd and senseless a thing were it, that he should be thought to appropriate a people to himself, have them solemnly baptized into his name, and trained up in a professed belief of those his more peculiar revelations which are without the common notice of the most, and in the use of certain, somewhat different, external institutes; being yet content that, in all things else, they be but just like the rest of the world.

Though he may be, for some time, patient of this indignity, and connive at such a state and posture of things, as he did a great while towards the Jews of old, yet, that this should be thought the top of his design, and the thing he lastly aimed at, and would acquiesce in, supposes such a notion of God, as than which, worshipping a stock were not more foolish and impious; and professed atheism as rational and innocent.

This hath spoiled and slurred the glory of the Christian temple, the most august and magnificent the world hath, and which indeed only hath right to the name; made the religion of Christians look like an empty vanity, and appear, for many ages, but as an external badge of civil distinction between them and another sort of men, that are only contending for enlarging of empire, and who shall grasp most power into their hands; both having also their sub-distinguishing marks besides, under which too probably divers of those who have adjoined themselves to the so differenced parties, furiously drive at the same design. And these zealously pretend for religion and the temple of

God; when, in the meantime, it were a thing perfectly indifferent, even in itself, as well as in the opinion of the persons concerned, what religion or way they were of, true or false, right or wrong, Paganish, Mahometan, Jewish, Christian, Popish, Protestant, Lutheran, Calvinistical, Episcopal, Presbyterial, Independent, &c.: supposing there be any of each of these denominations that place their religion in nothing else but a mere assent to the peculiar opinions, and an observation of the external formalities, of their own party; and that they never go further, but remain finally alienated from the life of God, and utter strangers to the soul-refining, governing power of true religion. Only, that their case is the worse, the nearer they approach, in profession, to the truth.

And really, if we abstract from the design and end, the spirit and life, the tranquillity and pleasure, of religion, one would heartily wonder what men can see in all the rest, for which they can think it worth the while to contend, to the disquieting themselves and the world. Nobody can believe they regard the authority of God, in this doctrine or institution, rather than another, who neglect and resist the substance and main scope of religion, recommended to them by the same authority. And as to the matters themselves which will then remain to be disputed, we have first the distinguishing name; and if we run over all those before recited, is it a matter of that consequence, as to cut throats, and lay towns and countries desolate, only upon this quarrel, which of these hath the handsomer sound? The different rites of this or that way, to them who have no respect to the authority enjoining them, must, in themselves, signify as little. And for the peculiar opinions of one or another sect, it may be soberly said, that a very great part understand no more of the distinguishing principles of their own, than he that was yet to learn how many legs a sectary had. Only they have learned to pronounce

the word which is the Shibboleth of their party, to follow the common cry, and run with the rest, that have agreed to do so too!

But if they all understood the notions never so well, not to speak of only those which are peculiar to their way, but, which are most necessary to true religion itself; were it not, in them, a strange frenzy, to contend with clubs and swords about a mere notion, which has no influence on their practice, and they intend never shall? If any should profess to be of opinion that a triangle is a figure that hath four corners, sober men would think it enough to say they were mad, but would let them quietly enjoy their humour, and never think it fit to levy armies against them, or embroil the world upon so slender a quarrel. And wherein can the notions belonging to religion be rationally of higher account with them, who never purpose to make any use of them, and against which it is impossible for any to fight so mischievously by the most vehement, verbal opposition, as themselves do, by their opposite practice, most directly assaulting and striking at, even what is most principally fundamental to religion and the temple of God? Not that these great things are unworthy to be contended for. All that I mean is, what have these men to do with them? or how irrationally and inconsistently with themselves do they seem so concerned about them?

For even lesser things, the appendages to this sacred frame, are not without their just value, to them who understand their intent and use. Nor am I designing to tempt your Lordship to the neglect or disesteem of any the least thing appertaining to religion. And if any other should, I rejoice daily to behold in you that resolute adherence to whatsoever apparently divine truth and institution, to common order, decency, peace and unity, which so greatly contribute both to the beauty and stability of God's house, that may even defy and dismay the attempt; and gives ground, however, to be confident it

would be labour bestowed as vainly, as it were impiously designed. So much greater assurance do you give of your constant fidelity and devotedness to the substance of practical religion itself.

Only how deeply it is to be resented, that while it should be so with all others, so few understand wherein that substance doth consist. I shall not now take notice of men's very different, which must infer some men's mistaken, apprehensions concerning the things necessary to be believed. But, besides that, though some religious sentiments be most deeply natural to men, and, for aught we certainly know, as far extended as the true notion of humanity can be, yet, in all times, there has been a too general mistake, not peculiar to the paganish world only, of the true design, and proportionably of the genuine principle of it.

That is, it has not been understood as a thing designed to purify and refine men's spirits, to reconcile and join them to God, associate them with him, and make them finally blessed in him. But only to avert or pacify his wrath, procure his favourable aspect on their secular affairs, how unjust soever, while, in the meantime, they have thought of nothing less than becoming like to him, acquainted with him, and happy in him. A reconciliation hath only been dreamed of on one side, namely, on his, not their own; on which, they are not so much as inclined to any thing else, than the continuance of the former distance and disaffection.

Consonantly whereto, it is plainly to be seen, that the great principle which hath mostly animated religion in the world hath not been a generous love, but a basely servile fear and dread. Whence the custom of sacrificing hath so generally prevailed, whencesoever it took its rise, in the pagan world. And with so deep an apprehension of its absolute necessity, that men of even so vile and barbarous

manners* as the Gauls of old, chose, in matters of controversy, to submit their greatest concernments to the pleasure and arbitrement of their Druids, those sacred persons, as they reckoned them, rather than be interdicted the sacrifices, the only punishment they could inflict, in case of their refusal: which punishment, as is testified by Julius Cæsar,† they accounted the most grievous imaginable. And it needs not be said in what part of the world the same engine hath had the same power with men, even since they obtained to be called Christian. Which, while it hath been of such force with them, that, notwithstanding, persisted in courses of the most profligate wickedness; whence could their religion, such as it was, proceed, save only from a dread of divine revenge? What else could it design, though that most vainly, but the averting it, without even altering their own vile course?

Now let this be the account and estimate of religion—only to propitiate the Deity towards flagitious men, still remaining so; and how monstrous a notion doth it give us of God, that he is one that by such things can ever be rendered favourable to such men! Let it not be so,—while you sever its true and proper end also,—how most despicably inept and foolish a thing doth it make religion! A compages and frame of merely scenical observances and actions, intended to no end at all.

In a word, their religion is nothing but foolery, which is not taken up and prosecuted with a sincere aim to the bettering their spirits; the making them holy, peaceful, meek, humble, merciful, studious of doing good, and the composing them into temples, some way meet for the residence of the blessed God; with design and expectation to have his intimate, vital presence settled, and made permanent there.

The materials and preparation of which temple are no where entirely contained and directed, but in the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: as, hereafter, we may with divine assistance labour to evince. The greater is the ignominy done to the temple of God, and the Christian name, by only titular and nick-named Christianity. Will they pretend themselves the temple of God, partakers in the high privilege and dignity of the Emmanuel, in whom most eminently the Deity inhabiteth, who are discernibly, to all that know them, as great strangers to God, and of a temper of spirit as disagreeing to him, of as worldly spirits, as unmortified passions, as proud, wrathful, vain-glorious, envious, morose, merciless, disinclined to do good, as any other men? When God cleanses his house, and purges his floor, where will these be found?

And for this temple itself, it is a structure whereto there is a concurrence of truth and holiness; the former letting in—it were otherwise a darksome, disorderly, uncomfortable house—a vital, directive, formative light, to a heavenly, calm, God-like frame of spirit, composed and made up of the latter.

It is this temple, my Lord, which I would invite you both to continue your respect unto in others, and, more and more, to prepare and beautify in yourself.

You will find little, in this part offered to your view, more than only its vestibulum, or rather a very plain, if not rude, frontispiece; with the more principal pillars that must support the whole frame. Nor, whereas, by way of introduction to the discourse of this temple, and as most fundamental to the being of it, the existence of the great Inhabitant is so largely insisted on, that I think that altogether a needless labour. Of all the sects and parties in the world, though there are few that avow it, and fewer, if any, that are so, by any

formed judgment, unshaken by a suspicion and dread of the contrary, that of atheists we have reason enough to suppose the most numerous, as having diffused and spread itself through all the rest. And though, with the most, under disguise, yet uncovering, with too many, its ugly face: and scarce ever more than in our own days. Wherefore, though it hath never been in any age more strongly impugned; yet, because the opposition can never be too common, to so common an enemy, this additional endeavour may prove not wholly out of season. And the Epicurean atheist is chiefly designed against in this discourse; that being the atheism most in fashion.

Nor is any thing more pertinent to the design of the discourse intended concerning God's temple; which importing worship to be done to him, requires, first, a belief that he is.

And surely the 'Ei' inscribed of old, as Plutarch tells us, on the Delphic temple; signifying, as, after divers other conjectures, he concludes it to do, Thou dost exist, is an inscription much more fitly set in view, at our entrance into the temple of the living God, whose name is, I AM.

Amidst the pleasant entertainments of which temple, made more intimate to you than human discourse can make it, may you spend many happy days in this world, as a preparative and introduction to a happier eternity in the other. Whereto he is under many and deep obligations, by any means, to contribute to his uttermost, who must, especially in the offices relating to this temple, profess himself,

My honoured Lord,

Your Lordship's most humbly

Devoted servant,

JOHN HOWE.

PART I

CONCERNING GOD'S EXISTENCE, AND HIS CONVERSABLENESS WITH MAN

CHAPTER I

This notion common. Authorities needless. Insignificant with the atheistical, who have made it more necessary to defend religion and a temple in general than this or that. Better defended against them by practice and use, than argument, whereof they are incapable. Often disputes of its principles not necessary to the practice of religion. Some consideration of those supposed in the general notion of a temple, pertinent, however, to this discourse.

I. IT is so well known that this notion hath long obtained in the world, that we need not quote sayings to avouch it; wherewith not the sacred writings only, but others, even of pagans themselves, would plentifully furnish us.

But as authorities are, in a plain case, needless to unprejudiced minds; so will they be useless to the prejudiced, be the case never so plain. Nor is any prejudice deeper, or less vincible, than that of profane minds against religion. With such it would in the present argument signify little, to tell them what hath been said or thought before by any others. Not because it is their general course to be so very circumspect and wary, as never to approve or assent to anything, unless upon the clearest and most convincing

demonstration; but from their peculiar dislike of those things only that are of this special import and tendency. Discourse to them what you will of a temple, and it will be nauseous and unsavoury; not as being cross to their reason (which they are as little curious to gratify as any other sort of men), but to their ill humour, and the disaffected temper of their mind; whence also, though they cannot soon or easily get that mastery over their understandings herein, yet because they would fain have it so, they do what they can to believe religion nothing else but the effect of timorous fancy; and a temple, consequently, one of the most idle impertinences in the world.

To these, the discussion of the notion we have proposed to consider, will be thought a beating the air, an endeavour to give consistency to a shadow. And if their reason and power could as well serve their purpose as their anger and scorn, they would soon tear up the holy ground on which a temple is set, and wholly subvert the sacred frame.

I speak of such as deny the existence of the ever-blessed Deity; or if they are not arrived to that express and formed misbelief, whose hearts are inclined and ready to determine, even against their misgiving and more suspicious minds, there is no God; who, if they cannot as yet believe, do wish there were none; and so strongly, as in a great degree to prepare them for that belief; that would fain banish him not only out of all their thoughts, but the world too; and to whom it is so far from being a grateful sound, that the tabernacle of God is with men on earth, that they grudge to allow him a place in heaven. At least, if they are willing to admit the existence of any God at all, do say to him, "Depart from us;" and would have him so confined to heaven, that he and they may have nothing to do with one another; and do, therefore, rack their impious wits to serve their hypothesis either way, that under its protection they may securely

indulge themselves in a course, upon which they find the apprehension of a God interesting himself in human affairs, would have a very unfavourable and threatening aspect.

They are, therefore, constrained to take great pains with themselves, to discipline and chastise their minds and understandings to that tameness and patience, as contentedly to suffer the razing out of their most natural impressions and sentiments. And they reckon they have arrived to a very heroical perfection, when they can pass a scoff upon anything that carries the least signification with it of the fear of God; and can be able to laugh at the weak and squeamish folly of those softer and effeminate minds, that will trouble themselves with any thoughts or cares, how to please and propitiate a Deity; and doubt not but they have made all safe, and effectually done their business, when they have learned to put the ignominious titles of frenzy and folly upon devotion, in whatsoever dress or garb; to cry canting, to any serious mention of the name of God, and break a bold, adventurous jest upon any the most sacred mysteries, or decent and awful solemnities, of religion.

II. These content not themselves to encounter this or that sect, but mankind, and reckon it too mean and inglorious an achievement, to overturn one sort of temple or another, but would down with them all, even to the ground.

And they are bound in reason and justice to pardon the emulation which they provoke, of vying with them as to the universality of their design; and not to regret it, if they find there be any that think it their duty to waive a while serving the temple of this or that party, as less considerable, to defend that one wherein all men have a common interest and concernment.

Since matters are brought to that exigency and hazard, that it seems less necessary to contend about this or that mode of religion, as whether there ought to be any at all. What was said of a former age, could never better agree to any than our own, "that none was ever more fruitful of religions, and barren of religion or true piety." It concerns us to consider, whether the fertility of those many, doth not as well cause, as accompany, a barrenness in this one. And since the iniquity of the world hath made that too suitable, which were otherwise unseemly in itself, to speak of a temple as a fortified place, whose own sacredness ought ever to have been its sufficient fortification, it is time to be aware lest our forgetful heat and zeal in the defence of this or that out-work, do expose, not to say betray, the main fortress to assault and danger. Whilst it hath long been by this means a neglected, forsaken thing; and is more decayed by vacancy and disuse, than it could ever have been by the most forcible battery, so as even to promise the rude assailant an easy victory. Who fears to insult over an empty, dispirited, dead religion! which alive and shining in its native glory, as that temple doth which is compacted of lively stones united to the living corner-stone, bears with it a magnificence and state that would check a profane look, and dazzle the presumptuous eye that durst venture to glance at it obliquely, or with disrespect. The temple of the living God, manifestly animated by his vital presence, would not only dismay opposition, but command veneration also, and be both its own ornament and defence. Nor can it be destitute of that presence, if we ourselves render it not inhospitable, and make not its proper Inhabitant become a stranger at home. If we preserve in ourselves a capacity of the divine presence, and keep the temple of God in a posture fit to receive him, he would then no more forsake it, than the soul a sound and healthy body, not violated in any vital part. But if he forsake it once, it then becomes an exposed and despised thing. And as the most impotent, inconsiderable enemy can securely trample on the

dead body of the greatest hero, that alive carried awfulness and terror in his looks, so is the weak-spirited atheist become as bold now, as he was willing before, to make rude attempts upon the temple of God, when He hath been provoked to leave it, who is its life, strength, and glory.

III. Therefore, as they who will not be treacherous to the interest of God and man, must own an obligation and necessity to apply themselves to the serious endeavour of restoring the life and honour of religion, so will the case itself be found to point out to us the proper course in order hereto. That is, that it must rather be endeavoured by practice than by disputation; by contending, every one with himself, to excite the love of God in his own breast, rather than with the profane adversary, to kindle his anger: more aiming to foment and cherish the domestic, continual fire of God's temple and altar, than transmit a flame into the enemies' camp. For what can this signify? And it seldom fails to be the event of disputing against prejudice (especially of disputing for the sum of religion, at once, against the prepossession of a sensual profane temper, and a violent inclination and resolvedness to be wicked), to beget more wrath than conviction, and sooner to incense the impatient wretch than enlighten him. And by how much the more cogent and enforcing reasonings are used, and the less is left the confounded, baffled creature to say on behalf of a cause so equally deplorable and vile; the more he finds himself concerned to fortify his obstinate will, and supply his want of reason with resolution: to find out the most expedite ways of diverting from what he hath no mind to consider; to entertain himself with the most stupifying pleasures, (that must serve the same turn that opium is wont to do in the case of broken, unquiet sleep), or whatsoever may most effectually serve to mortify any divine principle, and destroy all sense of God out of his soul.

And how grateful herein, and meritorious often, are the assistant railleries of servile, and it may be mercenary, wits? How highly shall he oblige them that can furnish out a libel against religion, and help them with more artificial spite, to blaspheme what they cannot disprove. And now shall the scurrilous pasquil, and a few bottles, work a more effectual confutation of religion, than all the reason and argument in the world shall be able to countervail. This proves too often the unhappy issue of misapplying what is most excellent in its own kind and place, to improper and incapable subjects.

IV. And who sees not this to be the case with the modern atheist, who hath been pursued with that strength and vigour of argument, even in our own days, that would have baffled persons of any other temper than their own, into shame and silence? And so as no other support hath been left to irreligion, than a senseless stupidity, an obstinate resolvedness not to consider, a faculty to stifle an argument with a jest, to charm their reason by sensual softnesses into a dead sleep; with a strict and circumspect care that it may never awake into any exercise above the condition of dozed and half-witted persons; or if it do, by the next debauch, presently to lay it fast again. So that the very principle fails in this sort of men, whereto, in reasoning, we should appeal, and apply ourselves. And it were almost the same thing, to offer arguments to the senseless images, or forsaken carcasses of men. It belongs to the grandeur of religion to neglect the impotent assaults of these men: as it is a piece of glory, and bespeaks a worthy person's right understanding, and just value of himself, to disdain the combat with an incompetent or a foiled enemy. It is becoming and seemly, that the grand, ancient, and received truth, which tends to, and is the reason of, the godly life, do sometimes keep state; and no more descend to perpetual, repeated janglings with every scurrilous and impertinent trifler, than a great and redoubted prince

would think it fit to dispute the rights of his crown with a drunken, distracted fool, or a madman.

Men of atheistical persuasions, having abandoned their reason, need what will more powerfully strike their sense—storms and whirlwinds, flames and thunderbolts; things not so apt immediately to work upon their understanding, as their fear; and that will astonish, that they may convince:—that the great God make himself known by the judgments which he executes. Stripes are for the back of fools, as they are justly styled, that say in their hearts, there is no God. But if it may be hoped any gentler method may prove effectual with any of them, we are rather to expect the good effect from the steady, uniform course of their actions and conversation, who profess reverence and devotedness to an eternal Being; and the correspondence of their way to their avowed principle, that acts them on agreeably to itself, and may also incur the sense of the beholder, and gradually invite and draw his observation; than from the most severe and necessitating argumentation that exacts a sudden assent.

V. At least, in a matter of so clear and commanding evidence, reasoning many times looks like trifling; and out of a hearty concernedness and jealousy for the honour of religion, one would rather it should march on, with an heroic neglect of bold and malapert cavillers, and only demonstrate and recommend itself by its own vigorous, comely, coherent course, than make itself cheap by discussing at every turn its principles: as that philosopher who thought it the fittest way to confute the sophisms against motion, only by walking.

But we have nothing so considerable objected against practical religion, as well to deserve the name of a sophism; at least, no sophism so perplexing in the case of religious, as of natural motion;

jeers and sarcasms are the most weighty, convincing arguments. And let the deplorate crew mock on; there are those in the world, that will think they have, however, reason enough to persist in the way of godliness; and that have already laid the foundation of that reverence which they bear to a Deity, more strongly, than to be shaken and beaten off from it by a jest: and therefore will not think it necessary to have the principles of their religion vindicated afresh, every time they are called to the practice of it. For surely they would be religious upon very uncertain terms, that will think themselves concerned to suspend, or discontinue their course, as oft as they are encountered in it with a wry mouth or a distorted look; or that are apt to be put out of conceit with their religion by the laughter of a fool; or by their cavils and taunts against the rules and principles of it, whom only their own sensual temper, and impatience of serious thoughts, have made willing to have them false. That any indeed should commence religious, and persist with blind zeal in this or that discriminating profession, without ever considering why they should do so, is unmanly and absurd; especially when a gross ignorance of the true reasons and grounds of religion shall be shadowed over with a pretended awe and scrupulousness to inquire about things so sacred; and an inquisitive temper shall have an ill character put upon it, as if rational and profane were words of the same signification; or, as if reason and judgment were utterly execrated, and an unaccountable, enthusiastic fury, baptized and hallowed, the only principle of religion. But when the matter hath undergone already a severe inquisition, and been searched to the bottom; principles have been examined; the strength and firmness hath been tried of its deepest and most fundamental grounds, and an approving judgment been past in the case, and a resolution thereupon taken up, of a suitable and correspondent practice; after all this, it were a vain and unwarrantable curiosity, to be perpetually perplexing one's easy path with new and suspicious researches into the most acknowledged

things. Nor were this course a little prejudicial to the design and end of religion, (if we will allow it any at all,) the refining of our minds, and the fitting us for a happy eternity. For when shall that building be finished, the foundations whereof must be every day torn up anew, upon pretence of further caution, and for more diligent search? Or when will he reach his journey's end, that is continually vexed (and often occasioned to go back from whence he came) by causeless anxieties about his way; and whether ever he began a right course, yea or no?

Many go securely on in a course most ignominiously wicked and vile, without ever debating the matter with themselves, or inquiring, if there be any rational principle to justify or bear them out. Much more may they, with a cheerful confidence persist in their well-chosen way, that have once settled their resolutions about it upon firm and assured grounds and principles, without running over the same course of reasonings with themselves in reference to each single, devotional act; or thinking it necessary every time they are to pray, to have it proved to them, there is a God. And because yet many of these do need excitation; and though they are not destitute of pious sentiments and inclinations, and have somewhat in them of the ancient foundations and frame of a temple, have yet, by neglect, suffered it to grow into decay; it is therefore the principal intendment of this discourse, not to assert the principles of religion against those with whom they have no place, but to propound what may some way tend to reinforce and strengthen them, where they visibly languish; and awaken such as profess a devotedness to God, to the speedy and vigorous endeavour of repairing the ruins of his temple in their own breasts; that they may thence hold forth a visible representation of an indwelling Deity, in effects and actions of life worthy of such a presence, and render his enshrined glory, transparent to the view and conviction of the irreligious and profane.

Which hath more of hope in it, and is likely to be to better purpose, than disputing with them that more know how to jest than reason; and better understand the relishes of meat and drink, than the strength of an argument.

VI. But though it would be both an ungrateful and insignificant labour, and as talking to the wind, to discourse of religion with persons that have abjured all seriousness, and that cannot endure to think; and would be like fighting with a storm, to contend against the blasphemy and outrage of insolent mockers at whatever is sacred and divine; and were too much a debasing of religion, to retort sarcasms with men not capable of being talked with in any other than such (that is, their own) language: yet it wants neither its use nor pleasure, to the most composed minds, and that are most exempt from wavering herein, to view the frame of their religion, as it aptly and even naturally rises and grows up from its very foundations—to contemplate its first principles, which they may in the meantime find no present cause or inclination to dispute. They will know how to consider its most fundamental grounds, not with doubt or suspicion, but with admiration and delight; and can, with a calm and silent pleasure, enjoy the repose and rest of a quiet and well-assured mind, rejoicing and contented to know to themselves (when others refuse to partake with them in this joy), and feel all firm and stable under them, whereupon either the practice or the hopes of their religion do depend.

And there may be also many others of good and pious inclinations, that have never yet applied themselves to consider the principal and most fundamental grounds of religion, so as to be able to give, or discern, any tolerable reason of them. For either the sluggishness of their own temper may have indisposed them to any more painful and laborious exercise of their minds, and made them to be content with

the easier course of taking every thing upon trust, and imitating the example of others; or they have been unhappily misinformed, that it consists not with the reverence due to religion, to search into the grounds of it. Yea, and may have laid this for one of its main grounds, that no exercise of reason may have any place about it. Or perhaps having never tried, they apprehend a greater difficulty in coming to a clear and certain resolution herein, than indeed there is. Now such need to be excited to set their own thoughts a-work this way, and to be assisted herein. They should therefore consider who gave them the understandings which they fear to use. And can they use them to better purpose, or with more gratitude to Him who made them intelligent, and not brute creatures, than in labouring to know, that they may also, by a reasonable service, worship and adore their Maker? Are they not to use their very senses about the matters of religion? "For the invisible things of God, even his eternal power and Godhead, are clearly seen," &c. And their faith comes by hearing. But what? are these more sacred and divine, and more akin to religion, than their reason and judgment, without which also their sense can be of no use to them herein? Or is it the best way of making use of what God has revealed of himself, by whatsoever means, not to understand what he hath revealed? It is most true indeed, that when we once come clearly to be informed that God hath revealed this or that thing, we are then readily to subject (and not oppose) our feeble reasonings to his plain revelation. And it were a most insolent and uncreaturely arrogance, to contend or not yield him the cause, though things have to us seemed otherwise. But it were as inexcusable negligence, not to make use of our understandings to the best advantage; that we may both know that such a revelation is divine, and what it signifies, after we know whence it is. And any one that considers, will soon see it were very unseasonable, at least, to allege the written, divine revelation, as the ground of his religion, till he have gone lower, and fore-known some things (by and by to be

insisted on) as preparatory, and fundamental to the knowledge of this.

And because it is obvious to suppose how great an increase of strength and vigour pious minds may receive hence, how much it may animate them to the service of the temple, and contribute to their more cheerful progress in a religious course; it will therefore not be besides our present purpose, but very pursuant to it, to consider awhile, not in the contentious way of brawling and captious disputation (the noise whereof is as unsuitable to the temple as that of axes and hammers), but of calm and sober discourse, the more principal and lowermost grounds upon which the frame of religion rests, and to the supposal whereof, the notion and use of any such thing as a temple in the world, do owe themselves.

CHAPTER. II

The two more principal grounds which a temple supposes. First, The existence of God. Secondly, His conversableness with men: both argued from common consent. The former doubtful if ever wholly denied in former days. The latter also implied, in the known general practice of some or other religion. Evidenced, in that some, no strangers to the world, have thought it the difference of man. The immodesty and rashness of the persons from whom any opposition can be expected. These two grounds proposed to be more strictly considered apart. And, first, The existence of God, where the notion of God is assigned. The parts whereof are proposed to be evinced severally of some existent being. First, Eternity. Second, Self-origination. Third, Independency. Fourth, Necessity of existence. Fifth, Self-activity. (The impossibility this world should be this

necessary self-active being. The inconsistency of necessary alterable matter, more largely deduced in a marginal digression.) Sixth, Life. Seventh, Vast and mighty power. A Corollary.

I. Now the grounds more necessary to be laid down, and which are supposed in the most general notion of a temple, are especially these two; The existence of God, and his conversableness with men. For no notion of a temple can more easily occur to any one's thoughts, or is more agreeable to common acceptance, than that it is a habitation wherein God is pleased to dwell among men.

Therefore to the designation and use of it, or (which is all one) to the intention and exercise of religion, the belief or persuasion is necessary of those two things, (the same which we find made necessary on the same account) "That God is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him," Heb. 11:6: as will appear when the manner and design of that his abode with men shall be considered.

These are the grounds upon which the sacred frame of a temple ought to stand, and without which it must be acknowledged an unsupported, airy fabric. And since it were vain to discourse what a temple is, or whereto the notion of it may be applied, unless it be well resolved that there is, or ought to be, any such thing, the strength and firmness of this its double ground should be tried and searched, and of its pretensions thereto.

II. And though it be not necessary, in a matter that is so plain, and wherein so much is to be said otherwise; yet it will not be impertinent to consider, first, what prescription (which in clearing of titles is not wont to signify nothing) will signify in the present case. And,—

First, for the existence of God, we need not labour much to show how constantly and generally it hath been acknowledged through the whole world; it being so difficult, to produce an uncontroverted instance of any that ever denied it in more ancient times. For as for them whose names have been infamous amongst* men heretofore upon that account, there hath been that said that, at least, wants not probability for the clearing them of so foul an imputation. That is, that they were maliciously represented as having denied the existence of a Deity, because they impugned and derided the vulgar conceits and poetical fictions of those days, concerning the multitude and the ridiculous attributes of their imaginary deities. Of which sort Cicero † mentions not a few; their being inflamed with anger, and mad with lust; their wars, fights, wounds; their hatreds, discords; their births and deaths, &c.: who, though he speaks less favourably of some of these men, and mentions one ‡ as doubting whether there were any gods or no, (for which cause his book in the beginning whereof he had intimated that doubt, [as Cotta is brought in, informing us], was publicly burnt at Athens, and himself banished his country,) and two others § as expressly denying them; yet the more generally decried patron || of atheism, (as he hath been accounted,) he makes Velleius highly vindicate from this imputation, and say of him, that he was the first that took notice that even nature itself had impressed the notion of God upon the minds of all men, who also gives us these as his words: "What nation is there, or set of men that hath not, without teaching, a certain anticipation of the gods, which he calls a prolepsis, a certain preventive, or fore-conceived information of a thing in the mind, without which nothing can be understood, or sought, or disputed of?" Unto which purpose the same author ¶ (as is commonly observed) elsewhere speaks, that there is no nation so barbarous, no one of all men so savage, as that some apprehension of the gods hath not tinctured his mind; that many do think indeed corruptly of them, which is, saith he, the effect

of vicious custom, but all do believe there is a divine power and nature. Nor, as he there proceeds, hath men's talking and agreeing together effected this; it is not an opinion settled in men's minds by public constitutions, and sanctions. But in every matter the consent of all nations is to be reckoned a law of nature.

And whatever the apprehensions of those few, (and some others that are wont to be mentioned under the same vile character,) were in this matter, yet so inconsiderable hath the dissent been, that as another most ingenious pagan author* writes, "In so great a contention and variety of opinions, (that is, concerning what God is,) herein you shall see the law and reason † of every country to be harmonious and one; that there is one God, the King and Father of all;—that the many are but the servants and co-rulers unto God;‡—that herein the Greek and the barbarian say the same thing, the islander and the inhabitant of the continent, the wise and the foolish: go to the utmost bounds of the ocean, and you find God there. But if," says he, "in all times there have been two or three, an atheistical, vile, senseless sort of persons,§ whose own eyes and ears deceive them, and who are maimed in their very soul, an irrational and sterile sort, as monstrous creatures as a lion without courage, an ox without horns, or a bird without wings; yet out of those you shall understand somewhat of God; for they know and confess him, whether they will or no."

III. Yea, and the use of a temple and the exercise of religion, which suppose the second ground also, as well as the first, have been so very common, though not altogether equally common with the former, that it is the observation of that famed moralist,|| "That if one travel the world, it is possible to find cities without walls, without letters, without kings, without wealth, without coin, without schools and theatres; but a city without a temple, or that useth no

worship, prayers, &c., no one ever saw." And he believes a city may more easily be built, ¶ without a foundation, or ground to set it on, than any community of men have or keep a consistency without religion.

IV. And it is no mean argument of the commonness of religion, that there have been some in the world, and those no idiots neither, that have accounted it the most constituent and distinguishing thing in human nature. So that Platonic Jew** judgeth invocation "of God, with hope towards him, to be, if we will speak the truth, the only genuine property of man; and saith, that only he who is acted by such a hope, is a man, and he that is destitute of this hope is no man;" †† preferring this account to the common definition, (which he says is only of the concrete of man,) that he is a reasonable, and mortal, living creature. And yet he extends not reason further, that is, to the inferior creatures; for he had expressly said above,— "That they who have no hope towards God, have no part or share in the rational nature." And a noble person* of our own says, "That upon accurate search, religion and faith appear the only ultimate differences of man; whereof neither divine perfection is capable, nor brutal imperfection;" reason, in his account, descending low among the inferior creatures. But these agreeing more peculiarly to man, and so universally, that he affirms, "There is no man well and entirely in his wits that doth not worship some deity." Who, therefore, accounted it a less absurdity to admit such a thing as a rational beast, than an irreligious man. Now if these have taken notice of any instances that seemed to claim an exemption from this notion of man, they have rather thought fit to let them pass as an anomalous sort of creatures, reducible to no certain rank or order in the creation, than that any should be admitted into the account, or be acknowledged of the society of men, that were found destitute of an inclination to worship the common Author of our beings. And according to this opinion, by

whatsoever steps any should advance in the denial of a Deity, they should proceed by the same, to the abandoning their own humanity, and by saying there is no God, should proclaim themselves no men.

However, it discovers (which is all that is at present intended by it) the commonness, not to say absolute universality of religion, in the observation of these persons, whom we must suppose no strangers to the world, in their own and former times. And if it afford any less ground for such an observation in our present time, we only see that as the world grows older it grows worse; and sinks into a deeper oblivion of its original, as it recedes further from it.

And, notwithstanding, this so common a consent is yet not without its weight and significancy to our present purpose; if we consider, how impossible it is to give or imagine any tolerable account of its original, if we do not confess it natural, and refer it to that common Author of all nature whom we are inquiring about: of which so much is said by divers others,[†] that nothing more needs here to be said about it.

V. And at least so much is gained by it to a temple, that unless some very plain and ungainsayable demonstration be brought against the grounds of it, (which will be time enough to consider when we see it pretended to,) no opposition, fit to be regarded, can ever be made to it. That is, none at all can possibly be made, but what shall proceed from the most immodest and rash confidence, animated and borne up only by a design of being most licentiously wicked, and of making the world become so. Immodest confidence it must be, for it is not a man, or a nation, or an age, that such have to oppose, but mankind; upon which they shall cast, not some lighter reflection, but the vilest and most opprobrious contumely and scorn that can be imagined. That is the imputation of so egregious folly and dotage, as all this

while to have worshipped a shadow, as the author of their being; and a figment, for their common parent. And this not the ruder only, and uninquisitive vulgar, but the wisest and most considering persons in all times. Surely less than clear and pregnant demonstration (at least not wild, incoherent, self-confounding suppositions and surmises, of which more hereafter) will never be thought sufficient to justify the boldness of an attempt that shall carry this signification with it. And it will be a confidence equally rash, as immodest. For what can be the undertakers' hope, either of success or reward? Do they think it an easy enterprize, and that a few quirks of malapert wit will serve the turn to baffle the Deity into nothing, and unteach the world religion, and raze out impressions renewed and transmitted through so many ages, and persuade the race of men to descend a peg lower, and believe they ought to live, and shall die like the perishing beast? Or, do they expect to find men indifferent in a matter that concerns their common practice and hope, and wherein their zeal hath been wont to be such as that it hath obtained to be proverbial, to strive as for the very altars? And what should their reward be, when the natural tendency of their undertaking is to exclude themselves from the expectation of any in another world? And what will they expect in this, from them whose temples and altars they go about to subvert? Besides, that if they be not hurried by a blind, impetuous rashness, they would consider their danger, and apprehend themselves concerned to strike very sure. For, if there remain but the least possibility that the matter is otherwise, and that the Being doth exist, whose honour and worship they contend against, they must understand his favour to be of some concernment to them; which they take but an ill course to entitle themselves unto. Much more have they reason to be solicitous, when their horrid cause not only wants evidence, nor hath hitherto pretended to more than a bare possibility of truth on their side, but hath so clear (and as yet altogether unrefuted) evidence lying against it, that quite takes away

that very possibility, and all ground for that miserable, languishing hope, that it could ever have afforded them. Therefore is it left also wholly unimaginable, what principle can animate their design, other than a sensual humour, impatient of restraints, or of any obligation to be sober, just, and honest, beyond what their own inclination, and much-mistaken interest or conveniency, would lead them to.

By all which, we have a sufficient measure of the persons from whom any opposition unto religion can be expected, and how much their authority, their example, or their scorn, ought to signify with us. And that a more valuable opposition can never be made, our experience, both that hitherto it hath not been, and that it would have been if it could, might render us tolerably secure. For surely it may well be supposed, that in a world so many ages lost in wickedness, all imaginable trials would have been made to disburden it of religion; and somewhat that had been specious at least, to that purpose, had been hit upon, if the matter had been any ways possible. And the more wicked the world hath been, so directly contrary, and so continually assaulted a principle, not yet vanquished, appears the more plainly invincible. And that the assaults have been from the lusts of men, rather than their reason, shows the more evidently, that their reason hath only wanted a ground to work upon, which if it could have been found, their lusts had certainly pressed it to their service in this warfare, and not have endured, rather, the molestation of continual checks and rebukes from it.

Nor need we yet to let our minds hang in suspense, or be in a dubious expectation, that possibly some or other great wit may arise, that shall perform some great thing in this matter, and discover the groundlessness and folly of religion, by plain and undeniable reasons that have not as yet been thought on; but betake ourselves to a stricter and closer consideration of our own grounds, which if we can

once find to be certainly true, we may be sure they are of eternal truth, and no possible contrivance or device can ever make them false.

VI. Having therefore seen what common consent may contribute to the establishing of them jointly; we may now apply ourselves to consider and search into each of them (so far as they are capable of a distinct consideration) severally and apart. Having still this mark in our eye, our own confirmation and excitation in reference to what is the proper work and business of a temple, religion and conversation with God: how little soever any endeavour in this kind may be apt to signify with the otherwise minded.

VII. And, first, for the existence of God; that we may regularly and with evidence make it out to ourselves, that he is, or doth exist; and may, withal, see what the belief of his existence will contribute towards the evincing of the reasonableness of erecting a temple to him, it is requisite that we first settle a true notion of him in our minds; or be at an agreement with ourselves, what it is that we mean, or would have to be signified by the name of God; otherwise we know not what we seek, nor when we have found him.

And though we must beforehand professedly avow, that we take him to be such a one as we can never comprehend in our thoughts; that this knowledge is too excellent for us, or he is more excellent than that we can perfectly know him; yet it will be sufficient to guide us in our search after his existence, if we can give such a description, or assign such certain characters of his being, as will severally, or together, distinguish him from all things else. For then we shall be able to call him by his own name, and say, This is God; whatever his being may contain more, or whatsoever other properties may belong

to it, beyond what we can as yet compass in our present thoughts of him.

VIII. And such an account we shall have of what we are inquiring after, if we have the conception in our minds of an eternal, uncaused, independent, necessary Being, that hath active power, life, wisdom, goodness, and whatsoever other supposable excellency, in the highest perfection originally, in and of itself.

Such a being we would with common consent express by the name of God. Even they that would profess to deny or doubt of his existence, yet must acknowledge this to be the notion of that which they deny, or doubt of. Or if they should say this is not it, or, which is all one, that they do not deny or doubt of the existence of such a Being as this; they on the other hand that would argue for his existence, may conclude the cause is yielded them; this being that which they designed to contend for.

It must indeed be acknowledged, that some things belonging to the notion of God might have been more expressly named. But it was not necessary they should, being sufficiently included here, as will afterwards appear: nor perhaps so convenient; some things, the express mention whereof is omitted, being such as more captious persons might be apt at first to startle at; who yet may possibly, as they are insinuated under other expressions, become by degrees more inclinable to receive them afterwards. And, however, if this be not a full and adequate notion, (as who can ever tell when we have an express, distinct, particular notion of God, which we are sure is adequate and full?) it may however suffice, that it is a true one, as far as it goes, and such as cannot be mistaken for the notion of any thing else. And it will be more especially sufficient to our present purpose, if enough be comprehended in it to recommend him to us as a fit and

worthy object of religion; and whereto a temple ought to be designed; as it will appear there is, when also we shall have added what is intended, concerning his conversableness with men. The ground whereof is also in great part included in this account of him; so that the consideration of it cannot be wholly severed from that of his existence; as hath been intimated above. That is, that if such a Being exist, unto which the notion belongs, it will sufficiently appear, he is such as that he can converse with men, though it doth not thence certainly follow that he will. For it were a rash and bold adventure, to say he could not be God, if he did not condescend to such terms of reconciliation and converse with apostate creatures. Whereof, therefore, more is to be said, than the mere manifesting his existence, in its own place.

And as to this, we shall endeavour to proceed gradually, and in the most familiar and intelligible way we can.

I am not unapprehensive that I might here indeed, following great examples, have proceeded in another method than that which I now choose. And because we can have no true, appropriate, or distinguishing idea or conception of Deity, which doth not include necessity of existence in it, have gone that shorter way, immediately to have concluded the existence of God, from his idea itself. And I see not, but treading those wary steps which the incomparable Dr. Cudworth (in his Intellectual System) hath done, that argument admits, in spite of cavil, of being managed with demonstrative evidence. Yet since some most pertinaciously insist that it is at the bottom but a mere sophism; therefore without detracting any thing from the force of it as it stands in that excellent work, and the writings of some other noted authors, I have chosen to go this other way, as plainer and less liable to exception, though further about. And beginning lower, to evince from the certain, present existence of

things not existing necessarily, or of themselves, their manifest dependence on what doth exist necessarily of itself; and how manifestly impossible it was that any thing should exist now, or hereafter to all eternity, if somewhat had not existed necessarily and of itself from all eternity. And I trust not only this will appear with competent evidence in the sequel of this discourse, but also that this necessary, self-existent being is God, a being absolutely perfect, such to whom the rest of his idea must belong; and to whom religion or the honour of a temple is due.

And because that was the point at which this discourse principally aims, and wherein it finally terminates, not merely the discovering of atheism, but irreligion; (from an apprehension that as to use and practice, it was all one to acknowledge no God at all, as only such a one to whom no temple or religion could belong;) it was therefore besides my purpose to consider the several forms or schemes of atheism, that have been devised in any age, as that excellent person hath done; and enough for my purpose, to refute the Epicurean atheism, or theism, (it is indifferent which you call it,) because that sect-master, while he was liberal in granting there were deities, yet was so impious as to deny worship to any, accounting they were such, as between whom and man there could be no conversation; on their part, by providence, or on man's, by religion. Therefore, if we shall have made it evident in the issue, that God is, and is conversable with men, both the Epicurean atheism vanishes from off the stage, and with it all atheism besides, and irreligion.

IX. We therefore begin with God's existence. For the evincing whereof we may first be most assured, that there hath been somewhat or other from all eternity, or that looking backward, somewhat of real being must be confessed eternal. Let such as have not been used to think of anything more than what they could see

with their eyes, and to whom reasoning only seems difficult because they have not tried what they can do in it, but use their thoughts a little, and by moving them a few easy steps, they will soon find themselves as sure of this as that they see, or hear, or understand, or are anything.

For being sure that something now is, (that you see, for instance, or are something,) you must then acknowledge, that certainly either something always was, and hath ever been, or been from all eternity; or else you must say, that sometime, nothing was, or that all being once was not. And so, since you find that something now is, that there was a time when anything of being did begin to be, that is, that till that time there was nothing, but now, at that time, somewhat first began to be. For what can be plainer than that if all being sometime was not, and now some being is, everything of being had a beginning? And thence it would follow that some being, that is, the first that ever began to be, did of itself start up out of nothing, or made itself to be, when before nothing was.

But now, do you not plainly see that it is altogether impossible anything should do so; that is, when it was as yet nothing, and when nothing at all as yet was, that it should make itself, or come into being of itself? For sure making itself is doing something. But can that which is nothing do anything? Unto all doing there must be some doer. Wherefore a thing must be before it can do anything; and therefore it would follow that it was before it was, or was and was not, was something and nothing, at the same time. Yea, and it was diverse from itself; for a cause must be a distinct thing from that which is caused by it. Wherefore it is most apparent that some being hath ever been, or did never begin to be.

X. Whence further, it is also evident, secondly, that some being was uncaused, or was ever of itself without any cause. For what never was from another had never any cause, since nothing could be its own cause. And somewhat, as appears from what hath been said, never was from another. Or it may be plainly argued thus, that either some being was uncaused, or all being was caused; but if all being were caused, then some one at least was the cause of itself; which hath been already shown impossible. Therefore the expression commonly used concerning the first Being, that it was of itself, is only to be taken negatively, that is, that it was not of another; not positively, as if it did sometime make itself. Or, what there is positive signified by that form of speech, is only to be taken thus, that it was a being of that nature, as that it was impossible it should ever not have been. Not that it did ever of itself step out of not being into being; of which more hereafter.

And now it is hence further evident, thirdly, that some being is independent upon any other; that is, whereas it already appears that some being did never depend on any other as a productive cause, or was not beholden to any other that it might come into being; it is thereupon equally evident that it is simply independent, or cannot be beholden to any for its continued being. For what did never need a productive cause, doth as little need a sustaining or conserving cause. And, to make this more plain, either some being is independent, or all being is dependent; but there is nothing without the compass of all being, whereon it may depend. Wherefore to say, that all being doth depend, is to say it depends on nothing, that is, that it depends not: for to depend on nothing is not to depend. It is therefore a manifest contradiction to say that all being doth depend; against which it is no relief to say, that all beings do circularly depend on one another. For so, however, the whole circle or sphere of being should depend on nothing, or one at last depend on itself,

which negatively taken, as before, is true, and the thing we contend for—that one, the common support of all the rest, depends not on anything without itself.

XII. Whence also it is plainly consequent, that, fourthly, such a Being is necessary, or doth necessarily exist, that is, that it is of such a nature as that it could not or cannot but be. For what is in being neither by its own choice, or any other's, is necessarily. But what was not made by itself, (which hath been shown impossible that anything should,) nor by any other, (as it hath been proved something was not,) it is manifest it neither depended on its own choice, nor any others that it is; and, therefore, its existence is not owing to choice at all, but to the necessity of its own nature. Wherefore it is always by a simple, absolute, natural necessity, being of such a nature to which it is altogether repugnant, and impossible ever not to have been, or ever to cease from being. And now having gone thus far, and being assured that hitherto we feel the ground firm under us, that is, having gained a full certainty that there is an eternal, uncaused, independent, necessary Being, and, therefore, actually and everlastingly existing, we may advance one step further—

XIII. And with equal assurance add, fifthly, that this eternal, independent, uncaused, necessary Being, is self-active; that is, which is at present meant, not such as acts upon itself, but that hath the power of acting upon other things, in and of itself, without deriving it from any other. Or at least, that there is such a Being as is eternal, uncaused, &c., having the power of action in and of itself. For either such a Being as hath been already evinced is of itself active or unactive; or either hath the power of action of itself or not. If we will say the latter, let it be considered what we say, and to what purpose we say it.

1. We are to weigh what it is we affirm, when we speak of an eternal, uncaused, independent, necessary Being, that is of itself totally unactive, or destitute of any active power. If we will say there is some such thing, we will confess, when we have called it something, it is a very silly, despicable, idle something, and a something, if we look upon it alone, as good as nothing. For there is but little odds between being nothing and being able to do nothing. We will again confess, eternity, self-origination, independency, necessity of existence, to be very great and highly dignifying attributes, and that import a most inconceivable excellency. For what higher glory can we ascribe to any being, than to acknowledge it to have been from eternity of itself,* without being beholden to any other, and to be such as that it can be, and cannot but be in the same state, self-subsisting, and self-sufficient to all eternity? And what inconceivable myriads of little senseless deities must we, upon that supposition, admit! (as would appear if it were fit to trouble the reader with an explication of the nature and true notion of matter, which the being now supposed must be found to be!) but what! can our reason either direct or endure, that we should so incongruously misplace so magnificent attributes as these, and ascribe the prime glory of the most excellent Being unto that which is next to nothing? What might further be said to demonstrate the impossibility of a self-subsisting, and self-original, unactive Being, will be here unseasonable and pre-occupying. But if any in the meantime will be so sullen as to say such a thing,

Let it, secondly, be considered to what purpose they say it. Is it to exclude a necessary self-active Being? But it can signify nothing to that purpose. For such a Being they will be forced to acknowledge, let them do what they can, (besides putting out their own eyes,) notwithstanding. For why will they acknowledge any necessary being at all, that was ever of itself? Is it not because they cannot otherwise,

for their hearts, tell how it was ever possible that anything at all could come into being? But finding that something is, they are compelled to acknowledge that something hath ever been, necessarily and of itself. No other account could be given how other things came to be. But what! doth it signify anything towards the giving an account of the original of all other things, to suppose only an eternal, self-subsisting, unactive Being? Did that cause other things to be? Will not their own breath choke them, if they attempt to utter the self-contradicting words, an unactive cause, efficient or author, (i. e.) of anything? And do they not see they are as far from their mark, or do no more towards the assigning the original of all other things, by supposing an eternal, unactive being only, than if they supposed none at all. That what can do nothing, can no more be the productive cause of another, than that which is nothing. Wherefore by the same reason that hath constrained us to acknowledge an eternal, uncaused, independent, necessary Being, we are also unavoidably led to acknowledge this Being to be self-active; or such as hath the power of action in and of itself: or, that there is certainly such a Being, that is the cause of all the things which our sense tells us are, besides, existent in the world.

XIV. For what else is left us to say or think? Will we think fit to say, that all things we behold, were, as they are, necessarily existent from all eternity? That were to speak against our own eyes, which continually behold the rise and fall of living things, of whatsoever sort or kind, that can come under their notice. And it were to speak against the thing itself, that we say; and to say and unsay the same thing in the same breath. For all the things we behold are, in some respect or other, internal or external, continually changing, and, therefore, could never long be beheld as they are. And to say then, they have been continually changing from eternity, and yet have been necessarily, is unintelligible and flat nonsense: for what is

necessarily, is always the same; and what is in this or that posture necessarily, (that is, by an intrinsic, simple, and absolute necessity, which must be here meant,) must be ever so. Wherefore to suppose the world in this or that state necessarily, and yet that such a state is changeable, is an impossible and self-contradicting supposition.*

And to say any thing is changing from eternity, signifies it is always undergoing a change which is never passed over, that is, that it is eternally unchanged, and is ever the same. For the least imaginable degree of change is some change. What is in any the least respect changed, is not in every respect the same. Suppose then anything in this present state or posture, and that it is eternally changing in it; either a new state and posture is acquired, or not. If it be, the former was temporary, and hath an end; and therefore the just and adequate measure of it was not eternity, which hath no end; much less of the change of it, or the transition from the one state to the other. But if no new state or posture be acquired, (which any the least gradual alteration would make,) then it is eternally unchanged in any the least degree. Therefore eternal changing is a manifest contradiction.

But if it be said, though eternity be not the measure of one change, it may be of infinite changes, endlessly succeeding one another: even this also will be found contradictory and impossible. For, (not to trouble the reader with the more intricate controversy of the possibility or impossibility of infinite or eternal succession, about which they who have a mind may consult others;)* if this signify anything to the present purpose, it must mean the infinite or eternal changes of a necessary being. And how these very terms do clash with one another, methinks any sound mind might apprehend at the first mention of them; and how manifestly repugnant the things are, may be collected from what hath been said; and especially from what was thought more fit to be annexed in the margin.

But now since we find that the present state of things is changeable, and actually changing, and that what is changeable is not necessarily, and of itself; and since it is evident that there is some necessary being;—otherwise nothing could ever have been, and that without action nothing could be from it;—since also all change imports somewhat of passion, and all passion supposes action, and all action, active power, and active power, an original seat or subject, that is self-active, or that hath the power of action in and of itself; (for there could be no derivation of it from that which hath it not, and no first derivation, but from that which hath it originally of itself; and a first derivation there must be, since all things that are, or ever have been, furnished with it, and not of themselves, must either mediately, or immediately have derived it from that which had it of itself;) it is therefore manifest that there is a necessary, self-active Being, the Cause and Author of this perpetually variable state and frame of things.

XV. And hence, sixthly, since we can frame no notion of life which self-active power doth not, at least, comprehend, (as upon trial we shall find that we cannot,) it is consequent that this being is also originally vital, and the root of all vitality, such as hath life in or of itself, and from whence it is propagated to every other living thing.†

And so as we plainly see that this sensible world did sometime begin to be, it is also evident that it took its beginning from a Being essentially vital and active, that had itself no beginning.

XVI. Nor can we make a difficulty to conclude, seventhly, that this Being (which now we have shown is active, and all action implies some power,) is of vast and mighty power; (we will not say infinite, lest we should step too far at once, not minding now to discuss whether creation require infinite power,) when we consider and

contemplate the vastness of the work performed by it. Unto which, if we were to make our estimate by nothing else, we must, at least, judge this power to be proportionable. For when our eyes behold an effect exceeding the power of any cause which they can behold, our mind must step in and supply the defect of our feebler sense; so as to make a judgment that there is a cause we see not, equal to this effect. As when we behold a great and magnificent fabric, and entering in we see not the master, nor any living thing (which was Cicero's observation* in reference to this present purpose), besides mice or weasels, we will not think that mice or weasels built it. Nor need we in a matter so obvious, insist further. But only when our severer reason hath made us confess, our further contemplation should make us admire, a power which is at once both so apparent, and so stupendous.

COROLLARY. And now, from what hath been hitherto discoursed, it seems a plain and necessary consectary, that this world had a cause diverse from the matter whereof it is composed.

For otherwise matter that hath been more generally taken to be of itself altogether unactive, must be stated the only cause and fountain of all the action and motion that is now to be found in the whole universe: which is a conceit, wild and absurd enough; not only as it opposes the common judgment of such as have with the greatest diligence inquired into things of this nature, but as being in itself manifestly impossible to be true; as would easily appear, if it were needful to press farther Dr. More's[†] reasonings to this purpose; which he hath done sufficiently for himself.

And also that otherwise all the great and undeniable changes which continually happen in it, must proceed from its own constant and eternal action upon itself, while it is yet feigned to be a necessary

being; with the notion whereof they are notoriously inconsistent. Which therefore we taking to be most clear, may now the more securely proceed to what follows.

CHAPTER. III

Wisdom asserted to belong to this Being. The production of this world, by a mighty agent destitute of wisdom, impossible. On consideration of, 1. What would be adverse to this production. 2. What would be wanting; some effects to which a designing cause will, on all hands, be confessed necessary, having manifest characters of skill and design upon them. Absurd here to except the works of nature; wherein at least equal characters of wisdom and design are to be seen, as in any the most confessed pieces of art, instanced in the frame and motion of heavenly bodies. A mean, unphilosophical temper, to be more taken with novelties, than common things of greater importance. Further instance, in the composition of the bodies of animals. Two contrary causes of men's not acknowledging the wisdom of their Maker herein. Progress is made from the consideration of the parts and frame, to the powers and functions of terrestrial creatures. Growth, nutrition, propagation of kind, spontaneous motion, sensation. The pretence considered, that the bodies of animals are machines. First, How improbable it is. Secondly, How little to the purpose. The powers of the human soul. It appears, First, Notwithstanding them, it had a cause; Secondly, By them, a wise and intelligent cause. It is not matter: that not capable of reason. They not here reflected on, who think reasonable souls made of refined matter, by the Creator. Not being matter, nor arising from thence, it must have a cause that is intelligent. Goodness also belonging to this Being.

I. WE therefore add, that this Being is wise and intelligent, as well as powerful; upon the very view of this world, it will appear so vast power was guided by equal wisdom in the framing of it. Though this

is wont to be the principal labour in evincing the existence of a Deity, viz., the proving that this universe owes its rise to a wise and designing cause; as may be seen in Cicero's excellent performance in this kind, and in divers later writers; yet the placing much of their endeavour herein, seems in great part to have proceeded hence, that this hath been chosen for the great medium to prove that it had a cause diverse from itself. But if that once be done a shorter way, and it fully appear that this world is not itself a necessary being, having the power of all the action and motion to be found in it, of itself; which already seems plain enough; and it does most evidently thence also appear to have had a cause foreign to, or distinct from, itself; though we shall not therefore the more carelessly consider this subject; yet no place of doubt seems to remain, but that this was an intelligent cause, and that this world was the product of wisdom and counsel, and not of mere power alone. For what imagination can be more grossly absurd, than to suppose this orderly frame of things to have been the result of so mighty power, not accompanied or guided by wisdom and counsel? That is, as the case must now unavoidably be understood, that there is some being necessarily existent, of an essentially active nature, of inconceivably vast and mighty power and vigour, destitute of all understanding and knowledge, and consequently of any self-moderating principle, but acting always by the necessity of its own nature, and therefore to its very uttermost, that raised up all the alterable matter of the universe, (to whose nature it is plainly repugnant to be of itself, or exist necessarily) out of nothing; and by the utmost exertion of that ungoverned power, put all the parts and particles of that matter into a wild hurry of impetuous motion, by which they have been compacted and digested into particular beings, in that variety and order which we now behold. And surely to give this account of the world's original, is, as Cicero speaks, not to consider, but to cast lots what to say; and were as mad a supposition, "as if one should suppose the one and twenty

letters, formed, as the same author elsewhere speaks, in great numbers, of gold, or what you please else, and cast of any careless fashion together, and that of these loosely shaken out upon the ground, Ennius's Annals should result, so as to be distinctly legible as now we see them." Nay, it were the supposition of a thing a thousand-fold more manifestly impossible.

II. For before we consider the gross absurdity of such a supposed production, that is, that a thing should be brought to pass by so mere a casualty, that so evidently requires an exquisitely-formed and continued design, even though there were nothing positively to resist or hinder it; let it be considered what there will be that cannot but most certainly hinder any such production. To this purpose we are to consider, that it is a vast power which so generally moves the diffused matter of the universe.

Hereof make an estimate, by considering what is requisite to the continual whirling about of such huge bulks as this whole massy globe of earth; (according to some;) or, which is much more strange, the sun, (according to others,) with that inconceivably swift motion which this supposition makes necessary, together with the other planets, and the innumerable heavenly bodies besides, that are subject to the laws of a continual motion. Adding hereto, how mighty a power it is which must be sufficient to all the productions, motions, and actions, of all other things.

Again, consider that all this motion, and motive power, must have some source and fountain diverse from the dull and sluggish matter moved thereby; unto which it already hath appeared impossible it should originally and essentially belong.

Next, that the mighty, active Being, which hath been proved necessarily existent, and whereto it must first belong, if we suppose it

destitute of the self-moderating principle of wisdom and counsel, cannot but be always exerting its motive power, invariably and to the same degree: that is, to its very utmost, and can never cease or fail to do so. For its act knows no limit but that of its power; if this can have any; and its power is essential to it, and its essence is necessary.

Further, that the motion impressed upon the matter of the universe must hereupon necessarily have received a continual increase, ever since it came into being.

That supposing this motive power to have been exerted from eternity, it must have been increased long ago to an infinite excess.

That hence the coalition of the particles of matter, for the forming of any thing, had been altogether impossible. For let us suppose this exerted, motive power to have been, any instant, but barely sufficient for such a formation, because that could not be despatched in an instant; it would by its continual, momently increase, be grown so over-sufficient, as, in the next instant, to dissipate the particles but now beginning to unite.

At least, it would be most apparent, that if ever such a frame of things as we now behold could have been produced, that motive power, increased to so infinite an excess, must have shattered the whole frame in pieces, many an age ago; or rather, never have permitted, that such a thing, as we call an age, could possibly have been.

Our experience gives us not to observe any so destructive or remarkable changes in the course of nature: and this, as was long ago foretold, is the great argument of the atheistical scoffers in these latter days, that things are as they were from the beginning of the creation to this day. But let it be soberly weighed, how it is possible

the general consistency, which we observe things are at throughout the universe, and their steady orderly posture, can stand with this momentarily increase of motion.

And that such an increase could not, upon the supposition we are now opposing, but have been, is most evident. For, not to insist that nothing of impressed motion is ever lost, but only imparted to other things, (which, they that suppose it, do not therefore suppose, as if they thought, being once impressed, it could continue of itself, but that there is a constant, equal supply from the first mover,) we will admit that there is a continual decrease, or loss, but never to the degree of its continual increase. For we see when we throw a stone out of our hand, whatever of the impressed force it do impart to the air, through which it makes its way, or not being received, vanishes of itself, it yet retains a part a considerable time, that carries it all the length of its journey, and all does not vanish and die away on the sudden. Therefore, when we here consider the continual, momentarily renewal of the same force, always necessarily going forth from the same mighty Agent, without any moderation or restraint; every following impetus doth so immediately overtake the former, that whatever we can suppose lost, is yet so abundantly oversupplied, that, upon the whole, it cannot fail to be ever growing, and to have grown to that all-destroying excess before mentioned. Whence therefore that famed restorer and improver of some principles of the ancient philosophy, hath seen a necessity to acknowledge it, as a manifest thing, "That God himself is the universal and primary cause of all the motions that are in the world, who in the beginning created matter, together with motion and rest; and doth now, by his ordinary concourse only, continue so much of motion and rest in it, as he first put into it. For, saith he, we understand it as a perfection in God, not only that he is unchangeable in himself, but that he works after a most constant and unchangeable manner. So that, excepting those

changes which either evident experience or divine revelation renders certain, and which we know or believe to be without change in the Creator, we ought to suppose none in his works, lest thereby any inconstancy should be argued in himself."* Whereupon he grounds the laws and rules concerning motion, which he afterwards lays down, whereof we referred to one, a little above.

It is therefore evident, that as without the supposition of a self-active Being there could be no such thing as motion; so without the supposition of an intelligent Being, (that is, that the same Being be both self-active, and intelligent,) there could be no regular motion; such as is absolutely necessary to the forming and continuing of any the compacted, bodily substances, which our eyes behold every day: yea, or of any whatsoever, suppose we their figures, or shapes, to be as rude, deformed, and useless, as we can imagine; much less, such as the exquisite compositions, and the exact order of things, in the universe, do evidently require and discover.

III. And if there were no such thing carried in this supposition, as is positively adverse to what is supposed, so as most certainly to hinder it, (as we see plainly there is), yet the mere want of what is necessary to such a production, is enough to render it impossible, and the supposition of it absurd. For it is not only absurd to suppose a production which somewhat shall certainly resist and hinder, but which wants a cause to effect it: and it is not less absurd, to suppose it effected by a manifestly insufficient and unproportionable cause, than by none at all. For as nothing can be produced without a cause, so no cause can work above or beyond its own capacity and natural aptitude. Whatsoever therefore is ascribed to any cause, above and beyond its ability, all that surplusage is ascribed to no cause at all: and so an effect, in that part at least, were supposed without a cause. And if then it follow when an effect is produced, that it had a cause:

why doth it not equally follow, when an effect is produced, having manifest characters of wisdom and design upon it, that it had a wise and designing cause? If it be said, there be some fortuitous or casual, at least undesigned, productions, that look like the effects of wisdom and contrivance, but indeed are not; as the birds so orderly and seasonably making their nests, the bees their comb, and the spider its web, which are capable of no design; that exception needs to be well proved before it be admitted; and that it be plainly demonstrated, both that these creatures are not capable of design, and that there is not a universal, designing cause, from whose directive as well as operative influence, no imaginable effect or event can be exempted; (in which case it will no more be necessary, that every creature that is observed steadily to work towards an end should itself design and know it, than that an artificer's tools should know what he is doing with them; but if they do not, it is plain he must;) and surely it lies upon them who so except, to prove in this case what they say, and not be so precarious as to beg, or think us so easy as to grant, so much, only because they have thought fit to say it, or would fain have it so. That is, that this or that strange event happened without any designing cause.

IV. But, however, I would demand of such as make this exception, whether they think there be any effect at all, to which a designing cause was necessary; or which they will judge impossible to have been otherwise produced, than by the direction and contrivance of wisdom and counsel? I little doubt but there are thousands of things, laboured and wrought by the hand of man, concerning which they would presently, upon first sight, pronounce they were the effects of skill, and not of chance; yea, if they only considered their frame and shape, though they yet understood not their use and end. They would surely think, at least, some effects or other sufficient to argue to us a designing cause. And would they but soberly consider, and resolve

what characters or footsteps of wisdom and design might be reckoned sufficient to put us out of doubt, would they not, upon comparing, be brought to acknowledge, there are nowhere any, more conspicuous and manifest, than in the things daily in view, that go ordinarily, with us, under the name of the works of nature? Whence it is plainly consequent, that what men commonly call universal nature, if they would be content no longer to lurk in the darkness of an obscure and uninterpreted word, they must confess is nothing else but common providence; that is, the universal power which is everywhere active in the world, in conjunction with the unerring wisdom which guides and moderates all its exertions and operations; or, the wisdom which directs and governs that power. Otherwise, when they see cause to acknowledge, that such an exact order and disposition of parts, in very neat and elegant compositions, do plainly argue wisdom and skill in the contrivance; only they will distinguish, and say, It is so in the effects of art, but not of nature; what is this, but to deny in particular what they granted in general? To make what they have said signify nothing more than if they had said, Such exquisite order of parts is the effect of wisdom, where it is the effect of wisdom; but it is not the effect of wisdom, where it is not the effect of wisdom? And to trifle, instead of giving a reason why things are so and so? And whence take they their advantage for this trifling, or do hope to hide their folly in it, but that they think, while what is meant by art, is known, what is meant by nature, cannot be known? But if it be not known, how can they tell but their distinguishing members are co-incident, and run into one? Yea, and if they would allow the thing itself to speak, and the effect to confess and dictate the name of its own cause, how plain is it that they do run into one, and that the expression imports no impropriety which we somewhere find in Cicero, The art of nature; or rather, that nature is nothing else but divine art, at least in as near an analogy as there can be, between any things divine and human? For, that this matter,

even the thing itself, waiving for the present the consideration of names, may be a little more narrowly discussed and searched into, let some curious piece of workmanship be offered to such a sceptic's view, the making whereof he did not see, nor of any thing like it, and we will suppose him not told that this was made by the hand of any man, nor that he hath any thing to guide his judgment about the way of its becoming what it is, but only his own view of the thing itself; and yet he shall presently, without hesitation, pronounce, This was the effect of much skill. I would here inquire, Why do you so pronounce? Or, What is the reason of this your judgment? Surely he would not say, he hath no reason at all for this so confident and unwavering determination; for then he would not be determined, but speak by chance, and be indifferent to say that, or any thing else. Somewhat or other there must be, that, when he is asked, Is this the effect of skill? shall so suddenly and irresistibly captivate him into an assent that it is, that he cannot think otherwise. Nay, if a thousand men were asked the same question, they would as undoubtingly say the same thing; and then, since there is a reason for this judgment, what can be devised to be the reason, but that there are so manifest characters and evidences of skill in the composure, as are not attributable to anything else? Now here I would further demand, Is there anything in this reason yea, or no? Doth it signify anything, or is it of any value to the purpose for which it is alleged? Surely it is of very great, inasmuch as, when it is considered, it leaves it not in a man's power to think anything else; and what can be said more potently and efficaciously to demonstrate? But now, if this reason signify anything, it signifies thus much; that wheresoever there are equal characters, and evidences of skill, (at least where there are equal,) a skilful agent must be acknowledged. And so it will, in spite of cavil, conclude universally, and abstractly from what we can suppose distinctly signified by the terms of art, and nature, that whatsoever effect hath such, or equal characters of skill upon it, did

proceed from a skilful cause. That is, that if this effect be said to be from a skilful cause, as such, (viz., as having manifest characters of skill upon it,) then, every such effect, (viz., that hath equally manifest characters of skill upon it,) must be, with equal reason, concluded to be from a skilful cause.

We will acknowledge skill to act, and wit to contrive, very distinguishable things; and in reference to some works, as the making some curious automaton, or self-moving engine, are commonly lodged in divers subjects; that is, the contrivance exercises the wit and invention of one, and the making, the manual dexterity and skill of others: but the manifest characters of both, will be seen in the effect. That is, the curious elaborateness of each several part shows the latter; and the order and dependence of parts, and their conspiracy to one common end, the former. Each betokens design; (or at least the smith or carpenter must be understood to design his own part, that is, to do as he was directed:) both together, do plainly bespeak an agent, that knew what he did; and that the thing was not done by chance, or was not the casual product of only being busy at random, or making a careless stir, without aiming at any thing. And this, no man that is in his wits, would, upon sight of the whole frame, more doubt to assent unto, than that two and two make four. And he would certainly be thought mad, that should profess to think that only by some one's making a blustering stir among several small fragments of brass, iron, and wood, these parts happened to be thus curiously formed, and came together into this frame, of their own accord.

Or lest this should be thought to intimate too rude a representation of their conceit, who think this world to have fallen into this frame and order, wherein it is, by the agitation of the moving parts, or particles of matter, without the direction of a wise mover; and that

we may also make the case as plain as is possible to the most ordinary capacity; we will suppose, for instance, that one who had never before seen a watch, or any thing of that sort, hath now this little engine first offered to his view; can we doubt, but he would upon the mere sight of its figure, structure, and the very curious workmanship which we will suppose appearing in it, presently acknowledge the artificer's hand? But if he were also made to understand the use and purpose for which it serves, and it were distinctly shown him how each thing contributes, and all things in this little fabric concur, to this purpose, the exact measuring and dividing of time by minutes, hours, and months, he would certainly both confess and praise the great ingenuity of the first inventor. But now if a bystander, beholding him in this admiration, would undertake to show a profounder reach and strain of wit, and should say,—Sir, you are mistaken concerning the composition of this so much admired piece; it was not made or designed by the hand or skill of any one; there were only an innumerable company of little atoms, or very small bodies, much too small to be perceived by your sense, that were busily frisking and plying to and fro about the place of its nativity; and by a strange chance (or a stranger fate, and the necessary laws of that motion which they were unavoidably put into, by a certain boisterous, undesigning mover,) they fell together into this small bulk, so as to compose it into this very shape and figure, and with this same number and order of parts which you now behold: one squadron of these busy particles, little thinking what they were about, agreeing to make up one wheel, and another some other, in that proportion which you see: others of them also falling, and becoming fixed in so happy a posture and situation, as to describe the several figures by which the little moving fingers point out the hour of the day, and the day of the month: and all conspired to fall together, each into its own place, in so lucky a juncture, as that the regular motion failed not to ensue which we see is now observed

in it;—what man is either so wise or so foolish, (for it is hard to determine whether the excess or the defect should best qualify him to be of this faith,) as to be capable of being made believe this piece of natural history? And if one should give this account of the production of such a trifle, would he not be thought in jest? But if he persist, and solemnly profess that thus he takes it to have been, would he not be thought in good earnest mad? And let but any sober person judge, whether we have not unspeakably more manifest madness to contend against in such as suppose this world, and the bodies of living creatures, to have fallen into this frame and orderly disposition of parts wherein they are, without the direction of a wise and designing cause? And whether there be not an incomparably greater number of most wild and arbitrary suppositions in their fiction, than in this? Besides the innumerable supposed repetitions of the same strange chances all the world over; even as numberless, not only as productions, but as the changes that continually happen to all the things produced. And if the concourse of atoms could make this world; why not (for it is but little to mention such a thing as this,) a porch, or a temple, or a house, or a city, as Tully speaks in the before recited place, which were less operose, and much more easy performances?

V. It is not to be supposed that all should be astronomers, anatomists, or natural philosophers, that shall read these lines; and therefore it is intended not to insist upon particulars, and to make as little use as is possible of terms that would only be agreeable to that supposition. But surely such general, easy reflections on the frame of the universe, and the order of parts in the bodies of all sorts of living creatures, as the meanest ordinary understanding is capable of, would soon discover incomparably greater evidence of wisdom and design in the contrivance of these, than in that of a watch or a clock. And if there were any whose understandings are but of that size and

measure as to suppose that the whole frame of the heavens serves to no other purpose than to be of some such use as that, to us mortals here on earth; if they would but allow themselves leisure to think and consider, might discern the most convincing and amazing discoveries of wise contrivance and design, as well as of vastest might and power, in disposing things into so apt a subserviency to that meaner end. And that so exact a knowledge is had thereby of times and seasons, days and years, as that the simplest idiot in a country may be able to tell you, when the light of the sun is withdrawn from his eyes, at what time it will return, and when it will look in at such a window, and when at the other; and by what degrees his days and nights shall either increase or be diminished; and what proportion of time he shall have for his labours in this season of the year, and what in that; without the least suspicion or fear that it shall ever fall out otherwise.

But that some, in later days, whose more enlarged minds have by diligent search and artificial helps got clearer notices, even than most of the more learned of former times, concerning the true frame and vastness of the universe, the matter, nature, and condition of the heavenly bodies, their situation, order, and laws of motion; and the great probability of their serving to nobler purposes, than the greater part of learned men have ever dreamed of before: that, I say, any of these should have chosen it for the employment of their great intellects, to devise ways of excluding intellectual power from the contrivance of this frame of things, having so great advantages beyond the most of mankind besides to contemplate and adore the great Author and Lord of all, is one of the greatest wonders that comes under our notice; and might tempt even a sober mind, to prefer vulgar and popular ignorance before their learned, philosophical deliration.

VI. Though yet indeed, not their philosophy, by which they would be distinguished from the common sort, but what they have in common with them, ought in justice to bear the blame. For is it not evident, how much soever they reckon themselves exalted above the vulgar sort, that their miserable shifting in this matter proceeds only from what is most meanly so; i. e., their labouring under the most vulgar and meanest diseases of the mind, disregard of what is common, and an aptness to place more in the strangeness of new, unexpected, and surprising events, than in things unspeakably more considerable, that are of every day's observation? Than which nothing argues a more abject, unphilosophical temper.

For let us but suppose, (what no man can pretend is more impossible, and what any man must confess is less considerable, than what our eyes daily see,) that in some part of the air near this earth, and within such limits as that the whole scene might be conveniently beheld at one view, there should suddenly appear a little globe of pure flaming light resembling that of the sun; and suppose it fixed as a centre to another body, or moving about that other as its centre, (as this or that hypothesis best pleases us,) which we could plainly perceive to be a proportionably little earth, beautified with little trees and woods, flowery fields, and flowing rivulets, with larger lakes into which these discharge themselves; and suppose we, the other planets all of proportionable bigness to the narrow limits assigned them, placed at their due distances, and playing about this supposed earth or sun, so as to measure their shorter and soon absolved days, months, and years, or two, twelve, or thirty years, according to their supposed lesser circuits;—would they not presently, and with great amazement confess an intelligent contriver and maker of this whole frame, above a Posidonius, or any mortal? And have we not in the present frame of things, a demonstration of wisdom and counsel, as far exceeding that which is

now supposed, as the making some toy or bauble to please a child, is less an argument of wisdom than the contrivance of somewhat that is of apparent and universal use? Or if we could suppose this present state of things to have but newly begun, and ourselves pre-existent, so that we could take notice of the very passing of things out of horrid confusion into the comely order they are now in, would not this put the matter out of doubt? (And that this state had once a beginning needs not be proved over again.) But might what would yesterday have been the effect of wisdom, better have been brought about by chance five or six thousand years, or any longer time ago? It speaks not want of evidence in the thing, but want of consideration, and of exercising our understandings, if what were new would not only convince but astonish; and what is old, of the same importance, doth not so much as convince!

VII. And let them that understand anything of the composition of a human body, or indeed of any living creature, but bethink themselves whether there be not equal contrivance, at least, appearing in the composure of that admirable fabric, as of any the most admired machine or engine devised and made by human wit and skill. If we pitch upon any thing of known and common use, as suppose again a clock or watch, which is no sooner seen than it is acknowledged (as hath been said) the effect of a designing cause; will we not confess as much of the body of a man? Yea, what comparison is there, when in the structure of some one single member, as a hand, a foot, an eye, or ear, there appears upon a diligent search, unspeakably greater curiosity, whether we consider the variety of parts, their exquisite figuration, or their apt disposition to the distinct uses and ends these members serve for, than is to be seen in any clock or watch? Concerning which uses of the several parts in man's body, Galen,* so largely discoursing in seventeen books, inserts on the by, this epiphonema, upon the mention of one

particular instance of our most wise Maker's provident care; "Unto whom, (saith he,) I compose these commentaries," (meaning his present work of unfolding the useful figuration of the human body,) "as certain hymns, or songs of praise, esteeming true piety more to consist in this, that I first may know, and then declare to others, his wisdom, power, providence, and goodness, than in sacrificing to him many hecatombs: and in the ignorance whereof there is greatest impiety, rather than in abstaining from sacrifice.† Nor," as he adds in the close of that excellent work, "is the most perfect natural artifice to be seen in man only; but you may find the like industrious design and wisdom of the Author, in any living creature which you shall please to dissect: and by how much the less it is, so much the greater admiration shall it raise in you; which those artists show, that describe some great thing (contractedly) in a very small space: as that person, (saith he,) who lately engraved Phaeton carried in his chariot with his four horses upon a little ring—a most incredible sight! But there is nothing in matters of this nature, more strange than in the structure of the leg of a flea" (How much more might it be said of all its inward parts?) "Therefore (as he adds) the greatest commodity of such a work accrues not to physicians, but to them who are studious of nature; viz., the knowledge of our Maker's perfection, and that, (as he had said a little above,) it establishes the principle of the most perfect theology; which theology, (saith he,) is much more excellent than all medicine."

It were too great an undertaking, and beyond the designed limits of this discourse—(though it would be to excellent purpose, if it could be done without amusing terms, and in that easy, familiar way as to be capable of common use)—to pursue and trace distinctly the prints and footsteps of the admirable wisdom which appears in the structure and frame of this outer temple,—for even our bodies themselves are said to be the temples of the Holy Ghost, 1 Cor. 6:19,

—and to dwell awhile in the contemplation and discovery of those numerous instances of most apparent, ungainsayable sagacity and providence which offer themselves to view in every part and particle of this fabric; how most commodiously all things are ordered in it! With how strangely cautious circumspection and foresight, not only destructive, but even perpetually vexatious and afflicting incongruities are avoided and provided against!—to pose ourselves upon the sundry obvious questions that might be put for the evincing of such provident foresight. As for instance, how comes it to pass that the several parts which we find to be double in our bodies, are not single only? Is this altogether by chance? That there are two eyes, ears, nostrils, hands, feet, &c.: what a miserable, shiftless creature had man been, if there had only been allowed him one foot! A seeing, hearing, talking, unmoving statue! That the hand is divided into fingers: those so conveniently situate, one in so fitly opposite a posture to the rest!

And what if some one pair or other of these parts had been universally wanting? The hands, the feet, the eyes, the ears. How great a misery had it inferred upon mankind! and is it only a casualty that it is not so? That the back-bone is composed of so many joints, (twenty-four, besides those of that which is the basis and sustainer of the whole), and is not all of a piece, by which stooping, or any motion of the head or neck, diverse from that of the whole body, had been altogether impossible:—that there is such variety and curiosity in the ways of joining the bones together in that, and other parts of the body:—that in some parts, they are joined by mere adherence of one to another,* either with or without an intervening medium, and both these ways, so diversely:—that others are fastened together by proper jointing, so as to suit and be accompanied with motion, either more obscure or more manifest; and this, either by a deeper or more superficial insertion of one bone into another, or by a mutual

insertion, and that so different ways:—and that all these should be so exactly accommodated to the several parts and uses to which they belong and serve:—Was all this without design? Who, that views the curious and apt texture of the eye, can think it was not made on purpose to see with;* and the ear, upon the like view, for hearing, when so many things must concur that these actions might be performed by these organs, and are found to do so? Or who can think that the sundry little engines belonging to the eye were not made with design to move it upwards, downwards, to this side or that, or whirl it about as there should be occasion; without which instruments and their appendages, no such motion could have been? Who, that is not stupidly perverse, can think that the sundry inward parts—(which it would require a volume distinctly to speak of, and but to mention them and their uses would too unproportionably swell this part of this discourse)—were not made purposely by a designing Agent, for the ends they so aptly and constantly serve for? The want of some one among divers whereof, or but a little misplacing, or if things had been but a little otherwise than they are, had inferred an impossibility that such a creature as man could have subsisted, or been propagated upon the face of the earth. As what if there had not been such a receptacle prepared as the stomach is, and so formed, and placed as it is, to receive and digest necessary nutriment?† Had not the whole frame of man besides been in vain? Or, what if the passage from it downward, had not been made somewhat, a little way ascending, so as to detain a convenient time what is received, but that what was taken in were suddenly transmitted? It is evident the whole structure had been ruined as soon as made. What, to instance in what seems so small a matter, if that little cover had been wanting at the entrance of that passage through which we breathe; (the depression whereof by the weight of what we eat or drink, shuts it and prevents meat and drink from going down that way;) had not unavoidable suffocation ensued? And

who can number the instances that might be given besides? Now when there is a concurrence of so many things absolutely necessary, concerning which the common saying is as applicable, more frequently wont to be applied to matters of morality, "Goodness is from the concurrence of all causes, evil, from any defect," each so aptly and opportunely serving its own proper use, and all, one common end, certainly to say that so manifold, so regular, and stated a subserviency to that end, and the end itself, were undesigned, and things casually fell out thus,—is to say we know, or care, not what.

We will only, before we close this consideration, concerning the mere frame of a human body, (which hath been so hastily and superficially proposed,) offer a supposition which is no more strange (excluding the vulgar notion by which nothing is strange, but what is not common) than the thing itself, as it actually is; viz., That the whole more external covering of the body of a man were made, instead of skin and flesh, of some very transparent substance, flexible, but clear as very crystal; through which, and the other more inward (and as transparent) integuments or enfoldings, we could plainly perceive the situation and order of all the internal parts, and how they each of them perform their distinct offices:—if we could discern the continual motion of the blood, how it is conveyed, by its proper conduits, from its first source and fountain, partly downwards to the lower entrails, (if rather it ascend not from thence, as at least, what afterwards becomes blood doth,) partly upwards, to its admirable elaboratory, the heart; where it is refined and furnished with fresh vital spirits, and so transmitted thence by the distinct vessels prepared for this purpose:—could we perceive the curious contrivance of those little doors, by which it is let in and out, on this side and on that; the order and course of its circulation; its most commodious distribution by two social channels, or conduit-pipes, that everywhere accompany one another throughout the body:—

could we discern the curious artifice of the brain, its ways of purgation;—and were it possible to pry into the secret chambers and receptacles of the less or more pure spirits there; perceive their manifold conveyances, and the rare texture of that net commonly called the wonderful one:—could we behold the veins, arteries, and nerves, all of them arising from their proper and distinct originals; and their orderly dispersion for the most part, by pairs and conjugations, on this side and that, from the middle of the back; with the curiously wrought branches, which, supposing these to appear duly diversified, as so many more dusky strokes in this transparent frame, they would be found to make throughout the whole of it;—were every smaller fibre thus made at once discernible; especially those innumerable threads into which the spinal marrow is distributed at the bottom of the back:—and could we, through the same medium, perceive those numerous little machines made to serve unto voluntary motions, (which in the whole body are computed, by some,* to the number of four hundred and thirty, or thereabouts, or so many of them as according to the present supposition could possibly come in view) and discern their composition; their various and elegant figures—round, square, long, triangular, &c., and behold them do their offices, and see how they ply to and fro, and work in their respective places, as any motion is to be performed by them:—were all these things, I say, thus made liable to an easy and distinct view, who would not admiringly cry out, How fearfully and wonderfully am I made! And sure there is no man sober, who would not, upon such a sight, pronounce that man mad, that should suppose such a production to have been a mere undesigned casualty. At least, if there be anything in the world that may be thought to carry sufficiently convincing evidences in it, of its having been made industriously and on purpose, not by chance, would not this composition, thus offered to view, be esteemed to do so much more? Yea, and if it did only bear upon it characters equally

evidential of wisdom and design, with what doth certainly so, though in the lowest degree, it were sufficient to evince our present purpose. For if one such instance as this would bring the matter no higher than to a bare equality, that would at least argue a maker of man's body, as wise, and as properly designing, as the artificer of any such slighter piece of workmanship, that may yet, certainly, be concluded the effect of skill and design. And then, enough might be said, from other instances, to manifest him unspeakably superior. And that the matter would be brought, at least, to an equality, upon the supposition now made, there can be no doubt, if any one be judge that hath not abjured his understanding and his eyes together. And what then, if we lay aside that supposition, (which only somewhat gratifies fancy and imagination,) doth that alter the case? Or is there the less of wisdom and contrivance expressed in this work of forming man's body, only for that it is not so easily and suddenly obvious to our sight? Then we might with the same reason say, concerning some curious piece of carved work that is thought fit to be kept locked up in a cabinet, when we see it, that there was admirable workmanship shown in doing it; but as soon as it is again shut up in its repository, that there was none at all. Inasmuch as we speak of the objective characters of wisdom and design, that are in the thing itself, (though they must some way or other come under our notice, otherwise we can be capable of arguing nothing from them; yet,) since we have sufficient assurance that there really are such characters in the structure of the body of man as have been mentioned, and a thousand more than have been thought necessary to be mentioned here; it is plain that the greater or less facility of finding them out, so that we be at a certainty that they are, (whether by the slower and more gradual search of our own eyes, or by relying upon the testimony of such as have purchased themselves that satisfaction by their own labour and diligence,) is merely accidental to the thing itself we are discoursing of; and neither adds to, nor detracts from,

the rational evidence of the present argument. Or if it do either, the more abstruse paths of divine wisdom in this, as in other things, do rather recommend it the more to our adoration and reverence, than if everything were obvious, and lay open to the first glance of a more careless eye. The things which we are sure (or may be, if we do not shut our eyes) the wise Maker of this world hath done, do sufficiently serve to assure us that he could have done this also; that is, have made everything in the frame and shape of our bodies conspicuous in the way but now supposed, if he had thought it fit. He hath done greater things. And since he hath not thought that fit, we may be bold to say, the doing of it would signify more trifling, and less design. It gives us a more amiable and comely representation of the Being we are treating of, that his works are less for ostentation than use; and that his wisdom and other attributes appear in them rather to the instruction of sober, than the gratification of vain, minds.

We may, therefore, confidently conclude, that the figuration of the human body carries with it as manifest, unquestionable evidences of design, as any piece of human artifice that most confessedly, in the judgment of any man, doth so; and therefore had as certainly a designing cause. We may challenge the world to show a disparity, unless it be that the advantage is unconceivably great on our side. For would not any one that hath not abandoned at once both his reason* and his modesty, be ashamed to confess and admire the skill that is shown in making a statue or the picture of a man, that, as one ingeniously says, is but the shadow of his skin; and deny the wisdom that appears in the composure of his body itself, that contains so numerous and so various engines and instruments for sundry purposes in it, as that it is become an art, and a very laudable one, but to discover and find out the art and skill that are shown in the contrivance and formation of them?

VIII. It is, in the meantime, strange to consider from how different and contrary causes it proceeds, that the wise Contriver of this fabric hath not his due acknowledgments on the account of it. For, with some, it proceeds from their supine and drowsy ignorance, and that they little know or think what prints and footsteps of a Deity they carry about them, in their bone and flesh, in every part, and vein, and limb. With others (as if too much learning had made them mad, or an excess of light had struck them into a mopish blindness), these things are so well known and seen, so common and obvious, that they are the less regarded; and because they can give a very punctual account that things are so, they think it now not worth the considering how they come to be so. They can trace all these hidden paths and footsteps, and, therefore, all seems very easy; and they give over wondering. As they that would detract from Columbus's acquists of glory by the discovery he had made of America,* by pretending the achievement was easy, whom he ingeniously rebuked by challenging them to make an egg stand erect, alone, upon a plain table; which when none of them could do, he only by a gentle bruising of one end of it makes it stand on the table without other support, and then tells them this was more easy than his voyage to America, now they had seen it done; before, they knew not how to go about it. Some may think the contrivance of the body of a man or other animal easy, now they know it, but had they been to project such a model without a pattern, or anything leading thereto, how miserable a loss had they been at! How easy a confession had been drawn from them of the finger of God, and how silent a submission to his just triumph over their and all human wit, when the most admired performances in this kind by any mortal, have been only faint and infinitely distant imitations of the works of God! As is to be seen in the so much celebrated exploits of Posidonius, Regiomontanus, and others of this sort.

IX. And now, if any should be either so incurably blind as not to perceive, or so perversely wilful as not to acknowledge, an appearance of wisdom in the frame and figuration of the body of an animal, (peculiarly of man,) more than equal to what appears in any the most exquisite piece of human artifice, and which no wit of man can ever fully imitate; although, as hath been said, an acknowledged equality would suffice to evince a wise maker thereof, yet because it is the existence of God we are now speaking of, and that it is, therefore, not enough to evince but to magnify the wisdom we would ascribe to him; we shall pass from the parts and frame to the consideration of the more principal powers and functions of terrestrial creatures, ascending from such as agree to the less perfect orders of these, to those of the more perfect, viz. of man himself. And surely to have been the Author of faculties that shall enable to such functions, will evidence a wisdom that defies our imitation, and will dismay the attempt of it.

We begin with that of growth. Many sorts of rare engines we acknowledge contrived by the wit of man, but who hath ever made one that could grow, or that had in it a self-improving power? A tree, an herb, a pile of grass, may upon this account challenge all the world to make such a thing; that is, to implant the power of growing into anything to which it doth not natively belong, or to make a thing to which it doth.

By what art would they make a seed? and which way would they inspire it with a seminal form? And they that think this whole globe of the earth was compacted by the casual, or fatal, coalition of particles of matter, by what magic would they conjure up so many to come together as should make one clod? We vainly hunt with a lingering mind after miracles; if we did not more vainly mean by them nothing else but novelties, we are compassed about with such;

and the greatest miracle is that we see them not. You with whom the daily productions of nature, as you call it, are so cheap, see if you can do the like. Try your skill upon a rose. Yea, but you must have pre-existent matter? But can you ever prove the Maker of the world had so, or even defend the possibility of uncreated matter? And suppose they had the free grant of all the matter between the crown of their head and the moon, could they tell what to do with it, or how to manage it, so as to make it yield them one single flower, that they might glory in as their own production?

And what mortal man, that hath reason enough about him to be serious, and to think a while, would not even be amazed at the miracle of nutrition? Or that there are things in the world capable of nourishment? Or who would attempt an imitation here, or not despair to perform anything like it? that is, to make any nourishable thing. Are we not here infinitely outdone? Do we not see ourselves compassed about with wonders, and are we not ourselves such, in that we see, and are, creatures from all whose parts there is a continual defluxion, and yet that receive a constant gradual supply and renovation, by which they are continued in the same state, as the bush burning but not consumed? It is easy to give an artificial frame to a thing that shall gradually decay and waste, till it be quite gone and disappear. You could raise a structure of snow that would soon do that. But can your manual skill compose a thing that, like our bodies, shall be continually melting away, and be continually repaired, through so long a tract of time? Nay, but you can tell how it is done, you know in what method, and by what instruments, food is received, concocted, separated, and so much as must serve for nourishment turned into chyle, and that into blood, first grosser, and then more refined, and that distributed into all parts for this purpose. Yea, and what then? Therefore you are as wise as your Maker? Could you have made such a thing as the stomach, a liver, a

heart, a vein, an artery? Or are you so very sure what the digestive quality is? Or if you are, and know what things best serve to maintain, to repair, or strengthen it, who implanted that quality, both where it is so immediately useful, or in the other things you would use for the service of that? Or how, if such things had not been prepared to your hand, would you have devised to persuade the particles of matter into so useful and happy a conjuncture, as that such a quality might result? Or, to speak more suitably to the most, how, if you had not been shown the way, would you have thought it were to be done, or which way would you have gone to work, to turn meat and drink into flesh and blood?

Nor is propagation of their own kind, by the creatures that have that faculty implanted in them, less admirable, or more possible to be imitated by any human device. Such productions stay in their first descent. Who can by his own contrivance find out a way of making anything that can produce another like itself? What machine did ever man invent that had this power? And the ways and means by which it is done are such (though he that can do all things well knew how to compass his ends by them) as do exceed not our understanding only, but our wonder.

And what shall we say of spontaneous motion, wherewith we find also creatures endowed that are so mean and despicable in our eyes, as well as ourselves, that is, that so silly a thing as a fly, a gnat, &c., should have a power in it to move itself, or stop its own motion, at its own pleasure? Howfar have all attempted imitations in this kind fallen short of this perfection? And how much more excellent a thing is the smallest and most contemptible insect, than the most admired machine we ever hear or read of (as Archytas Tarentinus's dove, so anciently celebrated, or more lately Regiomontanus's fly, or his eagle, or any the like); not only as having this peculiar power above

anything of this sort, but as having the sundry other powers besides meeting in it, whereof these are wholly destitute.

And should we go on to instance further in the several powers of sensation, both external and internal; the various instincts, appetitions, passions, sympathies, antipathies, the powers of memory, and we might add of speech, that we find the inferior orders of creatures either generally furnished with, or some of them, as to this last, disposed unto; how should we even overdo the present business, and too needlessly insult over human wit, (which we must suppose to have already yielded the cause,) in challenging it to produce and offer to view a hearing, seeing engine, that can imagine, talk, is capable of hunger, thirst, of desire, anger, fear, grief, &c., as its own creature, concerning which it may glory and say, I have done this!

Is it so admirable a performance, and so ungainsayable an evidence of skill and wisdom, with much labour and long travail of mind, a busy, restless agitation of working thoughts, the often renewal of frustrated attempts, the varying of defeated trials, this way and that, at length to hit upon, and by much pains, and with a slow, gradual progress, by the use of who can tell how many sundry sorts of instruments or tools, managed by more, possibly, than a few hands, by long hewing, hammering, turning, filing, to compose one only single machine of such a frame and structure, as that by the frequent reinforcement of a skilful hand, it may be capable of some, (and that, otherwise, but a very short-lived) motion? And is it no argument, or effect of wisdom, so easily and certainly, without labour, error, or disappointment, to frame both so infinite a variety of kinds, and so innumerable individuals of every such kind, of living creatures, that cannot only with the greatest facility move themselves with so many sorts of motion, downwards, upwards, to and fro, this way or that,

with a progressive or circular, a swifter or a slower motion, at their own pleasure, but can also grow, propagate, see, hear, desire, joy, &c. Is this no work of wisdom, but only either blind fate or chance? Of how strangely perverse and odd a complexion is that understanding, if yet it may be called an understanding, that can make this judgment!

X. And they think they have found out a rare knack, and that gives a great relief to their diseased minds, who have learned to call the bodies of living creatures, even the human not excepted, by way of diminution, machines, or a sort of automatus engines.

But how little cause there is to hug or be fond of this fancy, would plainly appear, if, first we would allow ourselves leisure to examine with how small pretence this appellation is so placed and applied; and next, if it be applied rightly, to how little purpose it is alleged, or that it signifies nothing to the exclusion of divine wisdom from the formation of them.

And for the first, because we know not a better, let it be considered how defective and unsatisfying the account is which the great* and justly admired master in this faculty gives, how divers of those things, which he would have to be so, are performed only in the mechanical way.

For though his ingenuity must be acknowledged, in his modest exception of some nobler operations belonging to ourselves from coming under those rigid necessitating laws, yet certainly, to the severe inquiry of one not partially addicted to the sentiments of so great a wit, because they were his, it would appear there are great defects, and many things yet wanting, in the account which is given us of some of the meaner of those functions, which he would attribute only to organized matter, or (to use his own expression) to

the conformation of the members of the body, and the course of the spirits, excited by the heat of the heart, &c.

For howsoever accurately he describes the instruments and the way, his account seems very little satisfying of the principle, either of spontaneous motion, or of sensation.

As to the former, though it be very apparent that the muscles, seated in that opposite posture wherein they are mostly found paired through the body, the nerves and the animal spirits in the brain, and, suppose we, that glandule seated in the inmost part of it, are the instruments of the motion of the limbs and the whole body; yet, what are all these to the prime causation, or much more, to the spontaneity of this motion? And whereas, with us, who are acknowledged to have such a faculty independent on the body, an act of will doth so manifestly contribute, so that, when we will, our body is moved with so admirable facility, and we feel not the cumbersome weight of an arm to be lifted up, or of our whole corporeal bulk, to be moved this way, or that, by a slower or swifter motion; yea, and when as also, if we will, we can, on the sudden, in a very instant, start up out of the most composed, sedentary posture, and put ourselves, upon occasion, into the most violent course of motion or action; but if we have no such will, though we have the same agile spirits about us, we find no difficulty to keep in a posture of rest; and are, for the most part, not sensible of any endeavour or urgency of those active particles, as if they were hardly to be restrained from putting us into motion; and against a reluctant act of our will, we are not moved but with great difficulty to them, that will give themselves, and us, the trouble; this being, I say, the case with us, and it being also obvious to our observation, that it is so very much alike, in these mentioned respects, with brute creatures, how inconceivable is it, that the directive principle of their motions, and ours, should be so vastly and

altogether unlike; (whatsoever greater perfection is required, with us, as to those more noble and perfect functions and operations which are found to belong to us)? That is, that in us, an act of will should signify so very much, and be, for the most part, necessary to the beginning, the continuing, the stopping, or the varying of our motions; and in them, nothing like it, nor any thing else besides, only that corporeal principle* which he assigns as common to them and us, the continual heat in the heart, (which he calls a sort of fire,) nourished by the blood of the veins, the instruments of motion already mentioned, and the various representations and impressions of external objects; as there and elsewhere † he expresses himself. Upon which last, (though much is undoubtedly to be attributed to it,) that so main a stress should be laid, as to the diversifying of motion, seems strange; when we may observe so various motions of some silly creatures, as of a fly in our window, while we cannot perceive, and can scarce imagine, any change in external objects about them: yea, a swarm of flies, so variously frisking and plying to and fro, some this way, others that, with a thousand diversities and interferences in their motion, and some resting, while things are in the same state, externally, to them all; so that what should cause, or cease, or so strangely vary such motions, is from thence, or any thing else he hath said, left unimaginable. As it is much more, how, in creatures of much strength, as a bear or a lion, a paw should be moved sometimes so gently, and sometimes with so mighty force, only by mere mechanism, without any directive principle, that is not altogether corporeal. But most of all, how the strange regularity of motion in some creatures, as of the spider in making its web, and the like, should be owing to no other than such causes as he hath assigned of the motions in general of brute creatures. And what though some motions of our own seem wholly involuntary, as that of our eye-lids, in the case which he supposes, doth it therefore follow they must proceed from a principle* only corporeal, as if our soul

had no other act belonging to it, but that of willing? Which he doth not downright say; but that it is its only, or its chief act: and if it be its chief act only, what hinders but that such a motion may proceed from an act that is not chief? Or that it may have a power that may, sometimes, step forth into act (and in greater matters than that) without any formal, deliberated command or direction of our will? So little reason is there to conclude, that all our motions[†] common to us with beasts, or even their motions themselves, depend on nothing else than the conformation of the members, and the course which the spirits, excited by the heat of the heart, do naturally follow, in the brain, the nerves, and the muscles, after the same manner with the motion of an automaton, &c.

But as to the matter of sensation, his account seems much more defective and unintelligible, that is, how it should be performed (as he supposes every thing common to us with beasts may be) without a soul. For, admit that it be (as who doubts but it is) by the instruments which he assigns, we are still to seek what is the sentient, or what useth these instruments, and doth sentire or exercise sense by them. That is, suppose it be performed in the brain,[‡] and that (as he says) by the help of the nerves, which from thence, like small strings,[§] are stretched forth unto all the other members; suppose we have the three things to consider in the nerves, which he recites—their interior substance, which extends itself like very slender threads from the brain to the extremities of all the other members into which they are knit; the very thin little skins which enclose these, and which, being continued with those that enwrap the brain, do compose the little pipes which contain these threads; and lastly, the animal spirits, which are conveyed down from the brain through these pipes: yet which of these is most subservient unto sense? That he undertakes elsewhere* to declare, viz., that we are not to think, (which we also suppose,) some nerves

to serve for sense, others for motion only, as some have thought; but that the inclosed spirits serve for the motion of the members, and those little threads (also inclosed) for sense. Are we yet any nearer our purpose? Do these small threads sentire? Are these the things that ultimately receive and discern the various impressions of objects? And since they are all of one sort of substance, how comes it to pass that some of them are seeing: threads, others hearing threads, others tasting, &c. Is it from the diverse and commodious figuration of the organs unto which these descend from the brain? But though we acknowledge and admire the curious and exquisite formation of those organs, and their most apt usefulness (as organs, or instruments) to the purposes for which they are designed, yet what do they signify, without a proportionally apt and able agent to use them, or percipient to entertain and judge of the several notices, which by them are only transmitted from external things? That is, suppose we a drop of never so pure and transparent liquor, or let there be three, diversely tintured or coloured, and (lest they mingle,) kept asunder by their distinct, infolding coats; let these encompass one the other, and together compose one little shining globe: are we satisfied that now this curious, pretty ball can see? Nay, suppose we it never so conveniently situate; suppose we the forementioned strings fastened to it, and these being hollow, well replenished with as pure air, or wind, or gentle flame, as you can imagine; yea, and all the before-described little threads to boot; can it yet do the feat? Nay, suppose we all things else to concur that we can suppose, except a living principle, call that by what name you will, and is it not still as incapable of the act of seeing, as a ball of clay or a pebble stone? Or can the substance of the brain itself perform that or any other act of sense, (for it is superfluous to speak distinctly of the rest,) any more than the pulp of an apple or a dish of curds? So that, trace this matter whither you will, within the compass of your assigned limits, and you are still at the same loss: range through the

whole body, and what can you find but flesh and bones, marrow and blood, strings and threads, humour and vapour; and which of these is capable of sense? These are your materials and such like: order them as you will, put them into what method you can devise, and except you can make it live, you cannot make it so much as feel, much less perform all other acts of sense besides, unto which these tools alone seem as unproportionable as a ploughshare to the most curious sculpture, or a pair of tongs to the most melodious music.

But how much more inconceivable it is that the figuration and concurrence of the forementioned organs can alone suffice to produce the several passions of love, fear, anger, &c., whereof we find so evident indications in brute creatures, it is enough but to hint. And (but that all persons do not read the same books) it were altogether unnecessary to have said so much, after so plain demonstration* already extant, that matter, howsoever modified any of the mentioned ways, is incapable of sense.

Nor would it seem necessary to attempt any thing in this kind, in particular and direct opposition to the very peculiar sentiments of this most ingenious author, as he will undoubtedly be reckoned in all succeeding time, who, when he undertakes to show what sense is, and how it is performed, makes it the proper business of the soul, comprehends it under the name of cogitation; † naming himself a thinking thing, adds by way of question, What is that? and answers, A thing doubting, understanding, affirming, denying, willing, nilling, and also imagining, and exercising sense; says ‡ expressly, it is evident to all that it is the soul that exercises sense, not the body, § in as direct words as the so much celebrated poet of old. The only wonder is, that under this general name of cogitation he denies it unto brutes; under which name, he may be thought less fitly to have included it, than to have affirmed them incapable of any thing to

which that name ought to be applied; as he doth not only affirm, but esteems himself by most firm reasons to have proved.||

And yet that particular reason seems a great deal more pious than it is cogent, which he gives for his choosing his particular way of differencing brutes from human creatures; viz. lest any prejudice should be done to the doctrine of the human soul's immortality; there being nothing, as he truly says, "that doth more easily turn off weak minds from the path of virtue, than if they should think the souls of brutes to be of the same nature with our own; and therefore that nothing remains to be hoped or feared after this life, more by us than by flies or pismires." For surely there were other ways of providing against that danger, besides that of denying them so much as sense, (other than merely organical,¶ as he somewhere alleviates the harshness of that position, but without telling us what useth these organs,) and the making them nothing else but well-formed machines.

But yet, if we should admit the propriety of this appellation, and acknowledge the thing itself intended to be signified by it, that all the powers belonging to mere brutal nature are purely mechanical, and no more; to what purpose, is it here alleged? Or what can it be understood to signify? What is lost from our cause by it? And what have atheists whereof to glory? For was the contrivance of these machines theirs? Were they the authors of this rare invention, or of any thing like it? Or can they show any product of human device and wit, that shall be capable of vying with the strange powers of those machines? Or can they imagine what so highly exceeds all human skill, to have fallen by chance, and without any contrivance or design at all, into a frame capable of such powers and operations?

If they be machines, they are, as that free-spirited author speaks, to be considered as a sort of machine* made by the hand of God, which is by infinite degrees better ordered, and hath in it more admirable motions, than any that could ever have been formed by the art of man. Yea, and we might add, so little disadvantage would accrue to the present cause, (whatever might to some other,) by this concession, that rather, (if it were not a wrong to the cause, which justly disdains we should allege any thing false or uncertain for its support,) this would add much, we will not say to its victory, but to its triumph, that we did acknowledge them nothing else than mere mechanical contrivances. For, since they must certainly either be such, or have each of them a soul to animate, and enable them to their several functions; it seems a much more easy performance, and is more conceivable, and within the nearer reach of human apprehension, that they should be furnished with such a one, than be made capable of so admirable operations without it: and the former, though it were not a surer, were a more amazing, unsearchable, and less comprehensible discovery of the most transcendent wisdom, than the latter.

XI. But because whatsoever comes under the name of cogitation, properly taken, is assigned to some higher cause than mechanism; and that there are operations belonging to man, which lay claim to a reasonable soul, as the immediate principle and author of them; we have yet this further step to advance, that is, to consider the most apparent evidence we have of a wise, designing agent, in the powers and nature of this more excellent, and, among things more obvious to our notice, the noblest of his productions.

And were it not for the slothful neglect of the most to study themselves, we should not here need to recount unto men the common and well-known abilities and excellences which peculiarly

belong to their own nature. They might take notice, without being told, that first, as to their intellectual faculty, they have somewhat about them, that can think, understand, frame notions of things; that can rectify or supply the false or defective representations which are made to them by their external senses and fancies; that can conceive of things far above the reach and sphere of sense, the moral good or evil of actions or inclinations, what there is in them of rectitude or pravity; whereby they can animadvert, and cast their eye inward upon themselves, observe the good or evil acts or inclinations, the knowledge, ignorance, dulness, vigour, tranquillity, trouble, and, generally, the perfections or imperfections, of their own minds; that can apprehend the general natures of things, the future existence of what yet is not, with the future appearance of that to us, which, as yet, appears not. (Of which last sort of power, the confident assertion, "No man can have a conception of the future,"* needs not, against our experience, make us doubt; especially being enforced by no better, than that pleasant reason there subjoined, for, the future is not yet; that is to say, because it is future; and so, which is all this reason amounts to, we cannot conceive it, because we cannot. For though our conceptions of former things guide us in forming notions of what is future, yet sure our conception of any thing as future, is much another sort of conception from what we have of the same thing as past, as appears from its different effects: for if an object be apprehended good, we conceive of it as past with sorrow; as future, with hope and joy: if evil, with joy as past; with fear and sorrow, as future.) And, (which above all the rest discovers and magnifies the intellectual power of the human soul,) that they can form a conception, howsoever imperfect, of this absolutely perfect Being, whereof we are discoursing. Which even they that acknowledge not its existence, cannot deny; except they will profess themselves blindly, and at a venture, to deny they know not what, or what they have not so much as thought of!

They may take notice of their power of comparing things, of discerning and making a judgment of their agreements and disagreements, their proportions and disproportions to one another; of affirming or denying this or that, concerning such or such things; and of pronouncing, with more or less confidence, concerning the truth or falsehood of such affirmations or negations: and moreover, of their power of arguing, and inferring one thing from another, so as from one plain and evident principle, to draw forth a long chain of consequences, that may be discerned to be linked therewith.

They have withal to consider the liberty, and the large capacity of the human will, which, when it is itself, rejects the dominion of any other than the supreme Lord, and refuses satisfaction in any other than the supreme and most comprehensive Good.

And upon even so hasty and transient a view of a thing furnished with such powers and faculties, we have sufficient occasion to bethink ourselves, How came such a thing as this into being; whence did it spring, or to what original doth it owe itself?

More particularly we have here two things to be discoursed of: First, That, notwithstanding so high excellences, the soul of man doth yet appear to be a caused being, that sometime had a beginning. Secondly, That, by them, it is sufficiently evident, that it owes itself to a wise and intelligent cause.

As to the former of these, we need say the less, because that sort of atheists with whom we have chiefly now to do, deny not human souls to have had a beginning, as supposing them to be produced with the bodies they animate by the same generation, and that such generation did sometimes begin; that only rude and wildly moving matter was from eternity, and that by infinite alterations and commixtures, in that eternity, it fell at last into this orderly frame

and state wherein things now are, and became prolific, so as to give beginning to the several sorts of living things which do now continue to propagate themselves: the mad folly of which random fancy we have been so largely contending against hitherto. The other sort, who were for an eternal succession of generations, have been sufficiently refuted by divers others, and partly by what hath been already said in this discourse; and we may further meet with them ere it be long. We in the meantime, find not any professing atheism, to make human souls, as such, necessary and self-originate beings.

Yet it is requisite to consider, not only what persons of atheistical persuasions have said, but what also they possibly may say. And moreover, some, that have been remote from atheism, have been prone, upon the contemplation of the excellences of the human soul, to over-magnify, yea and even no less than deify, it. It is therefore needful to say somewhat in this matter. For if nothing of direct and downright atheism had been designed, the rash hyperboles, as we will charitably call them, and unwarrantable rhetorications of these latter, should they obtain to be looked upon and received as severe and strict assertions of truth, were equally destructive of religion, as the others' more strangely bold and avowed opposition to it.*

Such, I mean, as have spoken of the souls of men as parts of God; one thing with him; a particle of divine breath;† "an extract or derivation of himself;" that have not feared to apply to them his most peculiar attributes, or say that of them, which is most appropriate and incommunicably belonging to him alone. Nay, to give them his very name, and say in plain words they were God.‡

Now it would render a temple alike insignificant, to suppose no worshipper, as to suppose none who should be worshipped. And

what should be the worshipper, when our souls are thought the same thing with what should be the object of our worship?

But methinks, when we consider their necessitous, indigent state, their wants and cravings, their pressures and groans, their grievances and complaints, we should find enough to convince us they are not the self-originate or self-sufficient Being: and might even despair any thing should be plain and easy to them, with whom it is a difficulty to distinguish themselves from God. Why are they in a state which they dislike? Wherefore are they not full and satisfied? Why do they wish and complain? Is this Godlike? But if any have a doubt hanging in their minds concerning the unity of souls with one another, or with the soul of the world, let them read what is already extant: and supposing them, thereupon, distinct beings, there needs no more to prove them not to be necessary, independent, uncaused ones,* than their subjection to so frequent changes; their ignorance, doubts, irresolution, and gradual progress to knowledge; certainty, and stability in their purposes; their very being united with these bodies in which they have been but a little while, as we all know; whereby they undergo no small change (admitting them to have been pre-existent,) and wherein they experience so many; yea, whether those changes import any immutation of their very essence or no, the repugnancy being so plainly manifest of the very terms, necessary and changeable. And inasmuch as it is so evident that a necessary being can receive no accession to itself; that it must always have, or keep itself, after the same manner, and in the same state; that if it be necessarily such, or such, (as we cannot conceive it to be, but we must, in our own thoughts, affix to it some determinate state or other,) it must be eternally such, and ever in that particular unchanged state.

Therefore, be the perfection of our souls as great as our most certain knowledge of them can possibly allow us to suppose it, it is not yet so great, but that we must be constrained to confess them no necessary, self-originate beings; and by consequence, dependent ones, that owe themselves to some cause.

XII. Nor yet, (that we may pass over to the other strangely distant extreme,) is the perfection of our souls so little, as to require less than an intelligent cause, endowed with the wisdom which we assert and challenge unto the truly necessary, uncaused Being. Which, because he hath no other rival or competitor for the glory of this production, than only the fortuitous jumble of the blindly-moving particles of matter, directs our inquiry to this single point: Whose image the thing produced bears, Or which it more resembles; Stupid, senseless, inactive matter, (or at the best only supposed moving, though no man, upon the atheists' terms, can imagine how it came to be so,) or the active, intelligent Being, whom we affirm the cause of all things, and who hath peculiarly entitled himself, the Father of spirits?

That is, we are to consider whether the powers and operations belonging to the reasonable soul, do not plainly argue—First, That it neither rises from, nor is, mere matter; whence it will be consequent, it must have an efficient, diverse from matter:—and, Secondly, That it owes itself to an intelligent efficient.

As to the former, we need not deal distinctly and severally concerning their original and their nature. For if they are not mere matter, it will be evident enough they do not arise from thence.

So that all will be summed up in this inquiry, Whether reason can agree to matter, considered alone, or by itself?

But here the case requires closer discourse. For in order to this inquiry, it is requisite the subject be determined we inquire about. It hath been commonly taken for granted that all substance is either matter or mind, when yet it hath not been agreed, what is the distinct notion of the one or the other. And for the stating their difference, there is herein both an apparent difficulty and necessity.

A difficulty; for the ancient difference, that the former is extended, having parts lying without each other; the latter unextended, having no parts; is now commonly exploded, and, as it seems, reasonably enough; both because we scarce know how to impose it upon ourselves, to conceive of a mind or spirit that is unextended or that hath no parts; and that, on the other hand, the atoms of matter, strictly taken, must also be unextended and be without parts. And the difficulty of assigning the proper difference between these two is further evident, from what we experience how difficult it is to form any clear, distinct notion of substance itself, (so to be divided into matter and mind,) stripped of all its attributes.* Though, as that celebrated author also speaks, we can be surer of nothing, than that there is a real somewhat that sustains those attributes.

Yet, also, who sees not a necessity of assigning a difference? For how absurd is it to affirm, deny, or inquire of what belongs, or belongs not, to matter or mind, if it be altogether unagreed what we mean by the one, or the other.

That the former, speaking of any continued portion of matter, hath parts actually separable, the other, being admitted to have parts too, but that cannot be actually separated; with the power of self-contraction and self-dilatation ascribed to this latter, denied of the former, seem as intelligible differences, and as little liable to exception, as any we can think of. Besides what we observe of

dulness, inactivity, insensibility, in one sort of substance; and of vigour, activity, capacity of sensation, and spontaneous motion, with what we can conceive of self-vitality, in this latter sort: i. e. That whereas matter is only capable of having life imparted to it, from somewhat that lives of itself; created mind or spirit, though depending for its being on the Supreme Cause, hath life essentially included in that being, so that it is inseparable from it, and it is the same thing to it, to live and to be. But a merely materiate being, if it live, borrows its life, as a thing foreign to it, and separable from it.

But if, instead of such distinction, we should shortly and at the next have pronounced, that as mind is a cogitant substance, matter is incogitant, how would this have squared with our present inquiry? What antagonist would have agreed with us upon this state of the question? i. e. in effect whether that can reason or think, that is incapable of reason or thought? Such, indeed, as have studied more to hide a bad meaning than express a good one, have confounded the terms matter, or body, and substance. But take we matter as contradistinguished to mind and spirit, as above described; and it is concerning this that we intend this inquiry.

And here we shall, therefore, waive the consideration of their conceits, concerning the manner of the first origination of men, who thought their whole being was only a production of the earth. Whereof the philosophical account deserves as much laughter, instead of confutation, as any the most fabulously poetical; that is, how they were formed, (as also the other animals,) in certain little bags, or wombs of the earth, out of which, when they grew ripe, they broke forth, &c.*

And only consider what is said of the constitution- and nature of the human soul itself, which is said to be composed of very well polished,

the smoothest and the roundest atoms,[†] and which are of the neatest fashion, and every way, you must suppose, the best conditioned the whole country could afford, of a more excellent make, as there is added, than those of the fire itself. And these are the things you must know, which think, study, contemplate, frame syllogisms, make theorems, lay plots, contrive business, act the philosopher, the logician, the mathematician, statesman, and everything else. (Only you may except the priest, for of him there was no need.)

This, therefore, is our present theme, whether such things as these be capable of such, or any acts of reason, yea or no?

And if such a subject may admit of serious discourse, in this way it may be convenient to proceed; viz. either any such small particle or atom (for our business is not now with Des Cartes but Epicurus) alone is rational, or a good convenient number of them assembled, and most happily met together. It is much to be feared the former way will not do; for we have nothing to consider in any of these atoms, in its solitary condition, besides its magnitude, its figure, and its weight; and you may add also its motion, if you could devise how it should come by it.

And now, because it is not to be thought that all atoms are rational (for then the stump of a tree or a bundle of straw might serve to make a soul of, for aught we know, as good as the best), it is to be considered by which of those properties an atom shall be entitled to the privilege of being rational, and the rational atoms be distinguished from the rest. Is it their peculiar magnitude or size that so far ennoble them? Epicurus would here have us believe that the least are the fittest for this turn. Now if you consider how little we must suppose them generally to be, according to his account of them, (that is, that looking upon any of those little motes, a stream whereof

you may perceive when the sun shines in at a window, and he doubts not but many myriads of even ordinary atoms go to the composition of any one of these scarcely discernible motes); how sportful a contemplation were it to suppose one of those furnished with all the powers of a reasonable soul? (Though it is likely they would not laugh at the jest, that think thousands of souls might be conveniently placed upon the point of a needle.) And yet, which makes the matter more admirable, that very few, except they be very carefully picked and chosen, can be found among those many myriads but will be too big to be capable of rationality. Here sure the fate is very hard of those that come nearest the size, but only, by a very little too much corpulency, happen to be excluded as unworthy to be counted among the rational atoms. But sure, if all sober reason be not utterly lost and squandered away among these little entities, it must needs be judged altogether incomprehensible, why, if upon the account of mere littleness any atom should be capable of reason, all should not be so, and then we could not but have a very rational world; at least, the difference in this point being so very small among them, and they being all so very little, methinks they should all be capable of some reason, and have only less or more of it according as they are bigger and less. But there is little doubt that single property of less magnitude will not be stood upon as the characteristical difference of rational and irrational atoms; and because their more or less gravity is reckoned necessarily and so immediately to depend on that, for those atoms cannot be thought porous, but very closely compacted each one within itself, this, it is likely, will as little be depended on.* And so their peculiar figure must be the more trusted to, as the differencing thing. And because there is in this respect so great a variety among this little sort of people, or nation, as this author somewhere calls them (whereof he gives so punctual an account,† as if he had been the generalissimo of their armies, and were wont to view them at their rendezvous, to form them into regiments and

squadrons, and appoint them to the distinct services he found them aptest for), no doubt it was a difficulty to determine which sort of figure was to be pitched on to make up the rational regiment. But since his power was absolute, and there was none to gainsay or contradict, the round figure was judged best and most deserving this honour. Otherwise, a reason might have been asked, (and it might have been a greater difficulty to have given a good one,) why some other figure might not have done as well, unless respect were had to fellow-atoms, and that it was thought they of this figure could better associate for the present purpose; and that we shall consider of by and bye. We now proceed on the supposition that possibly a single atom, by the advantage of this figure, might be judged capable of this high achievement; and, in that case, it would not be impertinent to inquire, whether if an atom were perfectly round, and so very rational; but by an unexpected misadventure it comes to have one little corner somewhere clapped on, it be hereby quite spoiled of its rationality? And again, whether one that comes somewhat near that figure, only it hath some little protuberances upon it, might not by a little filing or the friendly rubs of other atoms, become rational? And yet, now we think on it, of this improvement he leaves no hope, because he tells us though they have parts, yet they are so solidly compacted that they are by no force capable of dissolution. And so whatever their fate is in this particular, they must abide it without expectation of change; and yet, though we cannot really alter it for the better with any of them, yet we may think as favourably of the matter as we please; and for anything that yet appears, whatever peculiar claim the round ones lay to rationality, we may judge as well (and shall not easily be disproved) of any of the rest.

Upon the whole, no one of these properties, alone, is likely to make a rational atom: what they will all do, meeting together, may yet seem a doubt. That is, supposing we could hit upon one single atom that is

at once of a very little size, and consequently very light and nimble, and most perfectly smooth, and unexceptionably round, (and possibly there may be found a good many such,) will not this do the business? May we not now hope to have a rational sort of people among them, that is, those of his peculiar family or tribe? And yet still the matter will be found to go very hard; for if we cannot imagine or devise how any one of these properties should contribute any thing (as upon our utmost disquisition we certainly cannot) towards the power of reasoning, it is left us altogether unimaginable how all these properties together should make a rational atom! There is only one relief remaining, that is, what if we add to these other properties some peculiarly brisk sort of actual motion: for to be barely moveable will not serve, inasmuch as all are so: but will not actual motion, (added to its being irreprehensibly little, light, and round,) especially if it be a very freakish one, and made up of many odd, unexpected windings and turns, effect the business? Possibly it might do something to actual reasoning, supposing the power were there before; for who can tell but the little thing was fallen asleep, and by this means its power might be awakened into some exercise? But that it should give the power itself, is above all comprehension; and there is nothing else to give it. These that have been mentioned, being all the prime qualities that are assigned to atoms singly considered; all other that can be supposed, belonging to concrete bodies that are composed of many of them meeting together. And therefore hither in the next place our inquiry must be directed, whether any number of atoms, definite or indefinite, being in themselves severally irrational, can become rational by association, or compose and make up a rational soul?

Hitherto it must be acknowledged we have not fought with any adversary; not having met with any that have asserted the rationality of single corporeal atoms; yet because we know not what time may

produce, and whither the distress and exigency of a desperate cause may drive the maintainers of it, it was not therefore fit to say nothing to that supposable or possible assertion: (I mean possible to be asserted, howsoever impossible it is to be true.) Nor yet could it well admit of anything to be said to it, but in that ludicrous and sportful way. If we will suppose any to be so foolish, they are to be dealt with according to their folly.

But now as to this other conceit: that atoms, (provided they be of the right stamp or kind,) may, a competent number of them assembled together, compose a reasonable soul, is an express article of the Epicurean creed. And therefore, here, we are to deal more cautiously; not that this is any whit a wiser fancy than the other, but that the truth in this matter is surer to meet with opposition in the minds of some persons, already formed unto that wild apprehension, and tinctured with it.

Wherefore such must be desired to consider in the first place, if they will be true disciples of Epicurus throughout, what he affirms of all atoms universally, that they must be simple, uncompounded bodies, —or, if you will, corpuscles,—not capable of division or section, by no force dissoluble, and therefore immutable, or in themselves void of any mutation.

Hereupon let it be next considered, if there were in them, (those that are of the right size, shape, and weight,) severally, some certain sparks or seeds of reason, (that we may make the supposition as advantageous as we can) or dispositions thereto, yet how shall it be possible to them to communicate, or have that communion with one another, as together to constitute an actually and completely rational or thinking thing? If every one could bring somewhat to a common stock that might be serviceable to that purpose; how shall each one's

proportion or share be imparted? They can none of them emit anything, there can possibly be no such thing as an effluvium from any of them, inasmuch as they are incapable of diminution; and are themselves each of them as little as the least imaginable effluvium, that we would suppose to proceed from this or that particular atom. They can at the most but touch one another; penetrate, or get into one another they cannot; insomuch as if any one have a treasure in it, which is in readiness for the making up an intellectual faculty or power among them that should be common to them all, yet each one remains so locked up within itself, and is so reserved and incommunicative, that no other, much less the whole body of them, can be any jot the wiser. So that this is like to be a very dull assembly.

But then, if there be nothing of reason to be communicated, we are yet at a greater loss; for if it be said, having nothing else to communicate, they communicate themselves, what is that self? Is it a rational self? Or is every single atom that enters this composition, reason? Or is it a principle of reason? Is it a seed? Or is it a part? Is it a thought? What shall we suppose? Or what is there in the properties assigned to this sort of atoms that can bespeak it any of these? And if none of these can be supposed, what doth their association signify towards ratiocination? They are little, what doth that contribute? Therefore there may need the more of them to make a good large soul; but why must a little thing, devoid of reason, contribute more towards it, than another somewhat bigger? They are light, doth that mend the matter? They are the sooner blown away, they can the less cohere, or keep together; they are the more easily capable of dissipation, the less of keeping their places in solemn council. They are round, and exactly smooth. But why do they the more conveniently associate upon that account for this purpose? They cannot therefore come so close together as they might have done, had they been of various figures. They cannot, indeed, give or receive

so rude touches. This signifies somewhat towards the keeping of state, but what doth it to the exercise of reason? Their being so perfectly and smoothly round, makes them the more incapable of keeping a steady station; they are the more in danger of rolling away from one another; they can upon this account lay no hold of each other. Their counsels and resolves are likely to be the more lubricous, and liable to an uncertain volubility. It is not to be imagined what a collection of individuals, only thus qualified, can do, when they are come together, an assembly thus constituted. Are we hence to expect oracles, philosophical determinations, maxims of state? And since they are supposed to be so much alike, how are the mathematical atoms to be distinguished from the moral? those from the political? the contemplative from the active? Or when the assembly thinks fit to entertain itself with matters of this or that kind, what must be its different composure or posture? Into what mould or figure must it cast itself for one purpose, and into what, for another? It is hard to imagine that these little globular bodies, that we may well suppose to be as like as one egg can be to another, should by the mere alteration of their situation, in respect of one another, (and no alteration besides can be so much as imagined among them,) make so great a change in the complexion of this assembly; so that now, it shall be disposed to seriousness, and by some transposition of the spherical particles, to mirth, now to business, and by and bye to pleasure. And seeing all human souls are supposed made of the same sort of material, how are the atoms modelled in one man, and how in another? What atoms are there to dispose to this sect more, and what to another? Or if a good reason can be assigned for their difference, what shall be given for their agreement? Whence is it that there are so many, so unquestionable, common notions everywhere received? Why are not all things transposed in some minds, when such a posture of the atoms as might infer it, is as supposable as any other! Yea, and since men are found not always to be of one mind with

themselves, it is strange and incomprehensible, that such a situation of these atoms that constitute his soul should dispose him to be of one opinion, and another of another. How are they to be ranged, when for the affirmative? how for the negative? And yet a great deal more strange, that since their situation is so soon changed, and so continually changing, (the very substance of the soul being supposed nothing else than a thing very like, but a little finer than, a busy and continually moving flame of fire,) any man should ever continue to be of the same opinion with himself, one quarter of an hour together; that all notions are not confounded and jumbled; that the same thing is not thought and unthought, resolved and unresolved, a thousand times in a day: that is, if anything could be thought, or resolved at all; or if this were a subject capable of framing, or receiving any sort of notion.

But still that is the greatest difficulty, how there can be such a thing as thinking, or forming of notions. The case is plain of such notions as have no relation to matter, or dependence upon external sense: (as what doth that contribute to my contemplation of my own mind, and its acts and powers; to my animadversion, or knowing that I think, or will, this or that?)

But besides, and more generally, what proportion is there between a thought, and the motion of an atom? Will we appeal to our faculties, or to our reason itself? And whither else will we? Is there any cognation, or kindred between the ideas we have of these things, the casual agitation of a small particle of matter, (be it as little, or as round, as we please to imagine,) and an act of intellection or judgment? And what if there be divers of them together? What can they do more towards the composing an intelligent thing, than many ciphers to the arithmetical composition of a number? It would be as rational to suppose an heap of dust, by long lying together, might at

last become rational. Yes, these are things that have, some way or other, the power of motion; and what can they effect by that? They can frisk about, and ply to and fro, and interfere among themselves, and hit, and justle and tumble over one another, and that will contribute a great deal; about as much, we may suppose, as the shaking of such dust well in a bag, by which means it might possibly become finer and smaller something; and by continuing that action, at length rational! No; but these atoms, of which the soul is made, have a great advantage by their being disposed into a so well-contrived and fitly-organized receptacle as the body is. It is indeed true, and admirable, that the body is, as hath been before observed, so fitly framed for the purposes whereto the whole of it, and its several parts, are designed. But how unfitly is that commodious structure of it so much as mentioned by such as will not allow themselves to own, and adore, the wisdom and power of its great Architect!

And what if the composure of the body be so apt and useful, so excellent in its own kind; is it so in every kind, or to all imaginable purposes? Or what purpose can we possibly imagine more remote or foreign to the composition of the body, than that the power of ratiocination should be derived thence? It might as well be said it was so made, to whirl about the sun, or to govern the motions of the moon and stars, as to confer the power of reason, or enable the soul to think, to understand, to deliberate, to will, &c. Yea, its organs, some of them, are much more proportionable to those actions, than any of them unto these. Which, though a well-habited body (while the soul remains in this imprisoned stale,) do less hinder, yet how doth it help? And that it might perform these acts without bodily organs, is much more apprehensible than how they can properly be said to be performed by them: and that, though they are done in the body, they would be done much better out of it.

But shall it be granted that these soul-constituting atoms, till they be (or otherwise than as they are) united with a duly organized body, are utterly destitute of any reasoning or intelligent power? Or are they, by themselves, apart from this grosser body, irrational? If this be not granted, the thing we intend must be argued out. Either then, they are, or they are not. If the latter be said, then they have it of themselves, without dependence on the organized body; and so we are fairly agreed to quit that pretence, without more ado, of their partaking reason from thence: and are only left to weigh over again what hath been already said to evince the contrary; that is, how manifestly absurd it is, to imagine that particles of matter, by their peculiar size, or weight, or shape, or motion, or all of these together, and that, whether single or associated, should be capable of reasoning. If the former be the thing which is resolved to be stuck to, that is, that they are of themselves irrational, but they become reasonable by their being united in such a prepared and organized body; this requires to be a little further considered. And to this purpose it is necessary to obviate a pitiful shift that it is possible some may think fit to use, for the avoiding the force of this dilemma; and may rely upon as a ground, why they may judge this choice the more secure; that is, that they say they are rational by dependence on the body they animate; because they are only found so united with one another there; that there they have the first coalition; there they are severed from such as serve not this turn; there they are pent in, and held together as long as its due temperament lasts; which, when it fails, they are dissipated, and so lose their great advantage for the acts of reason, which they had in such a body. What pleasure soever this may yield, it will soon appear it does them little service.

For it only implies, that they have their rationality of themselves, so be it that they were together; and not immediately from the body; or any otherwise, than that they are somewhat beholden to it, for a fair

occasion of being together; as if it were, else, an unlawful assembly; or that they knew not, otherwise, how to meet and hold together. They will not say that the body gives them being, for they are eternal, and self-subsisting, as they will have it. Yea, and of themselves (though the case be otherwise with the Cartesian particles) undiminishable as to their size, and, as to their figure and weight, unalterable; so that they have neither their littleness, their roundness, nor their lightness, from the body, but only their so happy meeting. Admit this, and only suppose them to be met out of the body. And why may not this be thought supposable? If they be not rational till they be met, they cannot have wit enough to scruple meeting, at least somewhere else, than in the body. And who knows but such a chance may happen? As great as this, are by these persons supposed to have happened, before the world could have come to this pass it is now at; who can tell but such a number of the same sort of atoms (it being natural for things so much of a complexion and temper to associate and find out one another) might ignorantly, and thinking no harm, come together? And having done so, why might they not keep together? Do they need to be pent in? How are they pent in, whilst in the body? If they be disposed, they have ways enough to get out. And if they must needs be inclined to scatter when the crisis of the body fails, surely a way might be found to hem them in, if that be all, at the time of expiration, more tightly and closely, than they could be in the body. And what reason can be devised, why, being become rational, by their having been assembled in the body, they may not agree to hold together, and do so in spite of fate, or maugre all ordinary accidents, when they find it convenient to leave it? And then upon these no-way impossible suppositions, (according to their principles so far as can be understood, with whom we have to do,) will they now be rational out of the body; being still endowed (as they cannot but be) with the same high privileges of being little, round, and light, and being still also together; and somewhat more, it

may be, at liberty, to roll and tumble, and mingle with one another, than in the body? If it be now affirmed, they will, in this case, be rational, at least as long as they hold together, then we are but where we were. And this shift hath but diverted us a little; but so, as it was easy to bring the matter again about, to the same point we were at before. Wherefore the shelter of the body being thus quite again forsaken, this poor expelled crew of dislodging atoms are exposed to fight in the open air, for their rationality, against all that was said before.

But if this refuge and sanctuary of the body be not merely pretended to, but really and plainly trusted in and stuck to, then are we sincerely and honestly to consider what a body so variously organized can do, to make such a party of atoms (that of themselves are not so, singly, nor together) become rational. And surely, if the cause were not saved before, it is now deplorable, and lost without remedy. For what do they find here that can thus, beyond all expectation, improve them to so high an excellency? Is it flesh, or blood, or bones, that puts this stamp upon them? Think, what is the substance of the nobler parts, the liver, or heart, or brain, that they should turn these, before, irrational atoms, when they fall into them, into rational, any more than if they were well soaked in a quagmire, or did insinuate themselves into a piece of soft dough? But here they meet with a benign and kindly heat and warmth, which comfortably fosters and cherishes them, till at length it hath hatched them into rational. But methinks they should be warm enough of themselves, since they are supposed so much to resemble fire. And, however, wherein do we find a flame of fire more rational, than a piece of ice? Yea, but here they find a due temper of moisture as well as heat. And that surely doth not signify much; for if the common maxim be true, that the dry soul is the wisest, they might have been much wiser, if they had kept themselves out of the body. And since it is necessary

the soul should consist of that peculiar sort of atoms before described; and the organical body (which must be said for distinction's sake, the soul being all this while supposed a body also) consists of atoms too, that are of a much coarser alloy, methinks a mixture should not be necessary, but a hindrance, and great debasement, rather, to this rational composition. Besides, that it cannot be understood, if it were necessary these atoms should receive any tincture from the body, in order to their being rational, what they can receive, or how they can receive anything. They have not pores that can admit an adventitious moisture, though it were of the divinest nectar, and the body could never so plentifully furnish them with it. Wherein then lies the great advantage these atoms have by being in the body, to their commencing rational? If there be such advantage, why can it not be understood? Why is it not assigned? Why should we further spend our guesses what may possibly be said? But yet, may not much be attributed to the convenient and well fenced cavity of the brain's receptacle, or the more secret chambers within that, where the studious atoms may be very private and free from disturbance? Yet sure it is hard to say, why they that are wont to do it here, might not as well philosophize in some well-chosen cavern, or hole of a rock; nor were it impossible to provide them there, with as soft a bed. And yet would it not be some relief to speak of the fine slender pipes, winding to and fro, wherein they may be conveyed so conveniently from place to place, that if they do not fall into a reasoning humour in one place, they may in another? Why, what can this do? It seems somewhat like Balaam's project, to get into a vein of incantation, by changing stations. And transplace them as you will, it requires more magic than ever he was master of, to make those innocent, harmless things, masters of reason.

For do but consider, what if you had a large phial capable of as great a quantity as you can think needful, of very fine particles, and,

replenished with them, closely stopped, and well luted; suppose these as pure and fit for the purpose as you can imagine, only not yet rational; will their faring to and fro, through very close and stanch tubes, from one such receptacle to another, make them at last become so? It seems then, do what you will with them, toss and tumble them hither and thither, rack them from vessel to vessel, try what methods you can devise of sublimation or improvement, everything looks like a vain and hopeless essay. For indeed, do what you please or can think of, they are such immutable entities, you can never make them less, or finer, than they originally were: and rational they were not, before their meeting, in the body; wherefore it were a strange wonder, if that should so far alter the case with them, that they should become rational by it.

XIII. And now, I must, upon the whole, profess not to be well pleased with the strain of this discourse: not that I think it unsuitable to its subject, (for I see not how it is fitly to be dealt with in a more serious way,) but that I dislike the subject. And were it not that it is too obvious, how prone the minds of some are to run themselves into any the grossest absurdities, rather than admit the plain and easy sentiments of religion; it were miserable trifling to talk at this rate, and a loss of time not to be endured. But when an unaccountable aversion to the acknowledgment and adoration of the ever-blessed Deity, hurries away men, affrighted and offended at the lustre of his so manifest appearances, to take a bad, but the only, shelter the case can admit, under the wings of any the most silly, foolish figment; though the ill temper and dangerous state of the persons is to be thought on with much pity, yet the things which they pretend being in themselves ridiculous, if we will entertain them into our thoughts at all, cannot fitly be entertained but with derision. Nor doth it more unbecome a serious person to laugh at what is ridiculous, than gravely to weigh and ponder what is weighty and considerable;

provided he does not seek occasions of that former sort, on purpose to gratify a vain humour; but only allow himself to discourse suitably to them, when they occur. And their dotage who would fain serve themselves of so wildly extravagant and impossible suppositions, for the fostering their horrid misbelief, that they have no God to worship, would certainly justify as sharp ironies, as the prophet Elijah bestows upon them who worshipped Baal, instead of the true God.

XIV. Nor is anything here said intended as a reflection on such, as, (being unfurnished with a notion of created, intelligent spirits, that might distinguish their substance from the most subtile matter,) have therefore thought that their mind or thinking power might have some such substratum, unto which it is superadded, or impressed thereon by a divine hand; in the meantime, not doubting their immortality, much less the existence of a Deity, the Author and Former of them, and all things. For they are no way guilty of that blasphemous nonsense, to make them consist of necessary, self-subsistent matter, every minute particle whereof is judged eternal and immutable, and in themselves, for aught we can find asserted, destitute of reason; and which yet acquire it by no one knows what coalition, without the help of a wise efficient, that shall direct and order it to so unimaginable an improvement. These persons do only think more refined matter capable of that impression and stamp; or of having such a power put into it, by the Creator's all-disposing hand. Wherein, to do them right, though they should impose somewhat hardly upon themselves, if they will make this estimate of the natural capacity of matter; or if they think the acts and power of reason in man, altogether unnatural to him; yet they do, in effect, the more befriend the cause we are pleading for; (as much as it can be befriended by a misapprehension; which yet is a thing of that untoward genius, and doth so ill consort with truth, that it is never

admitted as a friend, in any one respect, but it repays it with a mischievous revenge, in some other, as might many ways be shown in this instance, if it were within the compass of our present design;) it being evident, that if any portion of matter shall indeed be certainly found the actual subject of such powers, and to have such operations belonging to it, there is the plainer and more undeniable necessity and demonstration of his power and wisdom, who can make anything, of anything; of stones raise up children to Abraham! and who shall then have done that which is so altogether impossible, except to Him, to whom all things are possible. There is the more manifest need of his hand to heighten dull matter, to a qualifiedness for performances so much above its nature; to make the loose and independent parts of so fluid matter, cohere, and hold together, that if it were once made capable of knowledge, and the actual subject of it, whatsoever notions were impressed thereon, might not be, in a moment, confounded and lost; as indeed they could not but be, if the particles of matter were the immediate seat of reason, and so steady a hand did not hold them, in a settled composure, that they be not disordered; and men have, thence, the necessity of beginning afresh, to know anything, every hour of the day. Though yet it seems a great deal more reasonable to suppose the souls of men to be of a substance in itself more consistent, and more agreeable to our experience; who find a continual ebbing and flowing of spirits, without being sensible of any so notable and sudden changes in our knowledge, as we could not but, thereupon, observe in ourselves if they, or any as fluid finer matter, were the immediate subjects of it.

It is therefore, however, sufficiently evident, and out of question, that the human soul (be its own substance what it will) must have an efficient diverse from matter; which it was our present intendment to evince. And so our way is clear to

XV. The second inquiry, whether it be not also manifest, from the powers and operations which belong to it as it is reasonable, that it must have had an intelligent efficient? That is, since we find, and are assured, that there is a sort of being in the world (yea somewhat of ourselves, and that hath best right, of anything else about us, to be called ourselves) that can think, understand, deliberate, argue, &c., and which we can most certainly assure ourselves (whether it were pre-existent in any former state, or no) is not an independent or uncaused being, and hath therefore been the effect of some cause, whether it be not apparently the effect of a wise cause?

And this, upon supposition of what hath been before proved, seems not liable to any the least rational doubt. For it is already apparent, that it is not itself matter; and if it were, it is however the more apparent, that its cause is not matter; inasmuch, as if it be itself matter, its powers and operations are so much above the natural capacity of matter, as that it must have had a cause, so much more noble and of a more perfect nature than that, as to be able to raise and improve it, beyond the natural capacity of matter: which it was impossible for that, itself, to do. Whence it is plain, it must have a cause diverse from matter.

Wherefore this its immaterial cause must either be wise and intelligent, or not so. But is it possible any man should ever be guilty of a greater absurdity than to acknowledge some certain immaterial agent, destitute of wisdom, the only cause and fountain of all that wisdom, that is, or hath ever been, in the whole race of mankind? That is as much as to say, that all the wisdom of mankind hath been caused without a cause. For it is the same thing, after we have acknowledged any thing to be caused, to say it was caused by no cause, as to say it was caused by such a cause, as hath nothing of that in it, whereof we find somewhat to be in the effect. Nor can it avail

anything, to speak of the disproportion or superior excellency in some effects to their second, or to their only partial, causes; as that there are sometimes learned children of unlearned parents. For who did ever in that case say the parents were the productive causes of that learning? or of them, as they were learned? Sure that learning comes from some other cause. But shall it then be said, the souls of men have received their being from some such immaterial agent destitute of wisdom; and, afterward, their wisdom and intellectual ability came some other way; by their own observation, or by institution and precept, from others? Whence then came their capacity of observing, or of receiving such instruction? Can anything naturally destitute even of seminal reason, (as we may call it,) or of any aptitude or capacity tending thereto, ever be able to make observations, or receive instructions, whereby at length it may become rational? And is not that capacity of the soul of man a real something? Or is there no difference between being capable of reason and incapable? What, then, did this real something proceed from nothing? Or was the soul itself caused, and this its capacity, uncaused? Or was its cause only capable of intellectual perfection, but not actually furnished therewith? But if it were only capable, surely its advantages for the actual attainment thereof have been much greater than ours. Whence it were strange, if that capacity should never have come into act; and more strange, that we should know, or have any ground to pretend, that it hath not. But that there was an actual exercise of wisdom in the production of the reasonable soul is most evident. For is it a necessary being? That we have proved it is not. It is therefore a contingent, and its being depended on a free cause, into whose pleasure, only, it was resolvable, that it should be, or not be; and which therefore had a dominion over its own acts. If this bespeak not an intelligent agent, what doth?

And though this might also be said concerning everything else which is not necessarily, and so might yield a more general argument to evince a free designing cause; yet it concludes with greater evidence concerning the reasonable soul, whose powers and operations it is so manifestly impossible should have proceeded from matter. And therefore even that vain and refuted pretence itself, that other things might, by the necessary laws of motion, become what they are, can have less place here. Whence it is more apparent that the reasonable soul must have had a free and intelligent Cause, that used liberty and counsel, in determining that it should be, and especially that it should be such a sort of thing as we find it is. For when we see how aptly its powers and faculties serve for their proper and peculiar operations, who that is not besides himself can think that such a thing was made by one that knew not what he was doing? Or that such powers were not given on purpose for such operations? And what is the capacity, but a power that should sometime be reduced into act, and arrive to the exercise of reason itself?

Now was it possible any thing should give that power that had it not any way;—that is, in the same kind, or in some more excellent and noble kind? For we contend not that this Agent, whereof we speak, is in the strict and proper sense rational, taking that term to import an ability or faculty of inferring what is less known from what is more. For we suppose all things equally known to him, (which, so far as is requisite to our present design, that is, the representing him the proper object of religion, or of that honour which the dedication of a temple to him imports, we may in due time come more expressly to assert,) and that the knowledge which is with us the end of reasoning, is in him in its highest perfection, without being at all beholden to that means; that all the connexions of things with one another lie open to one comprehensive view; and are known to be connected, but not because they are so. We say, is it conceivable that

man's knowing power should proceed from a cause that hath it not, in the same, or this more perfect kind; and may use those words to this purpose, not for their authority, (which we expect not should be here significant,) but for the convincing evidence they carry with them, He that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he know? That we may drive this matter to an issue, it is evident the soul of man is not a necessary, self-originate thing; and had therefore some cause. We find it to have knowledge, or the power of knowing, belonging to it; therefore we say, so had its cause. We rely not here upon the credit of vulgar maxims, (whereof divers might be mentioned,) but the reason of them, or of the thing itself we allege; and do now speak of the whole, entire cause of this being, the human soul, or of whatsoever is causal of it, or of any perfection naturally appertaining to it. It is of an intelligent nature. Did this intelligent nature proceed from an unintelligent, as the whole and only cause of it? That were to speak against our own eyes, and most natural, common sentiments; and were the same thing as to say that something came of nothing. For it is all one to say so, and to say that any thing communicated what it had not to communicate. Or (which is alike madly absurd,) to say that the same thing was such and not such, intelligent, and not intelligent, able to communicate an intelligent nature, (for sure what it doth it is able to do,) and not able, (for it is not able to communicate what it hath not,) at the same time.

It is hardly here worth the while to spend time in countermining that contemptible refuge, (which is as incapable of offending us, as of being defended,) that human souls may perhaps only have proceeded in the ordinary course of generation from one another; for that none have ever said any thing to that purpose deserving a confutation, except that some sober and pious persons, for the avoiding of some other difficulties, have thought it more safe to assert the traduction of human souls, who yet were far enough from imagining that they

could be total, or first causes to one another; and doubted not, but they had the constant necessary assistance of that same Being we are pleading for, acting in his own sphere, as the first cause in all such, as well as any other productions. Wherein they nothing oppose the main design of this discourse; and therefore it is not in our way to offer at any opposition unto them.

But if any have a mind to indulge themselves the liberty of so much dotage, as to say the souls of men were first and only causes to one another; either they must suppose them to be material beings; (and then we refer them to what hath been already said, showing that their powers and operations cannot belong to matter, nor arise from it;) or immaterial, (and then they cannot produce one another in the way of generation.) For of what pre-existent substance are they made? Theirs who beget them? Of that they can part with nothing; separability, at least, of parts being a most confessed property of matter. Or some other? Where will they find that other spiritual substance, that belonged not inseparably to some individual being, before? And besides, if it were pre-existent, as it must be if a soul be generated out of it, then they were not the first and only causes of this production.

And in another way than that of generation, how will any form the notion of making a soul? Let experience and the making of trial convince the speculators. By what power, or by what art, will they make a reasonable soul spring up out of nothing?

It might be hoped that thus, without disputing the possibility of an eternal, successive production of souls, this shift may appear vain. But if any will persist, and say, that how or in what way soever they are produced, it is strange if they need any nobler cause than themselves; for may not any living thing well enough be thought

capable of producing another of the same kind, of no more than equal perfection with itself? To this we say, (besides that no one living thing is the only cause of another such;) yet if that were admitted possible, what will it avail? For hath every soul that hath ever existed, or been in being, been produced, in this way, by another? This it were ridiculous to say; for if every one were so produced, there was then some one, before every one; inasmuch as that which produces, must surely have been before that which is produced by it. But how can every one have one before it? A manifest contradiction in the very terms! For then there will be one without the compass of every one; and how is it then said to be every one? There is then it seems one, besides, or more than, all. And so all is not all. And if this be thought a sophism, let the matter be soberly considered thus. The soul of man is either a thing of that nature universally (and consequently every individual soul) as that it doth exist of itself, necessarily and independently, or not. If it be, then we have, however, a wise intelligent being necessarily existing. The thing we have been proving all this while. Yet this concession we will not accept; for though it is most certain there is such a being, we have also proved the human soul is not it. Whence it is evidently a dependent being, in its own nature, that could never have been of itself, and consequently not at all, had it not been put into being by somewhat else. And being so in its own nature, it must be thus with every one that partakes of this nature; and consequently it must be somewhat of another nature that did put the souls of men into being: otherwise, the whole stock and lineage of human souls is said to have been dependent on a productive cause, and yet had nothing whereon to depend; and so is both caused by another, and not caused. And therefore since it is hereby evident it was somewhat else, and of another nature, than a human soul, by which all human souls were produced into being: we again say, that distinct being either was a dependent, caused being, or not. If not, it being proved that the soul

of man cannot but have had an intelligent, or wise cause, we have now what we seek—an independent, necessary, intelligent being. If it do depend, or any will be so idle to say so, that, however, will infallibly and very speedily lead us to the same mark. For though some have been pleased to dream of an infinite succession of individuals of this or that kind, I suppose we have no dream as yet, ready formed, to come under confutation, of infinite kinds or orders of beings, gradually superior, one above another; the inferior still depending on the superior, and all upon nothing. And therefore, I conceive, we may fairly take leave of this argument from the human soul, as having gained from it sufficient evidence of the existence of a necessary being, that is intelligent, and designingly active, or guided by wisdom and counsel, in what it doth.

We might also, if it were needful, further argue the same thing from a power or ability manifestly superior to, and that exceeds the utmost perfection of, human nature, viz. that of prophecy, or the prediction of future contingencies; yea, and from another, that exceeds the whole sphere of all created nature, and which crosses and countermands the known and stated laws thereof, namely, that of working miracles; both of them exercised with manifest design; (as might evidently be made appear, by manifold instances, to as many as can believe any thing to be true, more than what they have seen with their own eyes; and that do not take present sense, yea and their own only, to be the alone measure of all reality.) But it is not necessary we insist upon every thing that may be said, so that enough be said to serve our present purpose.

XVI. And that our purpose may yet be more fully served, and such a being evidenced to exist as we may with satisfaction esteem to merit a temple with us, and the religion of it, it is necessary that we add somewhat concerning the divine goodness; for unto that eternal

Being, whose existence we have hitherto asserted, goodness also cannot but appertain, together with those his other attributes we have spoken of.

It is not needful here to be curious about the usual scholastical notions of goodness, or what it imports, as it is wont to be attributed to being in the general; what, as it belongs in a peculiar sense to intellectual beings; or what more special import it may have, in reference to this. That which we at present chiefly intend by it, is a propension to do good with delight, or most freely, without other inducement than the agreeableness of it to his nature who doth it; and a certain delectation and complacency, which, hence, is taken in so doing. The name of goodness (though thus it more peculiarly signifies the particular virtue of liberality) is of a significancy large enough, even in the moral acceptation, to comprehend all other perfections or virtues, that belong to, or may any way commend, the will of a free agent. These therefore we exclude not; and particularly whatsoever is wont to be signified, as attributable unto God, by the names of holiness, as a steady inclination unto what is intellectually pure and comely, with an aversion to the contrary; justice, as that signifies an inclination to deal equally, which is included in the former, yet as more expressly denoting what is most proper to a governor over others, namely, a resolution not to let the transgression of laws, made for the preservation of common order, pass without due animadversion and punishment; truth, whose signification also may be wholly contained under those former more general terms, but more directly contains sincerity, unaptness to deceive, and constancy to one's word: for these may properly be styled good things in a moral sense; as many other things might, in another notion of goodness, which it belongs not to our present design to make mention of. But these are mentioned as more directly tending to represent to us an amiable object of religion; and are

referred hither, as they fitly enough may, out of an unwillingness to multiply, without necessity, particular heads or subjects of discourse.

In the meantime, as was said, what we principally intend, is, That the Being whose existence we have been endeavouring to evince, is good, as that imports a ready inclination of will to communicate unto others what may be good to them; creating, first, its own object, and then issuing forth to it, in acts of free beneficence, suitable to the nature of every thing created by it. Which, though it be the primary or first thing carried in the notion of this goodness, yet because that inclination is not otherwise good than as it consists with holiness, justice, and truth, these therefore may be esteemed secondarily, at least, to belong to it, as inseparable qualifications thereof.

Wherefore it is not a merely natural and necessary emanation we here intend, that prevents any act or exercise of counsel or design; which would no way consist with the liberty of the Divine will, and would make the Deity as well a necessary Agent, as a necessary Being; yea, and would therefore make all the creatures merely natural and necessary emanations, and so destroy the distinction of necessary and contingent beings: and, by consequence, bid fair to the making all things God. It would infer, not only the eternity of the world, but would seem to infer either the absolute infinity of it, or the perfection of it, and of every creature in it, to that degree, as that nothing could be more perfect in its own kind, than it is; or would infer the finiteness of the Divine Being. For it would make what he hath done the adequate measure of what he can do, and would make all his administrations necessary, yea, and all the actions of men, and consequently take away all law and government out of the world, and all measures of right and wrong, and make all punitive justice, barbarous cruelty: and consequently, give us a notion of goodness, at length, plainly inconsistent with itself.

All this is provided against, by our having first asserted the wisdom of that Being, whereunto we also attribute goodness; which guides all the issues of it, according to those measures or rules which the essential rectitude of the divine will gives, or rather is, unto it: whereby also a foundation is laid of answering such cavils against the divine goodness, as they are apt to raise to themselves, who are wont to magnify this attribute to the suppression of others; which is, indeed, in the end, to magnify it to nothing. And such goodness needs no other demonstration, than the visible instances and effects we have of it in the creation and conservation of this world; and particularly, in his large, munificent bounty and kindness towards man, whereof his designing him for his temple and residence, will be a full and manifest proof.

And of all this, his own self-sufficient fulness leaves it impossible to us to imagine another reason, than the delight he takes in dispensing his own free and large communications. Besides, that when we see some semblances and imitations of this goodness in the natures of some men, which we are sure are not nothing, they must needs proceed from something, and have some fountain and original, which can be no other than the common Cause and Author of all things; in whom therefore, this goodness doth firstly and most perfectly reside.

CHAPTER. IV

Generally, all supposable perfection asserted of this Being, where, First, A being absolutely perfect is endeavoured to be evinced from

the (already proved) necessary being. Which is shown to import, in the general, the utmost fulness of being. Also divers things, in particular, that tend to evince that general. As that it is at the remotest distance from no being. Most purely actual. Most abstracted being. The productive and conserving cause of all things else. Undiminishable. Incapable of addition. Secondly, Hence is more expressly deduced the infiniteness of this being. An inquiry whether it be possible the creature can be actually infinite? Difficulties concerning the absolute fulness and infiniteness of God considered. The onliness of this Being. The Trinity not thereby excluded.

I. Some account hath been thus far given of that Being, whereunto we have been designing to assert the honour of a temple; each of the particulars having been severally insisted on, that concur to make up that notion of this being which was at first laid down: and more largely, what hath been more opposed by persons of an atheistical or irreligious temper. But because, in that forementioned account of God, there was added to the particulars there enumerated (out of a just consciousness of human inability to comprehend every thing that may possibly belong to him) this general supplement, That all other supposable excellences whatsoever, do in the highest perfection appertain also originally unto this Being, it is requisite that somewhat be said concerning this addition; especially inasmuch as it comprehends in it, or may infer, some things (not yet expressly mentioned) which may be thought necessary to the evincing the reasonableness of religion, or our self-dedication as a temple to him.

For instance, it may possibly be alleged, that if it were admitted there is somewhat that is eternal, uncaused, independent, necessarily existent, that is self-active, living, powerful, wise, and good; yet all

this will not infer upon us a universal obligation to religion, unless it can also be evinced,

1. That this Being is every way sufficient to supply and satisfy all our real wants and just desires.

2. That this Being is but one, and so that all be at a certainty where their religion ought to terminate; and that the worship of every temple must centre and meet in the same object. Now the evincing of an absolutely perfect Being would include each of these; and answer both the purposes which may seem hitherto not so fully satisfied. It is therefore requisite that we endeavour.

First, To show that the Being hitherto described is absolutely, or every way, perfect.

Secondly, To deduce, from the same grounds, the absolute infinity, and the unity, or the oneness, thereof.

II. And for the former part of this undertaking, it must be acknowledged, absolute or universal perfection cannot be pretended to have been expressed in any, or in all the works of God together. Neither in number, for aught we know, (for as we cannot conceive, nor consequently speak, of divine perfections, but under the notion of many, whatsoever their real identity may be, so we do not know, but that within the compass of universal perfection there may be some particular ones, of which there is no footsteps in the creation, and whereof we have never formed any thought,) nor (more certainly) in degree; for surely the world, and the particular creatures in it, are not so perfect in correspondence to those attributes of its great Architect, which we have mentioned, viz. his power, wisdom, and goodness, as he might have made them, if he had pleased. And

indeed, to say the world were absolutely and universally perfect, were to make that God.

Wherefore it must also be acknowledged, that an absolutely perfect Being cannot be immediately demonstrated from its effects, as whereto they neither do, nor is it within the capacity of created nature that they can, adequately correspond. Whence, therefore, all that can be done for the evincing of the absolute and universal perfection of God, must be in some other way or method of discourse.

And though it be acknowledged that it cannot be immediately evidenced from the creation, yet it is to be hoped that mediately it may: for from thence (as we have seen) a necessary self-originate being, such as hath been described, is, with the greatest certainty, to be concluded; and, from thence, if we attentively consider, we shall be led to an absolutely perfect one. That is, since we have the same certainty of such a necessary self-originate being, as we have that there is any thing existent at all; if we seriously weigh what kind of being this must needs be, or what its notion must import above what hath been already evinced, we shall not be found, in this way, much to fall short of our present aim, though we have also other evidence that may be produced in its own fitter place.

Here therefore let us awhile make a stand, and more distinctly consider how far we are already advanced, that we may with the better order and advantage make our further progress.

These two things then are already evident:—First, That there is a necessary Being that hath been eternally of itself, without dependence upon any thing, either as a productive or conserving cause; and, of itself, full of activity and vital energy, so as to be a productive and sustaining cause to other things. Of this any the most

confused and indistinct view of this world, or a mere taking notice that there is any thing in being that lives and moves, and withal that alters and changes, (which it is impossible the necessary Being itself should do,) cannot but put us out of doubt.—And, Secondly, that this necessary, self-originate, vital, active Being hath very vast power, admirable wisdom, and most free and large goodness belonging to it. And of this, our nearer, and more deliberate, view and contemplation of the world do equally ascertain us, for of these things we find the manifest prints and footsteps in it. Yea, we find the derived things themselves, power, wisdom, goodness, in the creatures, and we are most assured they have not sprung from nothing; nor from any thing that had them not; and that which originally had them, or was their first fountain, must have them necessarily and essentially, (together with whatsoever else belongs to its being,) in and of itself. So that the asserting of any other necessary being, that is in itself destitute of these things, signifies no more towards the giving any account how these things came to be in the world, than if no being, necessarily existing, were asserted at all. We are therefore, by the exigency of the case itself, constrained to acknowledge, not only that there is a necessary Being, but that there is such a one as could be, and was, the fountain and cause of all those several kinds and degrees of being and perfection, that we take notice of in the world besides. Another sort of necessary being should not only be asserted to no purpose, there being nothing to be gained by it, no imaginable use to be made of it, as a principle that can serve any valuable end: (for suppose such a thing as necessary matter, it will, as hath been shown, be unalterable; and therefore another sort of matter must be supposed besides it, that may be the matter of the universe, raised up out of nothing for that purpose, unto which this so unwieldy and unmanageable an entity, can never serve;) but also it will be impossible to be proved. No man can be able with any plausible show of reason to make it out: yea, and much may be said, I conceive with

convincing evidence, against it: as may perhaps be seen in the sequel of this discourse.

In the meantime, that there is, however, a necessary Being, unto which all the perfections whereof we have any footsteps or resemblances in the creation do originally and essentially belong, is undeniably evident.

Now, that we may proceed, what can self-essentiate, underived power, wisdom, goodness, be, but most perfect power, wisdom, goodness? Or such, as than which there can never be more perfect? For since there can be no wisdom, power, or goodness, which is not either original and self-essentiate, or derived and participated from thence; who sees not that the former must be the more perfect? Yea, and that it comprehend all the other (as what was from it) in itself, and consequently that it is simply the most perfect? And the reason will be the same, concerning any other perfection, the stamps and characters whereof we find signed upon the creatures.

But that the Being unto which these belong is absolutely and universally perfect in every kind, must be further evidenced by considering more at large the notion and import of such a self-originate necessary being.

Some indeed, both more anciently,* and of late, have inverted this course; and from the supposition of absolute perfection, have gone about to infer necessity of existence, as being contained in the idea of the former. But of this latter we are otherwise assured upon clearer and less exceptionable terms: and being so, are to consider what improvement may be made of it to our present purpose.

And in the general, this seems manifestly imported in the notion of the necessary Being we have already evinced, that it have in it (some

way or other, in what way there will be occasion to consider hereafter) the entire sum and utmost fulness of being, beyond which, or without the compass whereof, no perfection is conceivable, or indeed (which is of the same import) nothing.

Let it be observed, that we pretend not to argue this from the bare terms necessary being only, but from hence, that it is such as we have found it; though indeed these very terms import not a little to this purpose. For that which is necessarily of itself, without being beholden to anything, seems as good as all things, and to contain in itself an immense fulness, being indigent of nothing. Nor by indigence is here meant cravingness, or a sense of want only; in opposition whereto, every good and virtuous man hath or may attain a sort of αὐτάρκεια, or self-fulness, and be satisfied from himself: (which yet is a stamp of divinity, and a part of the image of God, or such a participation of the divine nature, as is agreeable to the state and condition of a creature:) but we understand by it (what is naturally before that) want itself, really, and not in opinion, as the covetous is said to be poor. On the other hand, we here intend not a merely rational, (much less an imaginary,) but a real self-fulness. And so we say, what is of that nature, that it is, and subsists wholly and only of itself, without depending on any other, must owe this absoluteness to so peculiar an excellency of its own nature, as we cannot well conceive to be less than whereby it comprehends in itself the most boundless and unlimited fulness of being, life, power, or whatsoever can be conceived under the name of a perfection. For taking notice of the existence of anything whatsoever, some reason must be assignable, whence it is that this particular being doth exist, and hath such and such powers and properties belonging to it, as do occur to our notice therein. When we can now resolve its existence into some cause that put it into being, and made it what it is, we cease so much to admire the thing, how excellent soever it be, and

turn our admiration upon its cause, concluding that to have all the perfection in it which we discern in the effect, whatsoever unknown perfection (which we may suppose is very great) it may have besides. And upon this ground we are led, when we behold the manifold excellences that lie dispersed among particular beings in this universe, with the glory of the whole resulting thence, to resolve their existence into a common cause, which we design by the name of God. And now considering him as a wise Agent, (which hath been proved,) and consequently a free one, that acted not from any necessity of nature, but his mere good pleasure herein, we will not only conclude him to have all that perfection and excellency in him which we find him to have displayed in so vast and glorious a work, but will readily believe him (supposing we have admitted a conviction concerning what hath been discoursed before) to have a most inconceivable treasure of hidden excellency and perfection in him, that is not represented to our view in this work of his: and account, that he who could do all this which we see is done, could do unspeakably more. For though, speaking of natural and necessitated agents, which always act to their uttermost, it would be absurd to argue from their having done some lesser thing, to their power of doing somewhat that is much greater; yet as to free agents, that can choose their own act, and guide themselves by wisdom and judgment therein, the matter is not so. As when some great prince bestows a rich largess upon some mean person, especially that deserved nothing from him, or was recommended by nothing to his royal favour, besides his poverty and misery; we justly take it for a very significant demonstration of that princely munificence and bounty, which would incline him to do much greater things, when he should see a proportionable cause.

But now, if taking notice of the excellences that appear in caused beings, and inquiring how they come to exist and be what they are,

we resolve all into their cause; which considering, as perfectly free and arbitrary in all his communications, we do thence rationally conclude, that if he had thought fit, he could have made a much more pompous display of himself; and that there is in him, besides what appears, a vast and most abundant store of undiscovered perfection.

When next, we turn our inquiry and contemplation more entirely upon the cause, and bethink ourselves, But how came he to exist and be what he is? Finding this cannot be refunded upon any superior cause; and our utmost inquiry can admit of no other result but this, that he is of himself what he is, we will surely say then, He is all in all. And that perfection which before we judged vastly great, we will now conclude altogether absolute, and such beyond which no greater can be thought.

Adding, I say, to what pre-conceptions we had of his greatness, from the works which we see have been done by him, (for why should we lose any ground we might esteem ourselves to have gained before?) the consideration of his necessary self-subsistence: and that no other reason is assignable of his being what he is, but the peculiar and incommunicable excellency of his own nature; whereby he was not only able to make such a world, but did possess eternally and invariably in himself all that he is, and hath: we cannot conceive that all to be less than absolutely universal, and comprehensive of whatsoever can lie within the whole compass of being.

For when we find that among all other beings, (which is most certainly true not only of actual, but all possible beings also,) how perfect soever they are or may be in their own kinds, none of them, nor all of them together, are or ever can be of that perfection, as to be of themselves, without dependence on somewhat else as their productive, yea and sustaining cause, we see, besides that their cause

hath all the perfection, some way, in it that is to be found in them all; there is also that appropriate perfection belonging thereto, that it could be, and eternally is (yea and could not but be) only of itself, by the underived and incommunicable excellency of its own being. And surely, what includes in it all the perfection of all actual and possible beings, besides its own, (for there is nothing possible which some cause, yea and even this, cannot produce,) and inconceivably more, must needs be absolutely and every way perfect. Of all which perfections this is the radical one, that belongs to this common Cause and Author of all things, that he is necessarily and only self-subsisting. For if this high prerogative in point of being had been wanting, nothing at all had ever been. Therefore we attribute to God the greatest thing that can be said or thought, (and not what is wholly diverse from all other perfection, but which contains all others in it,) when we affirm of him that he is necessarily of himself. For though, when we have bewildered and lost ourselves (as we soon may) in the contemplation of this amazing subject, we readily indulge our wearied minds the ease and liberty of resolving this high excellency of self or necessary existence into a mere negation, and say that we mean by it nothing else than that he was not from another; yet surely, if we would take some pains with ourselves, and keep our slothful shifting thoughts to some exercise in this matter, though we can never comprehend that vast fulness of perfection which is imported in it, (for it were not what we plead for, if we could comprehend it,) yet we should soon see and confess that it contains unspeakably more than a negation, even some great thing that is so much beyond our thoughts, that we shall reckon we have said but a little in saying we cannot conceive it. And when we have stretched our understandings to the utmost of their line and measure, though we may suppose ourselves to have conceived a great deal, there is infinitely more that we conceive not.

Wherefore that is a sober and most important truth which is occasionally drawn forth (as is supposed) from the so admired Des Cartes, by the urgent objections of his very acute, friendly adversary,* That the inexhaustible power of God is the reason for which he needed no cause; and that since that unexhausted power, or the immensity of his essence, is most highly positive, therefore he may be said to be of himself positively; i. e. not as if he did ever by any positive efficiency cause himself, (which is most manifestly impossible) but that the positive excellency of his own being was such, as could never need, nor admit of, being caused.

And that seems highly rational, (which is so largely insisted on by Doctor Jackson, and divers others,†) that what is without cause must also be without limit of being; because all limitation proceeds from the cause of a thing, which imparted to it so much and no more: which argument, though it seem neglected by Des Cartes, and is opposed by his antagonist; yet I cannot but judge that the longer one meditates, the less he shall understand, how anything can be limited ab intra, or from itself, &c. As the author of the Tentam. Phys. Theol. speaks.

But that we may entertain ourselves with some more particular considerations of this necessary Being, which may evince that general assertion of its absolute plenitude or fulness of essence; it appears to be such,

III. As is at the greatest imaginable distance from non-entity. For what can be at a greater, than that which is necessarily, which signifies as much as whereto not to be is utterly impossible? Now an utter impossibility not to be, or the uttermost distance from no being, seems plainly to imply the absolute plenitude of all being. And, if here it be said, that to be necessarily, and of itself, needs be

understood to import no more than a firm possession of that being which a thing hath, be it never so scant or minute a portion of being; I answer, it seems indeed so, if we measure the signification of this expression by its first and more obvious appearance. But if you consider the matter more narrowly, you will find here is also signified the nature and kind of the being possessed, as well as the manner of possession; viz. that it is a being of so excellent and noble a kind, as that it can subsist alone without being beholden: which is so great an excellency, as that it manifestly comprehends all other, or is the foundation of all that can be conceived besides. Which, they that fondly dream of necessary matter, not considering, unwarily make one single atom a more excellent thing than the whole frame of heaven and earth: that being supposed simply necessary, this the merest piece of hap-hazard, the strangest chance imaginable, and beyond what any but themselves could ever have imagined: and which, being considered, would give us to understand that no minute, or finite being, can be necessarily.

And hence we may see what it is to be nearer, or at a further distance from, not-being.

For these things that came contingently into being, or at the pleasure of a free cause, have all but a finite and limited being; whereof some, having a smaller portion of being than others, approach so much the nearer to not-being. Proportionably, what hath its being necessarily and of itself, is at the farthest distance from no-being, as comprehending all being in itself. Or, to borrow the expressions of an elegant writer, translated into our own language,* "We have much more non-essence than essence, if we have the essence of a man, yet not of the heavens, or of angels. We are confined and limited within a particular essence; but God, who is what he is, comprehendeth all possible essences."

Nor is this precariously spoken, or as what may be hoped to be granted upon courtesy; but let the matter be rigidly examined and discussed, and the certain truth of it will most evidently appear. For if anything be, in this sense, remoter than other from no-being, it must either be, what is necessarily of itself, or what is contingently at the pleasure of the other. But since nothing is, besides that self-originate necessary Being, but what was from it; and nothing from it but what was within its productive power; it is plain all that, with its own being, was contained in it. And therefore, even in that sense, it is at the greatest distance from no-being; as comprehending the utmost fulness of being in itself, and consequently absolute perfection. Which will yet further appear, in what follows:—we therefore add,

IV. That necessary being is most unmixed or purest being, without alloy. That is pure which is full of itself. Purity is not here meant in a corporeal sense, (which few will think) nor in the moral; but, as with metaphysicians, it signifies simplicity of essence. And, in its present use, is more especially intended to signify that simplicity which is opposed to the composition of act, and possibility. We say then, that necessary being imports purest actuality; which is the ultimate and highest perfection of being; for it signifies no remaining possibility, yet unreplete or not filled up, and consequently the fullest exuberancy and entire confluence of all being, as in its fountain and original source. We need not here look further to evince this, than the native import of the very terms themselves; necessity and possibility; the latter whereof is not so fitly said to be excluded the former, as contingency is, but to be swallowed up of it; as fulness takes up all the space which were otherwise nothing but vacuity or emptiness. It is plain then that necessary being engrosses all possible being, both that is, and (for the same reason) that ever was so; for nothing can be, or ever was, in possibility to come into being, but

what either must spring, or hath sprung, from the necessary self-subsisting Being.

So that unto all that vast possibility, a proportionable actuality of this being must be understood to correspond; else the other were not possible. For nothing is possible to be produced, which is not within the actual productive power of the necessary Being: I say, within its actual productive power; for if its power for such production were not already actual, it could never become so, and so were none at all: inasmuch as necessary being can never alter, and consequently can never come actually to be what it already is not; upon which account it is truly said, *In æternis posse et esse sunt idem.*—Wherefore, in it is nothing else but pure actuality, as profound and vast as is the utmost possibility of all created or producible being; i. e. it can be nothing other than it is, but can do all things, of which more hereafter. It therefore stands opposed, not only, more directly, to impossibility of being, (which is the most proper notion of no-being,) but some way, even to possibility also; that is, the possibility of being anything but what it is; as being every way complete and perfectly full already.

V. Again, we might further add, that it is the most abstracted being, or is being in the very abstract; a thing much insisted on by some of the schoolmen. And the notion which with much obscurity they pursue after their manner, may carry some such sense as this, (if it may, throughout, be called sense,) that whereas no created nature is capable of any other than mere mental abstraction, but exists always in concretion with some subject, that, be it never so refined, is grosser and less perfect than itself; so that we can distinguish the mentally abstracted essence, and the thing which hath that essence; by which concretion essence is limited, and is only the particular essence of this or that thing, which hath or possesses that essence:

the necessary Being is, in strict propriety, not so truly said to have essence, as to be it, and exist separately by itself; not as limited to this or that thing. Whence it is, in itself, universal essence, containing therefore, not formally, but eminently, the being of all things in perfect simplicity. Whence all its own attributes are capable of being affirmed of it in the abstract,* that it is wisdom, power, goodness, and not only hath these; and that upon this account it is a Being, which is necessarily and of itself. For that which is necessarily and of itself, is not whatsoever it is by the accession of any thing to itself, whereof necessary being is incapable; but by its own simple and unvariable essence. Other being is upon such terms powerful, wise, yea, and existent, as that it may cease to be so; whereas to necessary being, it is manifestly repugnant, and impossible either simply not to be, or to be anything else but what and as it is. And though other things may have properties belonging to their essence not separable from it, yet they are not their very essence itself; and, whereas they are in a possibility to lose their very existence, the knot and ligament of whatsoever is most intimate to their actual being, all then falls from them together. Here, essence, properties, and existence, are all one simple thing that can never cease, decay, or change, because the whole Being is necessary. Now, all this being supposed, of the force of that form of speech when we affirm anything in the abstract of another, we may admit the common sense of men to be the interpreter. For every body can tell, though they do not know the meaning of the word abstract, what we intend when we use that phrase or manner of speaking. As when we say, by way of hyperbolic commendation, Such a man is not only learned, but learning itself; or he not only hath much of virtue, justice, and goodness in him, but he is virtue, justice, and goodness itself, (as was once said of an excellent Pagan virtuoso, that I may borrow leave to use that word in the moral sense,) every one knows the phrase intends the appropriating all learning, virtue, justice, goodness, to

such one. Which, because they know unappropriable to any man, they easily understand it to be, in such a case, a rhetorical strain and form of speech; and yet could not know that, if also they did not understand its proper and native import. And so it may as well be understood what is meant by saying of God, He is being itself. With which sense may be reconciled that of (the so-named) Dionysius the Areopagite;* That God is not so properly said to be of, or be in, or to have, (or partake,) of being, as that it is of him, &c. inasmuch as he is the pre-existent Being to all being; i. e. if we understand him to mean all besides his own. In which sense taking being for that which is communicated and imparted, he may truly be said, (as this author and the Platonists generally speak,)[†] to be super-essential or super-substantial. But how fitly being is taken in that restrained sense, we may say more hereafter.

In the meantime, what hath been said concerning this abstractedness of the necessary Being, hath in it some things so unintelligible, and is accompanied with so great (unmentioned) difficulties, (which it would give us, perhaps, more labour than profit to discuss,) and the absolute perfection of God appears so evidenceable otherwise, by what hath been and may be further said, that we are no way concerned to lay the stress of the cause on this matter only.

VI. Moreover, necessary being is the cause and author of all being besides. Whatsoever is not necessary, is caused; for not having being of itself, it must be put into being by somewhat else. And inasmuch as there is no middle sort of being betwixt necessary and not necessary, and all that is not necessary is caused, it is plain that which is necessary must be the cause of all the rest. And surely what is the cause of all being besides its own, must needs, one way or other, contain its own and all other in itself, and is, consequently, comprehensive of the utmost fulness of being; or is the absolutely

perfect Being, (as must equally be acknowledged,) unless any one would imagine himself to have got the notice of some perfection that lies without the compass of all being.

Nor is it an exception worth the mentioning, that there may be a conception of possible being or perfection, which the necessary Being hath not caused. For it is, manifestly, as well the possible cause of all possible being and perfection, as the actual cause of what is actual. And what it is possible to it to produce, it hath within its productive power; as hath been said before.

And if the matter did require it, we might say further, that the same necessary Being which hath been the productive cause, is also the continual root and basis of all being, which is not necessary. For what is of itself, and cannot, by the special privilege of its own being, but be, needs nothing to sustain it, or needs not trust to anything besides its own eternal stability. But what is not so, seems to need a continual reproduction every moment, and to be no more capable of continuing in being by itself, than it was, by itself, of coming into being. For (as is frequently alleged by that so often mentioned author) since there is no connexion betwixt the present and future time, but what is easily capable of rupture, it is no way consequent that, because I am now, I shall therefore be the next moment, further than as the free Author of my being shall be pleased to continue his own most arbitrary influence for my support. This seems highly probable to be true, whether that reason signify anything or nothing; and that, thence also, continual conservation differs not from creation. Which, whether (as is said by the same author) it be one of the things that are manifest by natural light; or whether a positive act be needless to the annihilation of created things, but only the withholding of influence, let them examine that apprehend the cause to need it. And if, upon inquiry, they judge it at least evidenceable by

natural light to be so, (as I doubt not they will,) they will have this further ground upon which thus to reason: that, inasmuch as the necessary Being subsists wholly by itself, and is that whereon all other doth totally depend, it hereupon follows that it must, some way, contain in itself all being. We may yet further add,

That the necessary Being we have evinced, though it hath caused and doth continually sustain all things, yet doth not itself in the meantime suffer any diminution. It is not possible, nor consistent with the very terms necessary being, that it can. It is true, that if such a thing as a necessary at m were admitted, that would be also undiminishable,—it were not else an atom—but as nothing then can flow from it—as from a perfect parvitude nothing can,—so it can effect nothing. And the reason is the same of many as of one. Nor would undiminishableness, upon such terms, signify anything to the magnifying the value of such a trifle.

But this is none of the present case: for our eyes tell us here is a world in being, which we are sure is not itself necessarily; and was therefore made by him that is; and that, without mutation or change in him, against which the very notion of a necessary being is most irreconcilably reluctant; and therefore without diminution, which cannot be conceived without change.*

Wherefore how inexhaustible a fountain of life, being, and all perfection, have we here represented to our thoughts! from whence this vast universe is sprung, and is continually springing, and that in the meantime receiving no recruits or foreign supplies, yet suffers no impairment or lessening of itself! What is this but absolute allfulness! And it is so far from arguing any deficiency or mutability in his nature that there is this continual issue of power and virtue from him, that it demonstrates its high excellency that this can be without

decay or mutation. For of all this, we are as certain as we can be of anything: that many things are not necessarily; that the Being must be necessary from whence all things else proceed; and that with necessary being change is inconsistent. It is therefore unreasonable to entertain any doubt that things are so, which most evidently appear to be so, only because it is beyond our measure and compass to apprehend how they are so. And it would be to doubt, against our own eyes, whether there be any such thing as motion in the world, or composition of bodies, because we cannot give a clear account, (so as to avoid all difficulties, and the entanglement of the common sophisms about them,) how these things are performed. In the present case, we have no difficulty but what is to be resolved into the perfection of the Divine Nature, and the imperfection of our own; and how easily conceivable is it, that somewhat may be more perfect, than that we can conceive it! If we cannot conceive the manner of God's causation of things, or the nature of his causative influence, it only shows their high excellency; and gives us the more ground (since this is that into which both his own revelation and the reason of things most naturally lead us to resolve all) to admire the mighty efficacy of his all-creating and all-sustaining will and word; that in that easy unexpensive way, by his mere fiat, so great things should be performed.

VII. We only say further, that this necessary Being is such to which nothing can be added; so as that it should be really greater, or better, or more perfect, than it was before. And this not only signifies that nothing can be joined to it, so as to become a part of it, (which necessary being, by its natural immutability, manifestly refuses,) but we also intend by it, that all things else, with it, contain not more of real perfection than it doth alone. Which, (though it carries a difficulty with it that we intend not wholly to overlook when it shall be seasonable to consider it,) is a most apparent and demonstrable

truth. For it is plain that all being and perfection which is not necessary, proceeds from that which is, as the cause of it; and that no cause could communicate any thing to another which it had not, some way, in itself. Wherefore it is manifestly consequent that all other being was wholly before comprehended in that which is necessary, as having been wholly produced by it; and what is wholly comprehended of another, i. e. within its productive power, before it be produced, can be no real addition to it, when it is.

Now what can be supposed to import fulness of being and perfection, more than this impossibility of addition, or that there can be nothing greater or more perfect?

And now these considerations are mentioned, without solicitude whether they be so many exactly distinct heads. For admit that they be not all distinct, but some are involved with others of them, yet the same truth may more powerfully strike some understandings in one form of representation, others in another. And it suffices, that (though not severally) they do together plainly evidence that the necessary Being includes the absolute, entire fulness of all being and perfection, actual and possible, within itself.

Having therefore thus despatched that former part of this undertaking, the eviction of an every way perfect being, we shall now need to labour little in the other, viz.

VIII. SECONDLY, The more express deduction of the infiniteness and onliness thereof.

For as to the former of these, it is in effect the same thing that hath been already proved; since to the fullest notion of infiniteness, absolute perfection seems every way most fully to correspond; for absolute perfection includes all conceivable perfection, leaves

nothing excluded. And what doth most simple infiniteness import, but to have nothing for a boundary, or, which is the same, not to be bounded at all?

We intend not now, principally, infiniteness extrinsically considered, with respect to time and place, as to be eternal and immense do import; but intrinsically, as importing bottomless profundity of essence, and the full confluence of all kinds and degrees of perfection, without bound or limit. This is the same with absolute perfection: which yet, if any should suspect not to be so, they might, however, easily and expressly prove it of the necessary Being, upon the same grounds that have been already alleged for proof of that:— as that the necessary Being hath actuality answerable to the utmost possibility of the creature; that it is the only root and cause of all other being, the actual cause of whatsoever is actually—the possible cause of whatsoever is possible to be:—which is most apparently true, and hath been evidenced to be so, by what hath been said, so lately, as that it needs not be repeated; that is, in short, that nothing that is not necessarily, and of itself, could ever have been or can be, but as it hath been or shall be put into being by that which is necessarily, and of itself. So that this is as apparent as that any thing is, or can be.

But now let sober reason judge, whether there can be any bounds or limits set to the possibility of producible being; either in respect of kinds, numbers, or degrees of perfection? Who can say or think, when there can be so many sorts of creatures produced, (or at least individuals of those sorts,) that there can be no more? Or that any creature is so perfect as that none can be made more perfect? which indeed, to suppose, were to suppose an actual infiniteness in the creature. And then it being, however, still but somewhat that is created or made, how can its Maker but be infinite? For surely

nobody will be so absurd as to imagine an infinite effect of a finite cause.

Either therefore the creature is, or sometime may be, actually made, so perfect that it cannot be more perfect, or not. If not, we have our purpose, that there is an infinite possibility on the part of the creature, always unreplete; and consequently, a proportionable infinite actuality of power on the Creator's part. Infinite power, I say, otherwise there were not that, acknowledged, infinite possibility of producible being. For nothing is producible, that no power can produce, be the intrinsic possibility of it (or its not implying in itself, a contradiction that it should exist) what it will. And I say infinite actual power, because the Creator, being what he is necessarily, what power he hath not actually, he can never have, as was argued before. But if it be said, the creature either is, or may some time be, actually so perfect as that it cannot be more perfect; that, as was said, will suppose it then actually infinite; and therefore much more that its Cause is so. And therefore in this way our present purpose would be gained also. But we have no mind to gain it this latter way, as we have no need. It is in itself plain, to any one that considers, that this possibility on the creature's part can never actually be filled up; that it is a bottomless abyss, in which our thoughts may still gradually go down deeper and deeper, without end: that is, that still more might be produced, or more perfect creatures, and still more, everlastingly, without any bound; which sufficiently infers what we aim at, that the Creator's actual power is proportionable. And indeed the supposition of the former can neither consist with the Creator's perfection, nor with the imperfection of the creature; it would infer that the Creator's productive power might be exhausted, that he could do no more, and so place an actual boundary to him, and make him finite. It were to make the creature actually full of being, that it could receive no more, and so would make that infinite.

But it may be said, since all power is in order to act, and the very notion of possibility imports that such a thing, of which it is said, may, some time, be actual; it seems very unreasonable to say, that the infinite power of a cause cannot produce an infinite effect; or that infinite possibility can never become infinite actuality. For that were to say and unsay the same thing, of the same; to affirm omnipotency and impotency of the same cause; possibility and impossibility of the same effect.

How urgent soever this difficulty may seem, there needs nothing but patience and attentive consideration to disentangle ourselves, and get through it. For if we will but allow ourselves the leisure to consider, we shall find that power and possibility must here be taken not simply and abstractly, but as each of them is in conjunction with infinite. And what is infinite, but that which can never be travelled through, or whereof no end can be ever arrived unto? Now suppose infinite power had produced all that it could produce, it were no longer infinite, there were an end of it: i. e. it had found limits, and a boundary beyond which it could not go. If infinite possibility were filled up, there were an end of that also; and so neither were infinite.

It may then be further urged, that there is therefore no such thing as infinite power or possibility: for how is that cause said to have infinite power, which can never produce its proportionable effect, or that effect have infinite possibility, which can never be produced? It would follow then, that power and possibility, which are said to be infinite, are neither power nor possibility; and that infinite must be rejected as a notion either repugnant to itself, or to any thing unto which we shall go about to affix it.

I answer, It only follows, they are neither power nor possibility whereof there is any bound or end, or that can ever be gone through.

And how absurd is it that they shall be said, as they cannot but be, to be both very vast, if they were finite; and none at all, for no other reason but their being infinite! And for the pretended repugnancy of the very notion of infinite, it is plain, that though it cannot be to us distinctly comprehensible, yet it is no more repugnant than the notion of finiteness. Nor when we have conceived of power, in the general, and in our own thoughts set bounds to it, and made it finite, is it a greater difficulty (nay, they that try will find it much easier) again to think away these bounds, and make it infinite? And let them that judge the notion of infiniteness inconsistent, therefore reject it if they can. They will feel it reimposing itself upon them, whether they will or no, and sticking as close to their minds as their very thinking power itself. And who was therefore ever heard of, that did not acknowledge some or other infinite? Even the Epicureans themselves, though they confined their gods, they did not the universe. Which, also, though some Peripatetic atheists made finite in respect of place, yet in duration they made it infinite: though the notion of an eternal world is encumbered with such absurdities and impossibilities, as whereof there is not the least shadow, in that of an every way infinite Deity.

Briefly, it consists not with the nature of a contingent being, to be infinite. For what is upon such terms, only, in being, is reducible to nothing, at the will and pleasure of its Maker; but it is a manifest repugnancy, that what is at the utmost distance from nothing (as infinite fulness of being cannot but be) should be reducible thither. Therefore actual infinity cannot but be the peculiar privilege of that which is necessarily.

Yet may we not say, that it is not within the compass of infinite power to make a creature that may be infinite? For it argues not want of power that this is never to be done, but a still infinitely abounding

surplusage of it, that can never be drained or drawn dry: nor, that the thing itself is simply impossible; it may be, as is compendiously expressed by that most succinct and polite writer, Dr. Boyle,* in fieri, not in facto esse. That is, it might be a thing always in doing, but never done. Because it belongs to the infinite perfection of God, that his power be never actually exhausted; and to the infinite imperfection of the creature, that its possibility or capacity be never filled up:—to the necessary self-subsisting Being, to be always full and communicative; to the communicated contingent being, to be ever empty and craving. One may be said to have that, some way, in his power, not only which he can do presently, all at once, but which he can do by degrees, and supposing he have sufficient time. So a man may be reckoned able to do that, as the uttermost, adequate effect of his whole power, which it is only possible to him to have effected, with the expiration of his life's time. God's measure is eternity. What if we say then, this is a work possible to be accomplished, even as the ultimate, proportionable issue of divine power, (if it were his will, upon which all contingent being depends,) that the creature should be ever growing in the meanwhile, and be absolutely perfect at the expiration of eternity? If then you be good at suppositions, suppose that expired, and this work finished, both together. Wherefore if you ask, Why can the work of making created being infinite, never be done? The answer will be, Because eternity (in every imaginable instant whereof, the inexhaustible power of God can, if he will, be still adding either more creatures, or more perfection to a creature) can never be at an end.

We might further argue the infinity of the necessary Being, from what hath been said of its undiminishableness by all its vast communications;—* its impossibility to receive any accession to itself, by any its so great productions; both which are plainly demonstrable, as we have seen, of the necessary Being, even as it is

such, and do clearly, as anything can, bespeak infinity. But we have thence argued its absolute perfection, which so evidently includes the same thing, that all this latter labour might have been spared; were it not that it is the genius of some persons not to be content that they have the substance of a thing said, unless it be also said in their own terms. And that the express asserting of God's simple infiniteness, in those very terms, is, in that respect, the more requisite, as it is a form of expression more known and usual.

IX. There are yet some remaining difficulties in the matter we have been discoursing of; which partly through the debility of our own minds we cannot but find, and which partly the subtlety of sophistical wits doth create to us. It will be requisite we have some consideration of at least some of them, which we will labour to despatch with all possible brevity; leaving those that delight in the sport of tying and loosing knots, or of weaving snares wherein cunningly to entangle themselves, to be entertained by the schoolmen; among whom they may find enough, upon this subject, to give them exercise unto weariness; and, if their minds have any relish of what is more savoury, I may venture to say, unto loathing.

It may possibly be here said, in short, But what have we all this while been doing? We have been labouring to prove that necessary being comprehends the absolute fulness of all being: and what doth this signify, but that all being is necessary? That God is all things, and so that everything is God; that we hereby confound the being of a man, yea, of a stone, or whatever we can think of, with one another, and all with the being of God. And again, how is it possible there should be an infinite self-subsisting Being? For then how can there be any finite, since such infinite being includes all being, and there can be nothing beyond all?

Here therefore it is requisite, having hitherto only asserted, and endeavoured to evince that, some way, necessary being doth include all being, to show in what way. And it is plain it doth not include all, in the same way. It doth not so include that which is created by it and depends on it, as it doth its own, which is uncreated and independent.

The one it includes as its own, or rather as itself; the other, as what it is, and ever was, within its power to produce. If any better like the terms formally and virtually, they may serve themselves of them at their own pleasure, which yet, as to many, will but more darkly speak the same sense.

We must here know, the productive power of God terminates not upon himself, as if he were, by it, capable of adding anything to his own appropriate Being, which is (as hath been evinced already) infinitely full, and incapable of addition, and is therefore all pure act; but on the creature, where there is still a perpetual possibility, never filled up; because divine power can never be exhausted. And thus all that of being is virtually in him, which, either having produced, he doth totally sustain, or not being produced, he can produce.

Whereupon it is easy to understand, how necessary being may comprehend all being, and yet all being not be necessary. It comprehends all being, besides what itself is, as having had, within the compass of its productive power, whatsoever hath actually sprung from it, and having within the compass of the same power, whatsoever is still possible to be produced. Which no more confounds such produced or producible being with that necessary Being which is its cause, than it confounds all the effects of human power with one another, and with the being of a man, to say, that he virtually comprehended them (so far as they were producible by him)

within his power. And it is no wiser an inference from the former, than it would be from this latter, that a house, a book, and a child, are the same thing with one another, and with the person that produced them; because, so far as they were produced by him, he had it in his power to produce them. And that the effects of divine power are produced thereby totally, whereas those of human power are produced by it but in part only, doth, as to the strength and reasonableness of the argument, nothing alter the case.

And as to the next, That infinite being should seem to exclude all finite. I confess that such as are so disposed, might here even wrangle continually, as they might do about anything in which infiniteness is concerned; and yet therein show themselves (as Seneca, I remember, speaks in another case) not a whit the more learned, but the more troublesome. But if one would make short work of it, and barely deny that infinite being excludes finite, (as Scotus doth little else;* besides denying the consequence of the argument, by which it was before enforced, viz. [that an infinite body would exclude a finite; for where should the finite be, when the infinite should fill up all space? And therefore by parity of reason, why should not infinite being exclude finite?]) showing the disparity of the two cases,) it would perhaps give them some trouble also to prove it. For which way would they go to work? Infinite self-subsisting being includes all being, very true; and therefore, we say, it includes finite. And what then? Doth it, because it includes it, therefore exclude it? And let the matter be soberly considered, somewhat of finite being and power, we say, (and apprehend no knot or difficulty in the matter,) can extend so far as to produce some proportionable effect, or can do such and such things; and what, doth it seem likely then, that infinite being and power can therefore do just nothing? Is it not a reason of mighty force, and confoundingly

demonstrative, that an agent can do nothing, or cannot possibly produce any the least thing, only because he is of infinite power!

For if there be a simple inconsistency between an infinite being and a finite, that will be the case; that, because the former is infinite, therefore it can produce nothing. For what it should produce cannot consist with it, i. e. even not being finite; and then certainly if we could suppose the effect infinite, much less. But what, therefore, is power the less for being infinite? or can infinite power, even because it is infinite, do nothing? What can be said or thought more absurd, or void of sense? Or shall it be said that the infiniteness of power is no hindrance, but the infiniteness of being? But how wild an imagination were that of a finite being, that were of infinite power? And besides, is that power somewhat, or nothing? Surely it will not be said it is nothing. Then it is some being; and if some power be some being, what then is infinite power? is not that infinite being? And now, therefore, if this infinite can produce anything, (which it were a strange madness to deny,) it can at least produce some finite thing. Wherefore there is no inconsistency between the infinite and finite beings, unless we say the effect produced, even by being produced, must destroy, or, even infinitely, impair its cause, so as to make it cease at least to be infinite! But that also cannot possibly be said of that which is infinite and necessary; which, as hath been shown, cannot, by whatsoever productions, suffer any diminution or decay.

If here it be further urged, But here is an infinite Being now supposed: let, next, be supposed the production of a finite: this is not the same with the other; for surely infinite, and finite, are distinguishable enough, and do even infinitely differ. This finite is either something or nothing; nothing it cannot be said; for it was supposed a being, and produced; but the production of nothing, is no

production. It is somewhat then; here is therefore an infinite Being, and a finite, now besides. The infinite, it was said, cannot be diminished; the finite, a real something, is added. Is there therefore nothing more of existent being than there was before this production? It is answered, Nothing more than virtually was before; for when we suppose an infinite Being, and afterwards a finite; this finite is not to be looked upon as emerging or springing up of itself out of nothing, or as proceeding from some third thing as its cause, but as produced by that infinite, or springing out of that, which it could not do, but as being before virtually contained in it. For the infinite produces nothing, which it could not produce; and what it could produce, was before contained in it, as in the power of its cause. And to any one that attends, and is not disposed to be quarrelsome, this is as plain and easy to be understood, as how any finite thing may produce another; or rather, more plain and easy, because a finite agent doth not entirely contain its effect within itself, or in its own power, as an infinite doth.

If yet it be again said, that which is limited is not infinite, but suppose any finite thing produced into being after a preexistent infinite, this infinite becomes now limited; for the being of the finite, is not that of the infinite, each hath its own distinct being; and it cannot be said of the one, it is the other; therefore each is limited to itself:—I answer; that which was infinite becomes not hereby less than it was, for it hath produced nothing but what was before virtually contained in it, and still is, for it still totally sustains the other. But whatsoever it actually doth, it can do, or hath within its power: therefore if it were infinite before, and is not now become less, it is still infinite.

Wherefore the true reason why the position of a finite thing after a supposed all-comprehending infinite, doth no way intrench upon or

detract from the other's all-comprehensive infinity, is, that it was formerly contained, and still is, within the virtue and power of the other.

It is true, that if we should suppose any thing besides that supposed infinite to be of itself, that would infer a limitation of the former. Infer, I say, not cause it; that is, it would not make it cease to be all-comprehendingly infinite, but it would argue it not to have been so before; and that the supposition of its infinity was a false supposition, because it would then appear that the former did not comprehend all being any way in itself, somewhat being now found to be in being, which hath no dependence thereon; whence it would be evident neither can be so. Of which, some good use may be made to a further purpose by and bye.

Here only we may by the way annex, as a just corollary, from the foregoing discourse, that as the supposition of necessary self-subsisting matter was before shown to be a vain, it now also appears plainly to be altogether an impossible supposition. For since the necessary self-subsisting Being is infinite and all-comprehensive; and if matter were supposed necessary, we must have another necessary being to form the world, inasmuch as matter is not self-active, much less intelligent, as it hath both been proved it cannot be, and that the Former of this world must be;—it is therefore out of question, that because both cannot be all-comprehensive, they cannot both be necessary. Nor can the vastly different kinds or natures of these things salve the business; for be they of what kinds they will, they are still beings. Besides, if matter were necessary and self-subsisting, every particle of it must be so, and then we shall have not only two, but an infinite number of such infinities, and all of the same kind. But being, only of this or that sort, (as is apparent where more sorts do exist than one,) could not be simply infinite, except as

the other depends thereon, and as this one is radically comprehensive of all the rest, that can come under the general and most common notion of being. For that there is some general notion wherein all being agrees, and by which it differs from no being, is, I think, little to be doubted; how unequally soever, and dependently the one upon the other, the distinct sorts do partake therein. Whereupon the expression, super-essential, and others like it, spoken of God, must be understood as rhetorical strains, importing more reverence than rigid truth; except by essence, as was formerly said, only that which is created be meant, and that only a purer and more noble kind of essence were intended to be asserted to him,*—which yet seems also unwarrantable and injurious, that a word of that import should be so misapplied and transferred from the substance, to signify nothing but the shadow, rather, of being. And that they who would seem zealously concerned to appropriate all being unto God, should, in the height of their transport, so far forget themselves as to set him above all being, and so deny him any at all. For surely that which simply is above all being, is no being.

X. And as to the unity, or onliness rather, of this Being, or of the Godhead, the deduction thereof seems plain and easy from what hath been already proved; that is, from the absolute perfection thereof. For though some do toil themselves much about this matter, and others plainly conclude that it is not to be proved at all in a rational way, but only by divine revelation; yet I conceive, they that follow the method (having proved some necessary self-subsisting being, the root and original spring of all being and perfection, actual and possible, which is as plain as any thing can be) of deducing from thence the absolute, all-comprehending perfection of such necessary Being, will find their work as good as done. For nothing seems more evident, than that there cannot be two (much less more) such Beings, inasmuch as one comprehends in itself all being and perfection; for

there can be but one all, without which is nothing. So that, one such Being supposed, another can have nothing remaining to it. Yea, so far is it therefore, if we suppose one infinite and absolutely perfect Being, that there can be another, independent thereon, (and of a depending infinity, we need not say more than we have, which, if any such could be, cannot possibly be a distinct God,) that there cannot be the minutest, finite thing, imaginable, which that supposed infinity doth not comprehend, or that can stand apart from it, on any distinct basis of its own. And that this matter may be left as plain as we can make it; supposing it already most evident,

That there is, actually existing, an absolute, entire fulness of wisdom, power, and so of all other perfection;

That such absolute entire fulness of perfection, is infinite;

That this infinite perfection must have its primary seat somewhere;

That its primary, original seat can be nowhere, but in necessary self-subsisting being;

We hereupon add, that if we suppose multitude, or any plurality of necessary self-originate beings, concurring to make up the seat or subject of this infinite perfection, each one must either be of finite and partial perfection, or infinite and absolute. Infinite and absolute it cannot be, because one self-originate, infinitely and absolutely perfect being will necessarily comprehend all perfection, and leave nothing to the rest. Nor finite, because many finites can never make one infinite; much less can many broken parcels or fragments of perfection ever make infinite and absolute perfection; even though their number, if that were possible, were infinite. For the perfection of unity would still be wanting, and their communication and

concurrence to any work (even such as we see is done) be infinitely imperfect and impossible.

We might, more at large, and with a much more pompous number and apparatus of arguments, have shown that there can be no more gods than one. But to such as had rather be informed, than bewildered and lost, clear proof that is shorter, and more comprehensive, will be more grateful.

Nor doth this proof of the unity of the Godhead any way impugn the trinity, which is by Christians believed, therein; (and whereof some heathens, as is known, have not been wholly without some apprehension, however they came by it,) or exclude a sufficient, uncreated ground of trinal distinction. As would be seen, if that great difference of beings, necessary and contingent, be well stated, and what is by eternal, necessary emanation of the divine nature, be duly distinguished from the arbitrary products of the divine will; and the matter be thoroughly examined, whether, herein, be not a sufficient distinction of that which is increated, and that which is created. In this way it is possible it might be cleared, how a trinity in the Godhead may be very consistently with the unity thereof. But that it is, we cannot know, but by his telling us so; it being among the many things of God, which are not to be known, but by the Spirit of God revealing and testifying them, in and according to the holy Scriptures: as the things of a man are not known but by the spirit of a man. And what further evidence we may justly and reasonably take from those Scriptures, even in reference to some of the things hitherto discoursed, may be hereafter shown.

CHAPTER. V

Demands in reference to what hath been hitherto discoursed, with some reasonings thereupon: First, Is it possible that, upon supposition of this Being's existence, it may be, in any way suitable to our present state, made known to us that it doth exist? Proved, 1. That it may. 2. That, since any other fit way that can be thought on is as much liable to exception as that we have already, this must be, therefore, sufficient. Strong impressions. Glorious apparitions. Terrible voices. Surprising transformations. If these are necessary, is it needful they be universal? frequent? If not, more rare things of this sort not are wanting. Second demand. Can subjects, remote from their prince, sufficiently be assured of his existence? Third demand. Can we be sure there are men on earth?

I. AND if any should in the meantime still remain either doubtful, or apt to cavil, after all that hath been said for proof of that Being's existence which we have described, I would only add these few things, by way of inquiry or demand; viz.

First, Do they believe, upon supposition of the existence of such a Being, that it is possible it may be made known to us, in our present state and circumstances, by means not unsuitable thereto, or inconvenient to the order and government of the world, that it doth exist? It were strange to say, or suppose, that a Being of so high perfection as this we have hitherto given an account of, if he is, cannot in any fit way make it known that he is, to an intelligent and apprehensive sort of creatures.

If indeed he is; and be the common Cause, Author, and Lord of us and all things, (which we do now but suppose: and we may defy cavil to allege anything that is so much as colourable against the possibility of the supposition,) surely he hath done greater things than the making of it known that he is. It is no unapprehensible

thing: there hath been no inconsistent notion hitherto given of him; nothing said concerning him, but will well admit that it is possible such a Being may be now existent. Yea, we not only can conceive, but we actually have, and cannot but have, some conception of the several attributes we have ascribed to him; so as to apply them, severally, to somewhat else, if we will not apply them, jointly, to him. We cannot but admit there is some eternal, necessary being; somewhat that is of itself active; somewhat that is powerful, wise, and good. And these notions have in them no repugnancy to one another; wherefore it is not impossible they may meet, and agree together, in full perfection to one and the same existent being: and hence it is manifestly no unapprehensible thing, that such a Being doth exist. Now supposing that it doth exist, and hath been to us the Cause and Author of our being; hath given us the reasonable, intelligent nature which we find ourselves possessors of; and that very power whereby we apprehend the existence of such a Being as he is, to be possible, (all which we for the present do still but suppose,) while also his actual existence is not unapprehensible; were it not the greatest madness imaginable to say, that if he do exist, he cannot also make our apprehensive nature understand this apprehensible thing, that he doth exist? We will therefore take it for granted, and as a thing which no man well in his wits will deny, that upon supposition such a Being, the Cause and Author of all things, do exist, he might, in some convenient way or other, with sufficient evidence, make it known to such creatures as we, so as to beget in us a rational certainty that he doth exist.

Upon which presumed ground we will only reason thus, or assume to it; That there is no possible and fit way of doing it, which is not liable to as much exception as the evidence we already have: whence it will be consequent, that if the thing be possible to be fitly done, it is done already. That is, that if we can apprehend how it may be possible

such a Being, actually existent, might give us that evidence of his existence that should be suitable to our present state, and sufficient to outweigh all objections to the contrary; (without which it were not rationally sufficient;) and that we can apprehend no possible way of doing this, which will not be liable to the same or equal objections, as may be made against the present means we have for the begetting of this certainty in us, then we have already sufficient evidence of this Being's existence: that is, such as ought to prevail against all objections, and obtain our assent that it doth exist.

Here it is only needful to be considered what ways can be thought of, which we will say might assure us in this matter, that we already have not: and what might be objected against them, equally, as against the means we now have.

II. Will we say such a Being, if he did actually exist, might ascertain us of his existence, by some powerful impression of that truth upon our minds? We will not insist, what there is of this already. Let them consider who gainsay, what they can find of it in their own minds; and whether they are not engaged by their atheistical inclinations in a contention against themselves, and their more natural sentiments, from which they find it a matter of no small difficulty to be delivered? It was not for nothing, that even Epicurus himself calls this of an existing Deity, a proleptical notion. But you may say, the impression might have been simply universal, and so irresistible, as to prevent or overbear all doubt, or inclination to doubt.

And, first, for the universality of it, why may we not suppose it already sufficiently universal? as hath been heretofore alleged. With what confidence can the few dissenting atheists, that have professed to be of another persuasion, put that value upon themselves, as to reckon their dissent considerable enough to implead the universality

of this impression! Or what doth it signify more to that purpose, than some few instances may do, of persons so stupidly foolish, as to give much less discovery of any rational faculty than some beasts, to the impugning the universal rationality of mankind.

Besides that, your contrary profession is no sufficient argument of your contrary persuasion, much less, that you never had any stamp or impression of a Deity upon your minds, or that you have quite rased it out. It is much to be suspected that you hold not your contrary persuasion, with that unshaken confidence, and freedom from all fearful and suspicious misgivings, as that you have much more reason to brag of your disbelief for the strength, than you have for the goodness of it: and that you have those qualmish fits, which bewray the impression, (at least to your own notice and reflection, if you would but allow yourselves the liberty of so much converse with yourselves,) that you will not confess, and yet cannot utterly deface. But if in this you had quite won the day, and were masters of your design, were it not pretty to suppose that the common consent of mankind would be a good argument of the existence of a Deity, except only that it wants your concurrence! If it were so universal as to include your vote and suffrage, it would then be a firm and solid argument; (as no doubt it is, without you, a stronger one than you can answer;) but when you have made a hard shift to withdraw your assent, you have undone the Deity, and religion! Doth this cause stand and fall with you, unto which you can contribute about as much as the fly to the triumph? Was that true before, which now your bard-laboured dissent hath made false? But if this impression were simply universal, so as also to include you, it matters not what men would say or object against it (it is to be supposed they would be in no disposition to object anything) but what were to be said, or what the case itself, objectively considered, would admit. And though it would not (as now it doth not) admit of anything to be said to any

purpose, yet the same thing were still to be said, that you now say. And if we should but again unsuppose so much of the former supposition, as to imagine that some few should have made their escape, and disburdened themselves of all apprehensions of God, would they not, with the same impudence as you now do, say that all religion were nothing else but enthusiastical fanaticism; and that all mankind, besides themselves, were enslaved fools?

And for the mere irresistibleness of this impression; it is true, it would take away all disposition to oppose, but it may be presumed this is none of the rational evidence which we suppose you to mean, when you admit (if you do admit) that some way or other, the existence of such a Being might be possibly made so evident, as to induce a rational certainty thereof. For to believe such a thing to be true only upon a strong impulse, (how certain soever the thing may be,) is not to assent to it upon a foregoing reason; nor can any, in that case, tell why they believe it, but that they believe it. You will not sure think anything the truer for this only, that such and such believe it with a sturdy confidence. It is true, that the universality and naturalness of such a persuasion, as pointing us to a common cause thereof, affords the matter of an argument, or is a medium not contemptible nor capable of answer, as hath been said before; but to be irresistibly captivated into an assent, is no medium at all; but an immediate persuasion of the thing itself, without a reason.

III. Therefore must it yet be demanded of atheistical persons, what means, that you yet have not, would you think sufficient to have put this matter out of doubt? Will you say, Some kind of very glorious apparitions, becoming the majesty of such a one as this Being is represented, would have satisfied? But if you know how to fancy that such a thing as the sun, and other luminaries, might have been compacted of a certain peculiar sort of atoms, coming together of

their own accord, without the direction of a wise Agent; yea, and consist so long, and hold so strangely regular motions; how easy would it be to object that, with much advantage, against what any temporary apparition, be it as glorious as you can imagine, might seem to signify to this purpose?

Would dreadful loud voices proclaiming him to be, of whose existence you doubt, have served the turn? It is likely, if your fear would have permitted you to use your wit, you would have had some subtle invention how, by some odd rencounter of angry atoms, the air or clouds might become thus terribly vocal. And when you know already, that they do sometimes salute your ears with very loud sounds, (as when it thunders,) there is little doubt but your great wit can devise a way how possibly such sounds might become articulate. And for the sense and coherent import of what were spoken; you that are so good at conjecturing how things might casually happen, would not be long in making a guess that might' serve that turn also; except you were grown very dull and barren, and that fancy that served you to imagine how the whole frame of the universe, and the rare structure of the bodies of animals, yea, and even the reasonable soul itself, might be all casual productions, cannot now devise how, by chance, a few words (for you do not say you expect long orations) might fall out to be sense though there were no intelligent speaker.

But would strange and wonderful effects that might surprise and amaze you do the business? We may challenge you to try your faculty, and stretch it to the uttermost; and then tell us what imagination you have formed of anything more strange and wonderful, than the already extant frame of nature, in the whole, and the several parts of it. Will he that hath a while considered the composition of the world; the exact and orderly motions of the sun, moon, and stars; the fabric of his own body, and the powers of his

soul, expect yet a wonder, to prove to him there is a God? But if that be the complexion of your minds, that it is not the greatness of any work, but the novelty and surprisingness of it, that will convince you, it is not rational evidence you seek: nor is it your reason, but your idle curiosity, you would have gratified; which deserves no more satisfaction than that fond wish, that one might come from the dead to warn men on earth, lest they should come into the place of torment.

And if such means as these that have been mentioned should be thought necessary, I would ask, Are they necessary to every individual person, so as that no man shall be esteemed to have had sufficient means of conviction, who hath not with his own eyes beheld some such glorious apparition; or himself heard some such terrible voice; or been the immediate witness or subject of some prodigious wonderful work? Or will the once seeing, hearing, or feeling them suffice? Is it not necessary there should be a frequent repetition and renewal of these amazing things, lest, the impression wearing off, there be a relapse, and a gradual sliding into an oblivion and unapprehensiveness of that Being's existence, whereof they had, sometime, received a conviction? Now if such a continual iteration of these strange things were thought necessary, would they not hereby soon cease to be strange? And then if their strangeness was necessary, by that very thing, wherein their sufficiency for conviction is said to consist, they should become useless. Or if by their frequent variations (which it is possible to suppose) a perpetual amusement be still kept up in the minds of men, and they be always full of consternation and wonder, doth this temper so much befriend the exercise of reason, or contribute to the sober consideration of things? As if men could not be rational, without being half mad! And indeed they might soon become altogether so, by being but a while beset with objects so full of terror, as are, by this supposition, made the

necessary means to convince them of a Deity.* And were this a fit means of ruling the world—of preserving order among mankind? What business could then be followed? Who could attend the affairs of their callings? Who could either be capable of governing, or of being governed, while all men's minds should be wholly taken up, either in the amazed view, or the suspenseful expectation, of naught else but strange things? To which purpose much hath been of late, with so excellent reason,* discoursed by a noted author, that it is needless here to say more. And the aspect and influence of this state of things would be most pernicious upon religion, that should be most served thereby, and which requires the greatest severity, and most peaceful composure of mind, to the due managing the exercises of it. How little would that contribute to pious and devout converses with God, that should certainly keep men's minds in a continual commotion and hurry? This course, as our present condition is, what could it do but craze men's understandings, as a too bright and dazzling light causeth blindness, or any over-excelling sensible object destroys the sense; so that we should soon have cause to apply the Erpen. proverb, "Shut the windows, that the house may be light:" and might learn to put a sense, not intolerable, upon those passages of some mystical writers,† that God is to be seen in a divine cloud or darkness,‡ as one; and, with closed eyes, as another§ speaks; though what was their very sense I will not pretend to tell.

Besides that, by this means, there would naturally ensue the continual excitation of so vexatious and enthralling passions, so servile and tormenting fears and amazements, as could not but hold the souls of men under a constant and comfortless restraint from any free and ingenuous access to God, or conversation with him; wherein the very life of religion consists. And then, to what purpose doth the discovery and acknowledgment of the Deity serve; inasmuch as it is never to be thought that the existence of God is a thing to be known,

only that it may be known; but that the end it serves for, is religion: a complacential and cheerful adoration of him, and application of ourselves, with at once both dutiful and pleasant affections towards him? That were a strange means of coming to know that he is, that should only tend to destroy or hinder the very end itself of that knowledge. Wherefore all this being considered, it is likely it would not be insisted upon as necessary to our being persuaded of God's existence, that he should so multiply strange and astonishing things, as that every man might be a daily, amazed, beholder and witness of them.

IV. And if their frequency and constant iteration be acknowledged not necessary, but shall indeed be judged wholly inconvenient, more rare discoveries of him, in the very ways we have been speaking of, have not been wanting. What would we think of such an appearance of God as that was upon Mount Sinai, when he came down (or caused a sensible glory to descend) in the sight of all that great people; wherein the several things concurred that were above mentioned! Let us but suppose such an appearance, in all the concurrent circumstances of it, as that is said to have been. That is, we will suppose an equally great assembly or multitude of people is gathered together, and solemn forewarning is given and proclaimed among them, by appointed heralds or officers of state, that, on such a prefixed day, now very nigh at hand, the Divine majesty and glory (even his glory set in majesty) will visibly appear, and show itself to them. They are most severely enjoined to prepare themselves, and be in readiness against that day; great care is taken to sanctify the people, and the place; bounds are set about the designed theatre of this great appearance; all are strictly required to observe their due and awful distances, and abstain from more audacious approaches and gazings, lest that terrible glory break out upon them, and they perish; an irreverent or disrespectful look, they are told, will be

mortal to them, or a very touch of any part of this sacred enclosure. In the morning of the appointed day, there are thunders, and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the hallowed mount. The exceeding loud sound of trumpet proclaims the Lord's descent. He descends in fire, the flames whereof envelope the trembling mount (now floored with a sapphire pavement, clear as the body of heaven,) and ascend into the middle region, or, as it is expressed, into the midst or heart of the heavens. The voice of words, (a loud and dreadful voice,) audible to all that mighty assembly, in which were six hundred thousand men, (probably more than a million of persons,) issues forth from amidst that terrible glory, pronouncing to them that I am Jehovah thy God; and thence proceeding to give them precepts so plain and clear, so comprehensive and full, so unexceptionably just and righteous, so agreeable to the nature of man, and subservient to his good, that nothing could be more worthy the great Creator, or more aptly suitable to such a sort of creatures.

It is very likely, indeed, that such a demonstration would leave no spectator in doubt concerning the existence of God; and would puzzle the philosophy of the most sceptical atheist to give an account, otherwise, of the phenomenon. And if such could devise to say any thing that should seem plausible to some very easy half-witted persons, that were not present, they would have a hard task of it to quiet the minds of those that were; or make them believe this was nothing else but some odd conjuncture of certain fiery atoms, that, by some strange accident happened into this occurrence and conflict with one another; or some illusion of fancy, by which so great a multitude were all at once imposed upon, so as that they only seemed to themselves to hear and see, what they heard and saw not. Nor is it likely they would be very confident of the truth of their own conjecture, or be apt to venture much upon it themselves; having been the eye and ear-witnesses of these things.

But is it necessary this course shall be taken to make the world know there is a God? Such an appearance, indeed, would more powerfully strike sense; but unto sober and considerate reason, were it a greater thing than the making such a world as this; and the disposing this great variety of particular beings in it, into so exact and elegant an order; and the sustaining and preserving it in the same state, through so many ages? Let the vast and unknown extent of the whole, the admirable variety, the elegant shapes, the regular motions, the excellent faculties and powers of that inconceivable number of creatures contained in it, be considered. And is there any comparison between that temporary, transient, occasional, and this steady, permanent, and universal discovery of God? Nor (supposing the truth of the history) can it be thought the design of this appearance to these Hebrews was to convince them of the existence of a Deity, to be worshipped; when both they had so convincing evidence thereof many ways before; and the other nations, that which they left, and those whither they went, were not without their religion and worship; such as it was: but to engage them, by so majestic a representation thereof, to a more exact observance of his will, now made known. Though, had there been any doubt of the former, (as we can hardly suppose they could, before, have more doubted of the being of a God, than that there were men on earth,) this might collaterally, and besides its chief intention, be a means to confirm them concerning that also: but that it was necessary for that end, we have no pretence to imagine. The like may be said, concerning other miracles heretofore wrought, that the intent of them was to justify the divine authority of him who wrought them, to prove him sent by God, and so countenance the doctrine or message delivered by him; not that they tended (otherwise than on the bye) to prove God's existence. Much less was this so amazing an appearance needful, or intended for that end; and least of all was it necessary that this should be God's ordinary way of making it known to men that he

doth exist: so as that, for this purpose, he should often repeat so terrible representations of himself. And how inconvenient it were to mortal men, as well as unnecessary, the astonishment wherewith it possessed that people, is an evidence; and their passionate affrighted wish thereupon, "Let not God any more speak to us, lest we die." They apprehended it impossible for them to outlive such another sight!

And if that so amazing an appearance of the Divine Majesty (sometime afforded) were not necessary, but some way, on the bye, useful, for the confirming that people in the persuasion of God's existence, why may it not be useful also, for the same purpose, even now to us? Is it that we think that can be less true now, which was so gloriously evident to be true four thousand years ago? Or is it that we can disbelieve or doubt the truth of the history? What should be the ground or pretence of doubt? If it were a fiction, it is manifest it was feigned by some person that had the use of his understanding, and was not beside himself, as the coherence and contexture of parts doth plainly show. But would any man not beside himself, designing to gain credit to a forged report of a matter of fact, ever say there were six hundred thousand persons present at the doing of it? Would it not rather have been pretended that it was done in a corner? Or is it imaginable it should never have met with contradiction? That none of the pretended bystanders should disclaim the avouchment of it, and say they knew of no such matter? Especially if it be considered that the laws said to be given at that time, chiefly those which were reported to have been written in the two tables, were not so favourable to vicious inclinations, nor that people so strict and scrupulous observers of them, but that they would have been glad to have had anything to pretend against the authority of the legislature, if the case could have admitted it. When they discovered, in that and succeeding time, so violently prone and unretractable a propension

to idolatry and other wickednesses, directly against the very letter of that law, how welcome and covetable a plea had it been, in their frequent, and, sometimes, almost universal apostasies, could they have had such a thing to pretend, that the law itself that curbed them was a cheat! But we always find, that though they laboured, in some of their degeneracies, and when they were lapsed into a more corrupted state, to render it more easy to themselves by favourable glosses and interpretations; yet, even in the most corrupt, they never went about to deny or implead its divine original, whereof they were ever so religious asserters, as no people under heaven could be more; and the awful apprehension whereof prevailed so far with them, as that care was taken (as is notoriously known) by those appointed to that charge, that the very letters should be numbered of the sacred writings, lest there should happen any the minutest alteration in them. Much more might be said, if it were needful, for the evincing the truth of this particular piece of history: and it is little to be doubted but any man who, with sober and impartial reason, considers the circumstances relating to it; the easily evidenceable antiquity of the records whereof this is a part; the certain nearness of the time of writing them, to the time when this thing is said to have been done; the great reputation of the writer even among pagans; the great multitude of the alleged witnesses and spectators; the no-contradiction ever heard of; the universal consent and suffrage of that nation through all times to this day, even when their practice hath been most contrary to the laws then given; the securely confident and unsuspecting reference of later pieces of sacred Scripture thereto, (even some parts of the New Testament,) as a most known and undoubted thing; the long series and tract of time through which that people are said to have had extraordinary and sensible indications of the divine presence; (which, if it had been false, could not, in so long a time, but have been evicted of falsehood;) their miraculous and wonderful education out of Egypt,

not denied by any, and more obscurely acknowledged by some heathen writers; their conduct through the wilderness, and settlement in Canaan; their constitution and form of polity, known for many ages to have been a Theocracy; their usual ways of consulting God, upon all more important occasions:—whosoever, I say, shall soberly consider these things, (and many more might easily occur to such as would think fit to let their thoughts dwell awhile upon this subject,) will not only, from some of them, think it highly improbable, but from others of them, plainly impossible that the history of this appearance should have been a contrived piece of falsehood. Yea, and though, as was said, the view of such a thing with one's own eyes would make a more powerful impression upon our fancy, or imagination; yet, if we speak of rational evidence (which is quite another thing) of the truth of a matter of fact that were of this astonishing nature, I should think it were as much (at least if I were credibly told that so many hundred thousand persons saw it at once) as if I had been the single unaccompanied spectator of it myself. Not to say that it were apparently, in some respect, much greater; could we but obtain of ourselves to distinguish between the pleasing of our curiosity, and the satisfying of our reason.

So that, upon the whole, I see not why it may not be concluded, with the greatest confidence, that both the (supposed) existence of a Deity is possible to be certainly known to men on earth, in some way that is suitable to their present state; that there are no means fitter to be ordinary, than those we already have; and that more extraordinary, additional confirmations are partly, therefore, not necessary, and partly not wanting.

V. Again, It may be further demanded, (as that which may both immediately serve our main purpose, and may also show the reasonableness of what was last said,) Is it sufficiently evident to

such subjects of some great prince as live remote from the royal residence, that there is such a one now ruling over them.

To say No, is to raze the foundation of civil government, and reduce it wholly to domestical, by such a ruler as may ever be in present view; which yet is upon such terms never possible to be preserved also. It is plain many do firmly enough believe that there is a king reigning over them, who not only never saw the king, but never heard any distinct account of the splendour of his court, the pomp of his attendance; or, it may be, never saw the man that had seen the king. And is not all dutiful and loyal obedience wont to be challenged and paid of such, as well as his other subjects? Or would it be thought a reasonable excuse of disloyalty, that any such persons should say they had never seen the king, or his court? Or a reasonable demand, as the condition of required subjection, that the court be kept, sometime, in their village, that they might have the opportunity of beholding at least some of the insignia of regality, or more splendid appearances of that majesty, which claims subjection from them? Much more would it be deemed unreasonable and insolent, that every subject should expect to see the face of the prince every day, otherwise they will not obey, nor believe there is any such person. Whereas it hath been judged rather more expedient and serviceable to the continuing the veneration of majesty, (and in a monarchy of no mean reputation for wisdom and greatness,) that the prince did very rarely offer himself to the view of the people. Surely more ordinary and remote discoveries of an existing prince and ruler over them, (the effects of his power, and the influences of his government,) will be reckoned sufficient, even as to many parts of his dominions that possibly through many succeeding generations never had other. And yet how unspeakably less sensible, less immediate, less constant, less necessary, less numerous, are the effects and instances of regal human power and wisdom, than of the divine;

which latter we behold which way soever we look, and feel in everything we touch, or have any sense of, and may reflect upon in our very senses themselves, and in all the parts and powers that belong to us; and so certainly, that if we would allow ourselves the liberty of serious thoughts, we might soon find it were utterly impossible such effects should ever have been without that only cause: that without its influence, it had never been possible that we could hear, or see, or speak, or think, or live, or be anything, nor that any other thing could ever have been: when as the effects that serve so justly to endear and recommend to us civil government, (as peace, safety, order, quiet possession of our rights,) we cannot but know, are not inseparably and incommunicably appropriate, or to be attributed to the person of this or that particular and mortal governor, but may also proceed from another; yea, and the same benefits may (for some short time at least) be continued without any such government at all. Nor is this intended merely as a rhetorical scheme of speech, to beguile or amuse the unwary reader: but, without arrogating anything, or attributing more to it, than that it is an altogether inartificial and very defective, but true and naked representation of the very case itself as it is, it is professedly propounded, as having somewhat solidly argumentative in it: that is, that (whereas there is most confessedly sufficient, yet) there is unspeakably less evidence to most people in the world, under civil government, that there actually is such a government existent over them, and that they are under obligation to be subject to it; than there is of the existence of a Deity, and the consequent reasonableness of religion. If therefore the ordinary effects and indications of the former be sufficient, which have so contingent and uncertain a connexion with their causes, (while those which are more extraordinary are so exceeding rare with the most,) why should not the more certain ordinary discoveries of the latter be judged sufficient, though the most have not the immediate notice of any

such extraordinary appearances as those are which have been before mentioned?

VI. Moreover, I yet demand further, whether it may be thought possible for any one to have a full rational certainty that another person is a reasonable creature, and hath in him a rational soul, so as to judge he hath sufficient ground and obligation to converse with him, and carry towards him as a man? Without the supposition of this, the foundation of all human society and civil conversation is taken away: and what evidence have we of it, whereunto that which we have of the being of God (as the foundation of religious and godly conversation) will not at least be found equivalent?

Will we say that mere human shape is enough to prove such a one a man? A philosopher would deride us, as the Stagyrice's disciples are said to have done the Platonic man. But we will not be so nice. We acknowledge it is, if no circumstances concur (as sudden appearing, vanishing, transformation, or the like) that plainly evince the contrary, so far as to infer upon us an obligation not to be rude and uncivil; that we use no violence, nor carry ourselves abusively towards one that only thus appears a human creature. Yea, and to perform any duty of justice or charity towards him within our power, which we owe to a man as a man. As suppose we see him wronged or in necessity, and can presently right or relieve him: though he do not, or cannot, represent to us more of his case than our own eyes inform us of. And should an act of murder be committed upon one whose true humanity was not otherwise evident, would not the offender be justly liable to the known and common punishment of that offence? Nor could he acquit himself of transgressing the laws of humanity, if he should only neglect any seasonable act of justice or mercy towards him, whereof he beholds the present occasion. But if any one were disposed to cavil, or play the sophister, how much more might be

said, even by infinite degrees, to oppose this single evidence of any one's true humanity, than ever was, or can be, brought against the entire concurrent evidence we have of the existence of God. It is here most manifestly just and equal, thus to state the case, and compare the whole evidence we have of the latter, with that one of the former; inasmuch as that one alone is apparently enough to oblige us to carry towards such a one as a man. And if that alone be sufficient to oblige us to acts of justice or charity towards man, he is strangely blind that cannot see infinitely more to oblige him to acts of piety towards God.

But if we would take a nearer and more strict view of this parallel, we would state the general and more obvious aspect of this world on the one hand, and the external aspect and shape of a man on the other; and should then see the former doth evidence to us an indwelling Deity diffused through the whole, and actuating every part, with incomparably greater certainty, than the latter doth an indwelling reasonable soul. In which way we shall find what will aptly serve our present purpose, though we are far from apprehending any such union of the blessed God with this world, as is between the soul and body of a man. It is manifestly possible to our understandings that there may be, and (if any history or testimony of others be worthy to be believed) certain to experience and sense that there often hath been, the appearance of human shape and of agreeable actions without a real man. But it is no way possible such a world as this should have ever been without God. That there is a world, proves that eternal Being to exist whom we take to be God, (suppose we it as rude a heap as at first it was, or as we can suppose it,) as external appearance represents to us that creature which we take to be a man: but that as a certain infallible discovery, necessarily true; this but as a probable and conjectural one, and (though highly probable) not impossible to be false.

And if we will yet descend to a more particular inquiry into this matter, which way will we fully be ascertained that this supposed man is truly and really what he seems to be? This we know not how to go about, without recollecting what is the differencing notion we have of a man; that he is, viz. a reasonable, living creature, or a reasonable soul, inhabiting, and united with a body. And how do we think to descry that here which may answer this common notion we have of a man? Have we any way, besides that discovery which the acts and effects of reason do make of a rational or intelligent being? We will look more narrowly, i. e. unto somewhat else than his external appearance, and observe the actions that proceed from a more distinguishing principle in him; that he reasons, discourses, doth business, pursues designs; in short, he talks and acts as a reasonable creature: and hence we conclude him to be one, or to have a reasonable soul in him.

And have we not the same way of procedure in the other case? Our first view, or taking notice of a world full of life and motion, assures us of an eternal active Being, besides it, which we take to be God, having now before our eyes a darker shadow of him only, as the external bulk of the human body is only the shadow of a man. Which, when we behold it stirring and moving, assures us there is somewhat besides that grosser bulk, (that of itself could not so move,) which we take to be the soul of a man. Yet, as a principle that can move the body makes not up the entire notion of this soul, so an eternal active Being, that moves the matter of the universe, makes not up the full notion of God. We are thus far sure in both cases, i. e. of some mover distinct from what is moved; but we are not yet sure, by what we hitherto see, what the one or the other is. But as when we have upon the first sight thought it was a reasonable soul that was acting in the former, or a man, (if we will speak according to their sense who make the soul the man,) in order to being sure, (as sure as the case can

admit,) we have no other way, but to consider what belongs more distinguishingly to the notion of a man, or of a reasonable soul; and observe how actions and effects, which we have opportunity to take notice of, do answer thereto, or serve to discover that. So when we would be sure what that eternal active Being is (which that it is, we are already sure, and) which we have taken to be God, that, I say, we may be sure of that also, we have the same thing to do.

That is, to consider what more peculiarly belongs to the entire notion of God, (and would even in the judgment of opposers be acknowledged to belong to it,) and see whether his works, more narrowly inspected, do not bear as manifest correspondency to that notion of God, as the works and actions of a man do to the notion we have of him. And certainly we cannot but find they do correspond as much; and that upon a serious and considerate view of the works and appearances of God in the world; having diligently observed and pondered the vastness and beauty of this universe, the variety, the multitude, the order, the exquisite shapes and numerous parts, the admirable and useful composure, of particular creatures; and especially the constitution and powers of the reasonable soul of man itself; we cannot, surely, if we be not under the possession of a very voluntary and obstinate blindness, and the power of a most vicious prejudice, but acknowledge the making, sustaining, and governing such a world, is as God-like, as worthy of God, and as much becoming him, according to the notion that hath been assigned of him, as at least the common actions of ordinary men, are of a man; or evidence the doer of them to be a human creature. Yea, and with this advantageous difference, that the actions of a man do evidence a human creature more uncertainly, and so as it is possible the matter may be otherwise. But these works of God do with so plain demonstrative evidence discover him the Author of them, that it is altogether impossible they could ever otherwise have been done.

Now therefore, if we have as clear evidence of a Deity, as we can have in a way not unsuitable to the nature and present state of man, and we can have in a suitable way, that which is sufficient; if we have clearer and more certain evidence of God's government over the world, than most men have, or can have, of the existence of their secular rulers; yea, more sure than that there are men on earth, and that thence (as far as the existence of God will make towards it.) there is a less disputable ground for religious than for civil conversation; we may reckon ourselves competently well ascertained, and have no longer reason to delay the dedication of a temple to Him, upon any pretence of doubt whether we have an object of worship existing, yea or no.

Wherefore we may also by the way take notice how impudent a thing is atheism, that by the same fulsome and poisonous breath whereby it would blast religion, would despoil man of his reason and apprehensive power, even in reference to the most apprehensible thing; would blow away the rights of princes, and all foundations of policy and government, and destroy all civil commerce and conversation out of the world; and yet blushes not at the attempt of so foul things.

VII. And here it may perhaps prove worth our while (though it can be no pleasant contemplation) to pause a little, and make some short reflections upon the atheistical temper and genius, so as therein to remark some few more obvious characters of atheism itself.

And first, such as have not been themselves seized by the infatuation, cannot but judge it a most unreasonable thing, a perverse and cross-grained humour, that so oddly writhes and warps the mind of a man, as that it never makes any effort or offer at any thing against the Deity; but it therein doth (by a certain sort of serpentine involution

and retortion) seem to design a quarrel with itself: that is, with (what one would think should be most intimate and natural to the mind of man) his very reasoning power, and the operations thereof. So near indeed was the ancient alliance between God and man, (his own son, his likeness, and living image.) and consequently between reason and religion, that no man can ever be engaged in an opposition to God and his interest, but he must be equally so to himself and his own. And any one that takes notice how the business is carried by an atheist, must think, in order to his becoming one his first plot was upon himself: to assassine his own intellectual faculty, by a sturdy resolution and violent imposing on himself not to consider or use his thoughts, at least with any indifferency, but with a treacherous predetermination to the part resolved on before-hand. Otherwise, it is hard to be imagined how it should ever have been possible that so plain and evident proofs of a Deity as every where offer themselves unto observation, even such as have been here proposed, (that do even lie open, for the most part, to common apprehension, and needed little search to find them out; so that it was harder to determine what not to say, than what to say,) could be overlooked.

For what could be more easy and obvious than, taking notice that there is somewhat in being, to conclude that somewhat must be of itself, from whence whatever is not so, must have sprung? That, since there is somewhat effected or made, (as is plain, in that some things are alterable, and daily altered, which nothing can be that is of itself, and, therefore, a necessary being,) those effects have then had an active being for their cause? That since these effects are, partly, such as bear the manifest characters of wisdom and design upon them; and are partly, themselves, wise and designing; therefore they must have had a wisely active and designing cause? So much would plainly conclude the sum of what we have been pleading for; and what can be plainer or doth require a shorter turn of thoughts? At this easy

expense might any one that had a disposition to use his understanding to such a purpose, save himself from being an atheist. And where is the flaw? What joint is not firm and strong in this little frame of discourse? which yet arrogates nothing to the contriver; for there is nothing in it worthy to be called contrivance: but things do themselves lie thus. And what hath been further said concerning the perfection and oneness of this Cause of all things, (though somewhat more remote from common apprehension,) is what it is likely would appear plain and natural to such as would allow themselves the leisure to look more naturally into such things.

Atheism therefore seems to import a direct and open hostility against the most native, genuine, and facile dictates of common reason. And being so manifest an enemy to it, we cannot suppose it should be at all befriended by it. For that will be always true and constant to itself, whatsoever false shows of it a bad cause doth sometimes put on; that having yet somewhat a more creditable name, and being of a little more reputation in the world, than plain downright madness and folly. And it will appear how little it is befriended, by anything that can justly bear that name, if we consider the pitiful shifts the atheist makes for his forlorn cause; and what infirm tottering supports the whole frame of atheism rests upon. For what is there to be said for their hypothesis, or against the existence of God, and the dueness of religion? For it, there is directly nothing at all. Only a possibility is alleged things might be as they are, though God did not exist. And if this were barely possible, how little doth that signify? Where reason is not injuriously dealt with, it is permitted the liberty of balancing things equally, and of considering which scale hath most weight. And is he not perfectly blind, that sees not what violence is done to free reason in this matter? Are there not thousands of things not altogether impossible, which yet he would be concluded altogether out of his wits, that should profess to be of the opinion they are, or

were actually so? And as to the present case, how facile and unexceptionable, how plain and intelligible, is the account that is given of the original of this world, and the things contained in it, by resolving all into a Deity, the Author and Maker of them? Whereas the wild, extravagant suppositions of atheists, if they were admitted possible, are the most unlikely that could be devised. So that if there had been any to have laid wagers, when things were taking their beginning, there is nobody that would not have ventured thousands to one, that no such frame of things (no not so much as one single mouse or flea) would ever have hit. And how desperate hazards the atheist runs, upon this mere supposed possibility, it will be more in our way to take notice by and bye. But besides, that pretended possibility plainly appears none at all. It is impossible anything should spring up of itself out of nothing; that anything that is alterable, should have been necessarily of itself, such as it now is; that what is of itself unactive, should be the maker of other things; that the Author of all the wisdom in the world, should be, himself, unwise. These cannot but be judged most absolute impossibilities, to such as do not violence to their own minds; or with whom reason can be allowed any the least exercise. Wherefore the atheistical spirit is most grossly unreasonable, in withholding assent where the most ungainsayable reason plainly exacts it.

And are not the atheist's cavils as despicably silly against the Deity, and (consequently) religion? Whosoever shall consider their exceptions against some things in the notion of God, eternity, infinity, &c. which themselves, in the meantime, are forced to place elsewhere, will he not see they talk idly? And as for such other impeachments of his wisdom, justice, and goodness, as they take their ground for, from the state of affairs, in some respects, in this present world, (many of which may be seen in Lucretius, and answered by Dr. More in his Dialogues,) how inconsiderable will they

be, to any one that bethinks himself, with how perfect and generous a liberty this world was made, by one that needed it not; who had no design, nor could have inclination to a fond, self-indulgent glorying, and vaunting of his own work; who did it with the greatest facility, and by an easy, unexpensive vouchsafement of his good pleasure; not with an operose curiosity, studious to approve itself to the peevish eye of every froward Momus, or to the nauseous, squeamish gust of every sensual Epicure. And to such as shall not confine their mean thoughts to that very clod, or ball of earth, on which they live; (which, as it is a very small part, may, for aught we know, but be the worst or most abject part of God's creation, which yet is full of his goodness, and hath most manifest prints of his other excellences besides, as hath been observed;) or that shall not look upon the present state of things as the eternal state, but upon this world only as an antichamber to another, which shall abide in most unexceptionable perfection for ever:—how fond and idle, I say, will all such cavils appear to one that shall but thus use his thoughts, and not think himself bound to measure his conceptions of God, by the uncertain, rash dictates of men born in the dark, and that talk at random; nor shall affix anything to him, which plain reason doth not dictate, or which he doth not manifestly assume, or challenge to himself. But that because a straw lies in my way, I would attempt to overturn heaven and earth, what raging frenzy is this!

Again, it is a base, abject temper, speaks a mind sunk and lost in carnality, and that having dethroned and abjured reason, hath abandoned itself to the hurry of vile appetite, and sold its liberty and sovereignty for the insipid, gustless pleasures of sense; an unmanly thing—a degrading of one's self. For if there be no God, what am I? A piece of moving, thinking clay, whose ill-compacted parts will shortly fly asunder, and leave no other remains of me than what shall become the prey and triumph of worms!

It is a sad, mopish, disconsolate temper; cuts off, and quite banishes, all manly, rational joy; all that might spring from the contemplation of the divine excellences and glory, shining in the works of his hands. Atheism clothes the world in black, draws a dark and duskish cloud over all things; doth more to damp and stifle all relishes of intellectual pleasure, than it would of sensible, to extinguish the sun. What is this world (if we should suppose it still to subsist) without God? How grateful an entertainment is it to a pious mind to behold his glory stamped on every creature, sparkling in every providence; and by a firm and rational faith to believe (when we cannot see) how all events are conspiring to bring about the most happy and blissful state of things! The atheist may make the most of this world; he knows no pleasure, but what can be drawn out of its dry breasts, or found in its cold embraces; which yields as little satisfaction, as he finds, whose arms, aiming to enclose a dear friend, do only clasp a stiff and clammy carcass. How uncomfortable a thing is it to him, that having neither power nor wit to order things to his own advantage or content, but finding himself liable to continual disappointments, and the rencounter of many an unsuspected, cross accident, hath none to repose on, that is wiser and mightier than himself? But, when he finds he cannot command his own affairs, to have the settled apprehension of an Almighty Ruler, that can with the greatest certainty do it for us the best way, and will, if we trust him—how satisfying and peaceful a repose doth this yield! And how much the rather, inasmuch as that filial, unsuspecting confidence and trust, which naturally tends to and begets that calm and quiet rest, is the very condition required on my part: and that the chief thing I have to do, to have my affairs brought to a good pass, is to commit them to his management; and my only care, to be careful in nothing. The atheist hath nothing to mitigate the greatness of this loss, but that he knows not what he loses; which is an allay that will serve but a little while. And when the most unsupportable, pressing

miseries befall him, he must in bitter agonies groan out his wretched soul without hope, and sooner die under his burden, than say, Where is God my Maker? At the best, he exchanges all the pleasure and composure of mind which certainly accompanies a dutiful, sonlike trust, submission, and resignation of ourselves and all our concernments, to the disposal of fatherly wisdom and love, for a sour and sullen succumbency to an irresistible fate, or hard necessity, against which he sees it is vain to contend. So that at the best, he only not rages, but tastes nothing of consolation; whereof his spirit is as uncapable, as his desperate affairs are of redress. And if he have arrived to that measure of fortitude, as not to be much discomposed with the lighter crosses which he meets with in this short time of life, what a dreadful cross is it that he must die! How dismal a thing is a certain, never to be avoided death! Against which as atheism hath not surely the advantage of religion in giving protection, so it hath greatly the disadvantage, in affording no relief. What would the joy be worth in that hour, that arises from the hope of the glory to be revealed! And is the want of that, the total sum of the atheist's misery at this hour? What heart can conceive the horror of that one thought, if darted in upon him at that time, (as it is strange, and more sad, if it be not,) What becomes now of me, if there prove to be a God? Where are my mighty demonstrations, upon which one may venture, and which may cut off all fear, and danger of future calamity in this dark, unknown state I am going into? Shall I be the next hour nothing, or miserable? Or if I had opportunity, shall I not have sufficient cause to proclaim, (as* once one of the same fraternity did, by way of warning to a surviving companion)—A great and a terrible God! A great and a terrible God! A great and a terrible God!

I only add, it is a most strangely mysterious and unaccountable temper; such as is hardly reducible to its proper causes: so that it would puzzle any man's inquiry to find out, or even give but probable

conjectures, how so odd and preternatural a disaffection as atheism should ever come to have place in a human mind. It must be concluded a very complicated disease, and yet, when our thoughts have fastened upon several things that have an aspect that way, as none of them alone could infer it, so it is hard to imagine, how all of them together should ever come to deprave reasonable nature to such a degree.

It is first most astonishingly marvellous (though it is apparent this distemper hath its rise from an ill will) that any should so much as will that which the atheist hath obtained of himself to believe; or affect to be, what he is.

The commonness of this vile disposition of will doth but sorrily shift off the wonder, and only with those slight and trifling minds that have resigned the office of judging things to their (more active) senses, and have learned the easy way of waiving all inquiries about common things, or resolving the account into this only, that they are to be seen every day. But if we allowed ourselves to consider this matter soberly, we should soon find, that howsoever it must plainly appear a very common plague upon the spirits of men (and universal till a cure be wrought) to say, by way of wish, No God, or I would there were none: yet, by the good leave of them who would thus easily excuse the thing, the commonness of this horrid evil doth so little diminish, that it increases, the wonder. Things are more strange, as their causes are more hardly assignable. What should the reason be, that a Being of so incomparable excellency, so amiable and alluring glory, purity, love, and goodness, is become undesirable and hateful to his own creatures! that such creatures, his more immediate, peculiar offspring, stamped with his likeness, the so vivid resemblances of his own spiritual, immortal nature, are become so wickedly unnatural towards their common and most indulgent

parent! what, to wish him dead! to envy life and being to Him from whom they have received their own! It is as strange as it is without a cause. But they have offended him, are in a revolt, and sharply conscious of fearful demerits; and who would not wish to live, and to escape so unsupportable revenge? It is still strange we would ever offend such a one! Wherein were his laws unequal, his government grievous? But since we have, this only is pertinent to be said by them that have no hope of forgiveness, that are left to despair of reconciliation. Why do we sort ourselves with devils? We profess not to be such.

Yea, but we have no hope to be forgiven the sin we do not leave, nor power to leave the sin which now we love. This, instead of lessening, makes the wonder a miracle! O wretched, forlorn creature! Wouldest thou have God out of being for this? (I speak to thee who dost not yet profess to believe there is no God, but dost only wish it.) The Sustainer of the world! the common Basis of all being! Dost thou know what thou sayest? Art not thou wishing thyself and all things into nothing? This, rather than humble thyself, and beg forgiveness! This, rather than become again a holy, pure, obedient creature, and again blessed in him, who first made thee so! It can never cease, I say, to be a wonder, we never ought to cease wondering, that ever this befell the nature of man, to be prone to wish such a thing, that there were no God!

But this is, it is true, the too common case; and if we will only have what is more a rarity go for a wonder, how amazing then is it, that if any man would, even never so fain, he ever can make himself believe there is no God! and shape his horrid course according to that most horrid misbelief! By what fatal train of causes is this ever brought to pass? Into what can we devise to resolve it?

Why, such as have arrived to this pitch are much addicted to the pleasing of their senses, and this they make their business; so as that, for a long time, they have given themselves no leisure to mind objects of another nature, especially that should any way tend to disturb them in their easy course; till they are gradually fallen into a forgetful sleep, and the images of things are worn out with them, that had only more slightly touched their minds before. And being much used to go by the suggestions of sense, they believe not what they neither see nor feel.

This is somewhat, but does not reach the mark; for there are many very great sensualists, (as great as they at least,) who never arrive hither, but firmly avow it that they believe a Deity, whatsoever mistaken notion they have of him; whereupon they imagine to themselves impunity in their vicious course.

But these, it may be said, have so disaccustomed themselves to the exercise of their reason, that they have no disposition to use their thoughts about anything above the sphere of sense; and have contracted so dull and sluggish a temper, that they are no fitter to mind or employ themselves in any speculations that tend to beget in them the knowledge of God, than any man is for discourse or business when he is fast asleep.

So indeed, in reason, one would expect to find it; but the case is so much otherwise when we consider particular instances, that we are the more perplexed and entangled in this inquiry, by considering how agreeable it is, that the matter should be thus; and observing that it proves, oftentimes, not to be so: insomuch that reason and experience seem herein not to agree, and hence we are put again upon new conjectures what the immediate cause of this strange malady should be. For did it proceed purely from a sluggish temper

of mind, unapt to reasoning and discourse, the more any were so, the more disposed they should be to atheism: whereas, every one knows that multitudes of persons of dull and slow minds to anything of ratiocination, would rather you should burn their houses, than tell them they did not believe in God; and would presently tell you, it were pity he should live, that should but intimate a doubt whether there were a God or no. Yea, and many, somewhat more intelligent, yet in this matter are shy of using their reason, and think it unsafe, if not profane, to go about to prove that there is a God, lest they should move a doubt, or seem hereby to make a question of it. And in the meantime, while they offer not at reasoning, they more meanly supply that want, after a sorry fashion, from their education, the tradition of their fore-fathers, common example, and the universal profession and practice of some religion round about them; and, it may be, only take the matter for granted, because they never heard such a thing was ever doubted of, or called in question, in all their lives.

Whereas, on the other hand, they who incline to atheism are perhaps some of them the greatest pretenders to reason. They rely little upon authority of former times and ages, upon vulgar principles and maxims, but are vogue'd great masters of reason, diligent searchers into the mysteries of nature, and can philosophize (as sufficiently appears) beyond all imagination. But it is hoped it may be truly said, for the vindication of philosophy and them that profess it, that modern atheists have little of that to glory in; and that their chief endowments are only their skill to please their senses, and a faculty with a pitiful sort of drollery to tincture their cups, and add a grace to their otherwise dull and flat conversation. Yet all this howsoever being considered, there is here but little advance made to the finding out whence atheism should proceed. For, that want of reason should be thought the cause, what hath been already said seems to forbid;

that many ignorant persons seem possessed with a great awe of a Deity, from which divers, more knowing, have delivered themselves. And yet neither doth the former signify anything (in just interpretation) to the disrepute of religion; for truth is not the less true, for that some hold it they know not how or why: nor doth the latter make to the reputation of atheism, inasmuch as men, otherwise rational, may sometimes learnedly dote. But it confirms us that atheism is a strange thing, when its extraction and pedigree are so hardly found out, and it seems to be directly of the lineage, neither of knowledge nor ignorance, neither sound reason nor perfect dotage.

Nor doth it at all urge to say, And why may we not as well stand wondering, whence the apprehension of a God, and an addictedness to religion should come, when we find them peculiar neither to the more knowing nor the more ignorant? For they are apparently and congruously enough to be derived from somewhat common to them both—the impression of a Deity, universally put upon the minds of all men, (which atheists have made a shift to raze out, or obliterate to that degree, as to render it illegible,) and that cultivated by the exercise of reason, in some, and in others, less capable of that help, somewhat confirmed by education, and the other accessaries mentioned above.

Therefore is this matter still most mysteriously intricate, that there should be one temper and persuasion, agreeing to two so vastly different sorts of persons, while yet we are to seek for a cause (except what is most tremendous to think of) from whence it should proceed, that is common to them both. And here is, in short, the sum of the wonder, that any, not appearing very grossly unreasonable in other matters, (which cannot be denied even of some of the more sensual and lewder sort of atheists,) should, in so plain and important a case,

be so, beyond all expression, absurd; that they without scruple are pleased to think like other men, in matters that concern and relate to common practice, and wherein they might more colourably, and with less hazard, go out of the common road; and are here only so dangerously and madly extravagant. Theirs is therefore a particular madness, the dementia quoad hoc; so much the stranger thing, because they whom it possesses, do only in this one case put off themselves, and are like themselves and other men in all things else. If they reckoned it a glory to be singular, they might (as hath been plainly shown) more plausibly profess it as a principle, that they are not bound to believe the existence of any secular ruler (and consequently not be subject to any) longer than they see him, and so subvert all policy and government; or pretend an exemption from all obligation to any act of justice, or to forbear the most injurious violence towards any man, because they are not infallibly certain any one they see is a human wight, and so abjure all morality, as they already have so great a part; than offer with so fearful hazard to assault the Deity, (of whose existence, if they would but think awhile, they might be most infallibly assured,) or go about to subvert the foundations of religion. Or, if they would get themselves glory by great adventures, or show themselves brave men by expressing a fearless contempt of divine power and justice; this fortitude is not human. These are without the compass of its object;* as inundations, earthquakes, &c. are said to be; unto which, that any one should fearlessly expose himself, can bring no profit to others, nor therefore glory to him.

In all this harangue of discourse, the design hath not been to fix upon any true cause of atheism, but to represent it a strange thing; and an atheist, a prodigy, a monster amongst mankind; a dreadful spectacle! forsaken of the common aids afforded to other men; hung up in

chains to warn others, and let them see what a horrid creature man may make himself by voluntary aversion from God that made him.

In the meantime, they upon whom this dreadful plague is not fallen, may plainly see before them the object of that worship which is imported by a temple—an existing Deity, a God to be worshipped. Unto whom we shall yet see further reason to design and consecrate a temple for that end, and even ourselves to become such, when we have considered what comes next to be spoken of: his conversableness with men.

CHAPTER. VI

What is intended by God's conversableness with men, considered only as fundamental and presupposed to a temple. An account of the Epicurean Deity. Its existence impossible any way to be proved, if it did exist. Nor can be affirmed to any good intent. That such a being is not God. That the absolute perfection proved of God represents him a fit object of religion. From thence more particularly deduced, to this purpose. His omniscieny. Omnipotency. Unlimited goodness. Immensity. Curcellæus's arguments against this last (his immensity) considered.

I. NOR is the thing here intended less necessary to a temple and religion than what we have hitherto been discoursing of. For such a sort of Deity as should shut up itself, and be reclused from all converse with men, would leave us as disfurnished of an object of religion, and would render a temple on earth as vain a thing, as if there were none at all. It were a being not to be worshipped, nor with any propriety to be called God, more (in some respect less) than an image or statue. We might, with as rational design, worship for a god what were scarce worthy to be called the shadow of a man, as dedicate temples to a wholly unconvertible Deity; that is, to such a one as not only will not vouchsafe to converse with men, but that cannot admit it; or whose nature were altogether incapable of such converse.

For that measure and latitude of sense must be allowed unto the expression, conversableness with men, as that it signify both capacity, and propension to such converse: that God is both by his nature capable of it, and hath a gracious inclination of will thereunto. Yea, and we will add, (what is also not without the compass of our

present theme or the import of this word whereby we generally express it,) that he is not only inclined to converse with men, but that he actually doth it; as we call him a conversable person that, upon all befitting occasions, doth freely converse with such as have any concern with him. It will indeed be necessary to distinguish God's converse with men, into That which he hath in common with all men, so as to sustain them in their beings, and some way influence their actions; (in which kind he is also conversant with all his creatures;) and That which he more peculiarly hath with good men.

And though the consideration of the latter of these will belong to the discourse concerning his temple itself, which he hath with and in them; yet it is the former only we have now to consider as presupposed thereto, and as the ground thereof; together with his gracious propension to the latter also.

As the great Apostle, in his discourse at Athens, lays the same ground for acquaintance with God (which he intimates should be set afoot and continued in another sort of temple than is made with hands) that he hath given to all breath and being and all things, and that he is near and ready, (whence they should therefore seek him, if haply they might feel after him, and find him out,) in order to further converse. And here, our business will have the less in it of labour and difficulty; for that we shall have little else to do, besides only the applying of principles already asserted (or possibly the more express adding of some or other that were implied in what hath been said) to this purpose. From which principles it will appear, that he not only can, but that in the former sense he doth converse with men, and is graciously inclined thereto in the latter. And yet because the former is more deeply fundamental, as whereon all depends, and that the act of it is not denied for any other reason than an imagined impossibility; that is, it is not said he doth not sustain and govern the

world upon any other pretence, but that he cannot, as being inconsistent with his nature and felicity: this we shall therefore more directly apply ourselves to evince, That his nature doth not disallow it, but necessarily includes an aptitude thereto.

II. Nor yet, though it may be a less laborious work than the former that we have despatched, is it altogether needless to deal somewhat more expressly in this matter; inasmuch as what opposition hath been made to religion in the world, hath, for the most part, been more expressly directed against this ground of it. I say more expressly; for indeed by plain and manifest consequence it impugns that also of God's existence: that is, through this it strikes at the other. For surely (howsoever any may arbitrarily, and with what impropriety and latitude of speech they please, bestow titles and eulogies here or there) that being is not God, that cannot converse with men, supposing them such as what purely and peculiarly belongs to the nature of man would bespeak them. So that they who have imagined such a being, and been pleased to call it God, have at once said and unsaid the same thing. That Deity was but a creature, and that only of their own fancy; and they have by the same breath blown up and blasted their own bubble; made it seem something and signify nothing: have courted it into being, and rioted it again quite out of it; in their conceit, created it a god, in their practice, a mere nullity. And it equally served their turn, and as much favoured the design of being wicked, to acknowledge only a god they could imagine and disimagine at their own pleasure, as to have acknowledged none at all. It could do no prejudice to their affairs to admit of this fictitious Deity that they could make be what, or where they pleased; that should affect ease and pleasure, and (lest his pleasures and theirs should interfere) that they could confine to remote territories, and oblige to keep at an obedient and untroublesome distance. Nor, though no imagination could be more

madly extravagant than that of a God no way concerned in the forming and governing of the world; and notwithstanding whom, men might take their liberty to do what they listed; yet (as hath been observed long ago, that no opinion was ever so monstrously absurd, as not to be owned by some of the philosophers) hath not this wanted patronage, and even among them who have obtained to be esteemed (not to say idolized) under that name. Which would be seen, if it were worth the while to trouble the reader with an account of the Epicurean Deity: as it can only be with this design, that the representation may render it (as it cannot but do) ridiculous to sober men; and discover to the rest, the vanity of their groundless and self-contradicting hope, (still too much fostered in the breasts of not a few,) who promise themselves impunity in the most licentious course of wickedness, upon the security only of this their own idle dream; that is, if there be a God, (which they reckon it not so plausible flatly to deny,) he is a being of either so dull and phlegmatic a temper that he cannot be concerned in the actions and affairs of men, or so soft and easy that he will not. But because his good will alone was not so safely to be relied on, it was thought the securer way not to let it be in his power to intermeddle with their concernments; and therefore being to frame their own God, to their own turn, thus the matter was of old contrived.

First, great care was taken, that he be set at a distance remote enough; that he be complimented out of this world, as a place too mean for his reception, and unworthy such a presence; they being indeed unconcerned where he had his residence, so it were not too near them. So that a confinement of him somewhere, was thought altogether necessary.*

Secondly, And then, with the same pretence of great observance and respect, it is judged too great a trouble to him, and inconsistent with

the felicity of his nature and being, that he should have given himself any diversion or disturbance, by making the world; from the care and labour whereof he is with all ceremony to be excused, it being too painful and laborious an undertaking for an immortal and a happy being. Besides that he was altogether destitute of instruments and utensils requisite to so great a performance.†

Whence, also, Thirdly, He was with the same reason to be excused of all the care and encumbrance of government;‡ as indeed, what right or pretence could he have to the government of a world that chose him not, which is not his inheritance, and which he never made? But all is very plausibly shadowed over with a great appearance of reverence and veneration, with magnificent eulogies of his never-interrupted felicity; whence also it is made a very great crime not to free even the divine nature itself from business: though yet the true ground and root of this Epicurean faith doth sometime more apparently discover itself, even an impatience of the divine government, and a regret of that irksome bondage which the acknowledgment of a Deity, that were to be feared by men, would infer upon them.

And therefore, Fourthly, He is further expressly asserted to be such as need not be feared, as cares not to be worshipped, as with whom neither anger nor favour hath any place. So that nothing more of duty is owing to him than a certain kind of arbitrary veneration, which we give to anything or person that we apprehend to excel us, and to be in some respect better than ourselves: an observance merely upon courtesy. But obedience and subjection to his government, fear of his displeasure, expectation of his favour and benefits, have no place left them. We are not obliged to worship him as one with whom we have any concern, and do owe him no more homage than we have to the Great Mogul, or the Cham of Tartary,

and indeed are less liable to his severity, or capable of his favours, than theirs; for of theirs, we are in some remote possibility, of his, in none at all. In one word, all converse between him and man, on his part by providence, and on ours by religion, is quite cut off. Which evidently appears (from what hath been already collected out of his own words, and theirs who pretended to speak that so admired author's mind and sense) to be the scope and sum of the Epicurean doctrine, in this matter; and was indeed observed to be so long ago, by one that we may suppose to have had better opportunity and advantages to know it, than we: who, discoursing that a man cannot live pleasantly, according to the principles of Epicurus; and that, according to his doctrine, beasts are more happy than men; plainly gives this reason* why he says so, viz. that the Epicureans took away providence, and that the design of their discoursing concerning God was, that we might not fear him.

Unto which purpose also much more may be seen in the same author elsewhere, when he more directly pleads (among divers more philosophical subjects) on behalf of religion, against the Epicurean doctrine, which he saith† they leave to us in word and show, but by their principles take away indeed, as they do nature and the soul, &c.

It is then out of question, that the doctrine of Epicurus utterly takes away all intercourse between God and man. Which yet were little worth our notice or consideration, nor would it answer any valuable end or purpose to revive the mention of such horrid opinions, or tell the world what such a one said or thought two thousand years ago; if their grave had been faithful to its trust, and had retained their filthy poisonous savour within its own unhallowed cell.

But since (against what were so much to have been desired, that their womb might have been their grave) their grave becomes their womb,

where they are conceived, and formed anew, and whence by a second birth they spring forth afresh, to the great annoyance of the world, the debauching and endangering of mankind; and that it is necessary some remedy be endeavoured of so mortal an evil; it was also convenient to run it up to its original, and contend against it as in its primitive state and vigour.

Wherefore this being a true (though it be a very short) account of the Epicurean god, resulting all into this shorter sum, That he is altogether unconvertible with men, (and such therefore as cannot inhabit their temple, and for whom they can have no obligation or rational design to provide any,) it will be requisite in reference hereto, and suitable to our present scope and purpose, severally to evince these things:—That the existence of such a being as this were impossible ever to be proved unto men, if it did exist—That being supposed without any good ground, it is equally unimaginable that the supposition of it can intend any valuable or good end—That this supposed being cannot be God, and is most abusively so called; as hereby, the true God, the Cause and Author of all things, is intended to be excluded—That it belongs to, and may be deduced from, the true notion of God which hath been given, (and proved by parts of a really existent Being,) that he is such as can converse with men.

III. For the first, that there is no way to prove the existence of such a being, is evident; for what ways of proving it can be thought of, which the supposition itself doth not forbid and reject? Is it to be proved by revelation? But that supposes converse with men, and destroys what it should prove, that such a being, having no converse with men, doth exist. And where is that revelation? Is it written or unwritten? Or who are its vouchers? Upon what authority doth it rest? Who was appointed to inform the world in this matter? Was Epicurus himself the common oracle? Why did he never tell men so? Did he ever

pretend to have seen any of these his vogue'd gods? No, they are confessed not to be liable to our sense, any more than the inane itself. And what miracles did he ever work to confirm the truth of his doctrine in this matter?—which sure was reasonably to be expected from one who would gain credit to dictates so contrary to the common sentiments of the rest of mankind, and that were not to be proved any other way. And what other way can be devised? Can it admit of rational demonstration? What shall be the medium? Shall it be from the cause? But what cause can (or ever did) he, or his followers, assign of God? Or from effects? And what shall they be, when the matter of the whole universe is supposed ever to have been of itself, and the particular frame of everything made thereof to have resulted only of the casual coalition of the parts of that matter, and no real being is supposed besides? Or shall it be that their idea, which they have of God, includes existence, as so belonging to him that he cannot but exist? But by what right do they affix such an idea to their petite and fictitious deities? How will they prove their idea true? Or are we bound to take their words for it? Yea, it is easily proved false, and repugnant to itself, while they would have that to be necessarily existent (as they must if they will have it existent at all) unto which, in the meantime, they deny the other perfections which necessary existence hath been proved to include. But how vain and idle trifling is it, arbitrarily and by a random fancy to imagine anything what we please, and attributing of our own special grace and favour necessary existence to it, thence to conclude that it cloth exist, only because we have been pleased to make that belong to the notion of it? What so odd and uncouth composition can we form any conception of, which, we may not make exist, at this rate?

But the notion of God is not arbitrary, but is natural, proleptical, and common to men, impressed upon the minds of all: whence they say it ought not to be drawn into controversy. What! the Epicurean notion

of him? We shall inquire further into that anon. And in the meantime need not doubt to say, any man might with as good pretence imagine the ridiculous sort of gods described in Cicero's ironical supposition,* and affirm them to exist, as they those they have thought fit to feign, and would impose upon the belief of men. And when they have fancied these to exist, is not that a mighty proof that they indeed do so! But that which for the present we allege, is, that supposing their notion were never so absolutely universal, and agreeing with the common sentiments of all other men, they have yet precluded themselves of any right to argue, from its commonness, to the existence of the thing itself. Nor can they, upon their principles, form an argument thence, that shall conclude or signify any thing to this purpose. None can be drawn hence, that will conclude immediately and itself reach the mark, without the addition of some further thing which so ill sorts with the rest of their doctrine, that it would subvert the whole frame. That is, it follows not, that because men generally hold that there is a God, that therefore there is one; otherwise than as that consequence can be justified by this plain and irrefragable proof—That no reason can be devised of so general an agreement, or of that so common an impression upon the minds of men, but this only; that it must have proceeded from one common cause, viz. God himself; who having made man so prime a part of His creation, hath stamped with his own signature this nobler piece of his workmanship, and purposely made and framed him to the acknowledgment and adoration of his Maker.

But how shall they argue so, who, while they acknowledge a God, deny man to be His creature, and will have him and all things to be by chance, or without dependence on any Maker? What can an impression infer to this purpose, that comes no one can tell whence or how; but is plainly denied to be from him, whose being they would argue from it?

The observation of so common an apprehension in the minds of men, might (upon their supposition) beget much wonder, but no knowledge; and may perplex men much, how such a thing should come to pass, without making them any thing the wiser; and would infer astonishment, sooner than a good conclusion, or than it would solidly prove any important truth. And do they think they have salved the business, and given us a satisfying account of this matter, by telling us, This impression is from nature, as they speak? It were to be wished some of them had told us, or could yet tell us, what they meant by nature. Is it any intelligent principle? Or was it guided by any such? If yea, whence came this impression, but from God himself? For surely an intelligent Being, that could have this universal influence upon the minds of all men, is much liker to be God than the imaginary entities they talk of, that are bodies, and no bodies; have blood, and no blood; members, and no members; are somewhere, and nowhere; or if they be any where, are confined to some certain places remote enough from our world; with the affairs whereof, or any other, they cannot any way concern themselves, without quite undoing and spoiling their felicity. If they say No, and that nature, which puts this stamp upon the minds of men, is an utterly unintelligent thing, nor was ever governed by any thing wiser than itself—strange! that blind and undesigning nature should, without being prompted, become thus ignorantly officious to these idle voluptuary godlings; and should so effectually take course they might be known to the world, who no way ever obliged it, nor were ever like to do! But to regress a little, fain I would know what is this thing they call nature? Is it any thing else than the course and inclination of conspiring atoms, which singly are not pretended to bear any such impression; but as they luckily club and hit together, in the composition of a human soul, by the merest and strangest chance that ever happened? But would we ever regard what they say whom we believe to speak by chance? Were it to be supposed that

characters and words serving to make up some proposition or other, were by some strange agitation of wind and waves impressed and figured on the sand; would we, if we really believed the matter came to pass only by such an odd casualty, think that proposition any whit the truer for being there, or take this for a demonstration of its truth, any more than if we had seen it in a ballad? Because men have casually come to think so, therefore there are such beings, (to be called gods,) between whom and them there never was, nor shall be, any intercourse or mutual concern. It follows as well, as that because the staff stands in the corner, the morrow will be a rainy day. The dictates of nature are indeed most regardable things taken as expressions of his mind, or emanations from him, who is the Author and God of nature: but abstracted from him, they are and signify as much as a beam cut off from the body of the sun; or a person that pretends himself an ambassador, without credentials.

Indeed, (as is imported in the words noted from that grave Pagan a little before,) the principles of these men destroy quite nature itself, as well as every thing of religion; and leave us the names and show of them, but take away the things themselves. In sum, though there be no such impression upon the minds of men as that which they talk of, yet if there were, no such thing can be inferred from it as they would infer; their principles taking away all connexion between the argument, and what they would argue by it.

IV. 2. We have also too much reason to add, That as the supposition of such a being, or sort of beings can have no sufficient ground; so it is equally unconceivable that it can be intended for any good end. Not that we think the last assertion a sufficient sole proof of this; for we easily acknowledge, that it is possible enough men may harmlessly and with innocent intentions attempt the building very weighty and important truths upon weak and insufficient

foundations; hoping they have offered that as a support unto truth, which proves only an useless cumber. Nor were it just to impute treachery, where there is ground for the more charitable censure, that the misadventure proceeded only from want of judgment and shortness of discourse. But it is neither needful nor seemly, the charity which, can willingly wink in some cases, should therefore be quite blind; or that no difference should be made of well-meant mistakes, and mischief thinly hid and covered over with specious pretences. And let it be soberly considered, what can the design be after the cashiering of all solid grounds for the proving of a Deity, at length to acknowledge it upon none at all: as if their acknowledgment must owe itself not to their reason, but their courtesy. And when they have done what they can to make the rest of men believe they have no need to own any God at all, and they can tell how all that concerns the making and governing the world may well enough be despatched without any, yet at last they will be so generous as to be content there shall be one, however. What, I say, can the design of this be, that they who have contended with all imaginable obstinacy against the most plain and convincing evidences, that do even defy cavil; have quite fought themselves blind, and lost their eyes in the encounter, so that they are ready to swear the sun is a clod of dirt, and noonday light is to them the very blackness of darkness; they cannot see a Deity encircling them with the brightest beams, and shining upon them with the most conspicuous glory through every thing that occurs, and all things that encompass them on every side; and yet when all is done, and their thunderstruck eyes make them fancy they have put out the sun, they have won the day, have cleared the field, and are absolute victors, they have vanquished the whole power of their most dreaded enemy, the light that reveals God in his works—after all this, without any inducement at all, and having triumphed over every thing that looked like an argument to prove it, they vouchsafe to say, however,

of their own accord, There is a God. Surely if this have any design at all, it must be a very bad one. And see whither it tends. They have now a God of their own making; and all the being he hath, depends upon their grace and favour. They are not his creatures, but he is theirs; a precarious Deity, that shall be as long, and what, and where, they please to have him. And if he displease them, they can think him back into nothing. Here seems the depth of the design. For see with what cautions and limitations they admit him into being. There shall be a God, provided he be not meddling, nor concern himself in their affairs to the crossing of any inclinations or humours which they are pleased shall command and govern their lives; being conscious that if they admit of any at all that shall have to do with their concernments, he cannot but be such as the ways they resolve on will displease. Their very shame will not permit them to call that God, which, if he take any cognizance at all of their course, will not dislike it. And herein that they may be the more secure, they judge it the most prudent course, not to allow him any part or interest in the affairs of the world at all.

Yet all this while they court him at a great rate, and all religion is taken away under pretence of great piety. Worship they believe he cares not for, because he is full and needs nothing. In this world he must not be, for it is a place unworthy of him. He must have had no hand in framing, nor can they think it fit he should have any in the government of it; for it would be a great disturbance to him, and interrupt his pleasures. The same thing as if certain licentious courtiers, impatient of being governed, should address themselves to their prince in such a form of speech, that it is beneath him to receive any homage from them, it would too much debase majesty; that his dominions afford no place fit for his residence, and therefore it would be convenient for him to betake himself into some other country, that hath better air and accommodation for delight; that

diadems and sceptres are burdensome things, which therefore if he will quit to them, he may wholly give up himself to ease and pleasure.

Yea, and whatsoever would any way tend to evince his necessary existence, is with the same courtship laid aside; (although if he do not exist necessarily and of himself, he cannot have any existence at all; for as they do not allow him to be the cause of any thing, so they assign nothing to be the cause of him;) that is, with pretence there is no need it should be demonstrated, because all men believe it without a reason, nature having impressed this belief upon the minds of all; or (which is all one) they having agreed to believe it because they believe. But though they have no reason to believe a Deity, they have a very good one why they would seem to do so; that they may expiate with the people their irreligion by a collusive pretending against atheism. And because they think it less plausible plainly to deny there is a God, they therefore grant one to please the vulgar; yet take care it shall be one as good as none, lest otherwise they should displease themselves: and so their credit and their liberty are both cared for together.

V. But this covering is too short, and the art by which they would fit it to their design, when it should cheat others, deceives themselves. For it is most evident,

3. That the being, with the pretended belief whereof they would mock the world, is no God; and that, consequently, while they would seem to acknowledge a Deity, they really acknowledge none at all. Our contest hath not, all this while, been a strife about words, or concerning the name, but the thing itself: and not whether there be such a thing in being to which that name may, with whatsoever impropriety, be given; but whether there be such a Being as whereto it properly belongs: supposing, and taking for granted as a matter

out of question, that (even in their own sense) if such a being as we have described do exist, it is most properly God; and that they will not go about to call it by another name; or that they will not pretend this name agrees to any other thing so fitly as to him. And because we have already proved this Being doth exist, and that there can be but one such, it plainly follows theirs is in propriety of speech (even though he did exist) no God; and that much less should he appropriate the name, and exclude the only true God. For since the high and dignifying eulogies, which they are wont to bestow upon their feigned deity, do plainly show they would have it thought they esteem him the most excellent of all existent Beings; if we have proved a really existent Being to be more excellent than he, it is evident, even upon their own grounds, that this is God. Hither the Deity must be deferred, and theirs must yield, and give out: inasmuch as we cannot suppose them so void of common sense, as to say the less excellent being is God, and the more excellent is no God. But if they should be so, (whereas the controversy is not about the name,) we have our main purpose, in having proved there is a Being actually existent, that hath all the real excellences which they ascribe to their deities, and infinitely more. And as concerning the name, who made them dictators to all the world, and the sole judges of the propriety of words? Or with what right or pretence will they assume so much to themselves, so as, against the rest of the world, to name that God, from which they cut off the principal perfections wont to be signified by that name? And if we speak of such perfections as tend to infer and establish religion and providence, who, but themselves, did ever call that God in the eminent sense, that they supposed could not hear prayers, and thereupon dispense favours, relieve the afflicted, supply the indigent, and receive suitable acknowledgments? "They indeed" (saith a famed writer* of Roman history) that exercise, themselves in the atheistical sorts of philosophy, (if we may call that philosophy,) as they are wont to jeer at all appearances of the gods,

whether among the Greeks or the Barbarians, will make themselves matter of laughter of our histories, not thinking that any god takes care of any man!" Let the story he there tells shift for itself; in the meantime it appears they escaped not the infamy of atheists, who (whatever deities they might imagine besides) did deny God's presence, and regard to men: which sort of persons he elsewhere often animadverts upon. But do we need to insist, that all the rest of the world acknowledged no gods, whom they did not also worship? What meant their temples and altars, their prayers and sacrifices? Or did they take him for God, whom they believed to take no care of them, or from whom they expected no advantage? Even the barbarous Scythians themselves understood it most inseparably to belong to a Deity, to be beneficent; when they upbraidingly tell Alexander,[†] That if he were a God, (as they, it seems, had heard he vogueed himself,) he should bestow benefits upon men, and not take from them what was their own.

And, by the way, it is observable how contradictory and repugnant the Epicurean sentiments are in this, even to themselves: that speaking of friendship,[‡] (of which they say many generous and brave things,) they gallantly profess (as Plutarch testifies of them) that it is a more pleasant thing to benefit others than to receive benefits one's self. They yet, while they seem so greatly concerned[§] that their gods be every way most perfectly happy, deny to them this highest and most excellent part of felicity: that a virtuous man may a great deal more benefit the world than they, and consequently have more pure and lively relishes of a genuine and refined pleasure.

Upon the whole, it is manifest they so maim the notion of God, as to make it quite another thing. And if they think to wipe off anything of the foul and odious blot wherewith their avowed irreligion hath stained their name and memory, by the acknowledgment of such a

God; they effect the like thing by it, and gain as much to the reputation of their piety, as he should of his loyalty, who being accused of treason against his prince, shall think to vindicate himself by professing solemnly to own the king, provided you only mean by it the king of clubs, or any such painted one the pack affords.

But here it may be demanded, Is every misapprehension of God to be understood as a denial of his being? If so, whom can we undertake to assoil of atheism? Or who can certainly acquit himself? For how impossible is it to be sure we have no untrue conception of a Being so infinitely, by our own confession, above all our thoughts? Or how is it to be avoided, in somewhat or other, to think amiss of so unknown and incomprehensibly excellent a Being, either by detracting somewhat that belongs to it, or attributing somewhat that belongs not? And since many we are sure, have thought and spoken unworthily of God, besides Epicureans, are all these to go into the account of atheists? Or whereas it is commonly wont to be said, Whatsoever is in God, is God: how can they who deny anything of him, which is really in him, be excused of denying his whole being? Or where will we fix the bounds of our censure?

Many things should be said (if we will speak at all) to so manifold an inquiry: but it belongs not to the design of this discourse to examine and discuss all men's sentiments of God that have been exposed to the view of the world, or arbitrate among the dissenting parties; much less to explain or abet every school-maxim that hath reference to this theme; the authors or lovers whereof will be sufficiently prompted by their own genius to do at least as much as can be requisite herein. But whatever the real sameness is supposed to be, of the things attributed to God, it is acknowledged we cannot but conceive of them as divers; and so that our conception of any one is not adequate to the entire object, which is confessed

incomprehensible. Yet any one attribute gives a true notion of the object, so far as it reaches, though not a full: as I may be said truly to see a man, when I only see his face, and view not every part and limb; or to know him, while yet I have not had opportunity to discern every quality in his temper, and what his dispositions and inclinations, in all respects, are. Moreover, it is one thing to deny any divine perfection, another, only not to know it.

And such mere nescience is so far from being guilty of the horrid crime of atheism, that it is not so much as culpable, further than as it is obstinately persisted in, against sufficient evidence: for we are not obliged to know everything, but what is to us knowable, and what we are concerned to know. Again, (and which is most considerable to our purpose,) we are not concerned to know what God is in himself, otherwise than as we may thereby know what he is in relation to us, viz. as he is the Author of our beings, the Governor of our lives and actions, and thereupon the Object of our religion; for a religious respect unto him is the very end of that knowledge. Now, if any other than that sort of persons we oppose have taken up apprehensions of him not so suitable to that end, it were to be wished they saw it, and would unthink all those thoughts. But surely, they who most professedly contend against the very notions themselves which directly influence all our practice toward God, so considered; would suggest such as are wholly inconsistent therewith; who oppose the knowledge of God to the end of that knowledge, and do not merely mistake the way to that end while they are aiming at it, but most avowedly resist and disclaim the end itself; are to be distinguished from them who professedly intend that same end, only see not wherein their misapprehensions are prejudicial and repugnant to it, otherwise are ready to reject them. And the former are therefore most justly to be singled out, and designed the objects of our direct opposition. Nor are they so fitly to be opposed under any other

notion, as that of atheists. For since our knowledge of God ought chiefly to respect him in that fore-mentioned relative consideration, and the inquiry, What is God? signifies, as it concerns us, What is the object of religion? they, denying any such thing, deny there is a God. Nor do they deny him in that relative consideration only; but (as every relation is founded in somewhat that is absolute) the very reason of their denying him so, is that they deny in him those absolute and positive perfections that render him such; as certain of those do, that have been proved to have belonged to him. Which is that we have next to consider, viz.,

VI. That it may evidently be deduced from what hath been said, tending to prove those things of God which are included in the notion of him, and from that notion itself, that he is such as can converse with men. That is, having proved—That there is an eternal, self-subsisting, independent, necessary Being, of so great activity, life, power, wisdom, and goodness, as to have been the Maker of this world: and by this medium—That we see this world is in being, which otherwise could never have been, much less such as we see it is: it therefore follows, that this great Creator can have influence upon the creatures he hath made, in a way suitable to their natures. It follows, I say, from the same medium, (the present visible existence of this world, which could not otherwise be now in being,) that he can thus have influence upon his creatures, for it is hence manifest that he hath: they depend on him, and are sustained by him; nor could more subsist by themselves, than they could make themselves, or of themselves have sprung out of nothing. And if it were possible they could, being raised up into being, continue in being of themselves; yet since our present question is not concerning what they need, but what God can do; and our adversaries in the present cause do not (as hath been noted) upon any other pretence deny that he doth concern himself in the affairs of the universe, but that he cannot; (that is, that

it consists not with his felicity, and he cannot be happy;) is it not plain that he can not, with the same facility, continue the influence which he at first gave forth, and with as little prejudice to his felicity? For if it be necessary to him to be happy, or impossible not to be so, he must be ever so. His happiness was not capable of being discontinued, so long as while he made the world, settled the several orders and kinds, and formed the first individuals of every kind of creatures. Therefore having done this, and without diminution to his happiness, was it a more toilsome and less tolerable labour to keep things as they were, than to make them so? If it was, (which no man that understands common sense would say,) surely that blind thing which they more blindly call nature, (not understanding or being able to tell what they mean by it,) and would have be the only cause of all things, acting at first to the uttermost, and having no way to recruit its vigour and reinforce itself, its labour and business being so much increased, and jaded and grown weary; had given out, and patiently suffered all things to dissolve, and relapse into the old chaos long ago. But if the labour was not greater, to continue things in the state wherein they were made, than to make them; surely a wise, intelligent Deity, which we have proved made them, could as well sustain them, being made, as their brutal (and as unintelligible, as unintelligent) nature do both.

So much then of intercourse God could have with his creatures, as his continual communication of his influence, to be received by them, amounts to; and then man, not being excluded their number, must share in this possible privilege according to the capacity of his nature. And inasmuch as we have also proved, more particularly, concerning man, that he immediately owes the peculiar excellences of his intelligent nature, as it is such, to God only; it is apparently consequent, that having formed this his more excellent creature, according to his own more express likeness, stamped it with the

glorious characters of his living image, given it a nature suitable to his own, and thereby made it capable of rational and intelligent converse with him; he hath it ever in his power to maintain a continual converse with this creature, by agreeable communications; by letting in upon it the vital beams and influences of his own light and love, and receiving back the return of its grateful acknowledgments and praises. Wherein it is manifest he should do no greater thing than he hath done: for who sees not, that it is a matter of no greater difficulty to converse with, than to make a reasonable creature? Or who would not be ashamed to deny, that he who hath been the only Author of the soul of man, and of the excellent powers and faculties belonging to it, can more easily sustain what he hath made, and converse with that his creature, suitably to the way wherein he hath made it capable of his converse?

Whereto the consideration being added of his gracious nature, (manifested in this creation itself,) it is further evident, that he is (as things are now ordered, whereof more hereafter) not only able, but apt and ready to converse with men, in such a way as shall tend to the improving of their being unto that blessedness whereof he hath made them naturally capable; if their own voluntary alienation and aversion to him (yet not overcome) do not obstruct the way of that intercourse. And even this were sufficient to give foundation to a temple, and both afford encouragement, and infer an obligation, to religion; although no other perfection had been, or could be, demonstrated of the Divine Being, than what is immediately to be collected from his works, and the things whereof he hath been the sole and most arbitrary Author. For what if no more were possible to be proved, have we not, even by thus much, a representation of an object sufficiently worthy of our homage and adoration? He that could make and sustain such a world as this, how inexpressibly doth he surpass in greatness the most excellent of all mortal creatures! to

some or other of whom, upon some (merely accidental) dignifying circumstances, we justly esteem ourselves to owe a dutiful observance and subjection.

If he did not comprehend within his own Being, simply, all perfection; if there were many gods and worlds besides, and he only the Creator and absolute Lord of our vortex; were not that enough to entitle him to all the obedience and service we could give him; and enable him sufficiently to reward it; and render his presence and cherishing influences (which he could everywhere diffuse within this circle, and limited portion of the universe) even infinitely covetable and desirable to us? Yea, if he were the only entire Author of our own particular being, how much more is that, than the partial, subordinate interest of a human parent, to whom (as even an Epicurean would confess) nature itself urges and exacts a duty, the refusal whereof even barbarian ingenuity would abhor, yea and brutal instinct condemn? How much greater and more absolute is the right which the parentage of our whole being challenges? If every man were created by a several God, whose creative power were confined to only one such creature, and each one were the solitary product and the charge of an appropriate Deity, whose dominion the state of things would allow to be extended so far only, and no further; were there therefore no place left for religion, or no tie unto love, reverence, obedience, and adoration, because the Author of my being comprehended not in himself all perfection, when as yet he comprehended so much as to be the sole cause of all that is in me? And his power over me, and his goodness to me, are hereby supposed the same which the only one God truly hath and exerciseth towards all! If all that I am and have be from him, I cannot surely owe to him less than all.

Such as have either had, or supposed themselves to have, their particular tutelary genii, (of whom there will be more occasion to take notice hereafter,) though they reckoned them but a sort of deputed or vicarious deities, underling gods, whom they never accounted the causes of their being: yet how have they coveted and gloried to open their breasts to become their temples, and entertain the converse of those, supposed, divine inhabitants! If they had taken one of these to be their alone creator, how much greater had their veneration and their homage been! This, it may be hoped, will be thought sufficiently proved in this discourse, (at least to have been so by some or other,) that we are not of ourselves; and that our extraction is to be fetched higher than from matter, or from only human progenitors: nothing that is terrene and mortal could be the author of such powers as we find in ourselves; we are most certainly the offspring of some or other Deity: and he that made us, knows us thoroughly, can apply himself inwardly to us, receive our addresses and applications, our acknowledgments and adoration; whereunto we should have, even upon these terms, great and manifest obligation, although nothing more of the excellency and perfection of our Creator were certainly known to us.

VII. But it hath been further shown, That the necessary Being from whence we sprang, is also an absolutely and infinitely perfect Being:—That necessary Being cannot be less perfect, than to include the entire and inexhaustible fulness of all being and perfection:—That, therefore, the God to whom this notion belongs, must consequently be every way sufficient to all, and be himself but one; the only Source and Fountain of all life and being; the common Basis and Support of the universe; the absolute Lord of this great creation; and the central Object of the common concurrent trust, fear, love, and other worship of his intelligent and reasonable creatures. And therefore there remains no greater, or other, difficulty, in apprehending how he can,

without disturbance to himself or interruption of his own felicity, intend all the concernments of his creatures, apply himself to them according to their several exigences, satisfy their desires and cravings, inspect and govern their actions and affairs; than we have to apprehend a Being absolutely and every way perfect. Whereof if we cannot have a distinct apprehension all at once, i. e. though we cannot comprehend every particular perfection of God in the same thought, (as our eye cannot behold, at one view, every part of an over-large object, unto which, however, part by part, it may be successively applied,) we can yet in the general apprehend him absolutely perfect; or such to whom, we are sure, no perfection is wanting; and can successively contemplate this or that, as we are occasionally led to consider them; and can answer to ourselves difficulties that occur to us, with this easy, sure, and ever ready solution; That he can do all things, that nothing is too hard for him, that he is full, all-sufficient, and every way perfect. Whereof we are the more confirmed, that we find we cannot, by the utmost range of our most enlarged thoughts, ever reach any bound or end of that perfection, which yet we must conclude is necessarily to be attributed to an absolutely perfect Being. And this we have reason to take for a very sufficient answer to any doubt that can arise, concerning the possibility of his converse with us; unless we will be so unreasonable as to pretend, that what is brought for solution hath greater difficulty in it than the doubt; or that because we cannot apprehend at once infinite perfection, therefore it cannot be; which were as much as to say, that it cannot be because it is infinite; for it were not infinite, if we could distinctly apprehend it; and so were to make it a reason against itself, which is most injuriously and with no pretence attempted, except we could show an inconsistency in the terms; which it is plain we can never do, and should most idly attempt. And it were to make our present apprehension the measure of all reality, against our experience; which (if our indulgence to that self-

magnifying conceit do not suspend our farther inquiries and researches) would daily bring to our notice things we had no apprehension of before. It were (instead of that just and laudable ambition of becoming ourselves like God, in his imitable perfections) to make him like ourselves; the true model of the Epicurean deity.

Nor can anything be more easy, than that wherein we pretend so great a difficulty; that is, to apprehend somewhat may be more perfect than we can apprehend. What else but proud ignorance can hinder us from seeing, that the more we know, the more there is that we know not? How often are we out-done by creatures of our own order in the creation! How many men are there whom we are daily constrained to admire, as unspeakably excelling us, and whom we cannot but acknowledge to be far more knowing, discerning, apprehensive of things, of more composed minds, of more penetrating judgments, of more quick and nimble wits, easily turning themselves to great variety of objects and affairs without distraction and confusion, of more equal and dispassionate tempers, less liable to commotion and disturbance than ourselves!

How absurd and senseless a pretence is it, against the thing itself, that we cannot apprehend an infinite perfection in one common fountain of all perfection; or because we cannot go through a multitude of businesses without distraction, that therefore He that made us and all things cannot. If we would make ourselves the measure, it is likely we should confess we were outstripped, when we are told that Julius Cæsar could dictate letters, when he was intent upon the greatest affairs, to four (and if he had nothing else to divert him, to seven) secretaries at once; that Cyrus* could call by name all the soldiers in his numerous army: with divers other strange instances of like nature. And since the perfections of some so far exceed the measure of the most, why is it then unconceivable that

divine perfection should so far surpass all, as that God may intend the affairs of the world, according to the several exigences of his creatures, without any ungrateful diversion to himself, or diminution to his felicity? And since they who partake of some, and but a small portion of perfection only, can be concerned in many affairs, with little trouble; why cannot he that comprehends all perfection, be concerned in all, without any? For though we have, in what hath been last said, endeavoured to represent it as not so unapprehensible as is pretended, that it may be also; we take it, in the meantime, as formally sufficiently proved, that so it is; that God is a being absolutely perfect, or that includes eminently all perfection in himself.

VIII. Which general perfection of his being, as it modifies all his attributes, so we shall particularly take notice that it doth so as to those that have a more direct influence upon, and tend more fully to evince, his conversableness with men. As, First, his wisdom and knowledge (for we need not to be so curious as at present to distinguish them) must be omniscience. About which, if any place were left for rational doubt, it would be obvious to them to allege it who are of slower inclinations towards religion; and object, (against all applications to, or expectations from him,) that if we be not sure he knows simply all things, so as wisely to consider them and resolve fitly about them, it will be no little difficulty to determine which he doth, and which not; or to be at a certainty, that this or that concernment of theirs, about which they might address themselves to him, be not among the unknown things. At least, we shall the less need to be curious in distinguishing, or to consider what things may be supposed, rather than other, to be without the compass of his knowledge, if it appear that it universally encompasses all things, or that nothing can be without its reach. And because we suppose it already out of doubt, that the true notion of God imports a Being

absolutely or every way perfect; nothing else can be doubted in this matter, but whether the knowledge of all things be a perfection?

The greatest difficulty that hath troubled some in this matter, hath been, How it is possible there should be any certain knowledge of events yet to come, that depend upon a free and self-determining cause. But methinks we should not make a difficulty to acknowledge, that to know these things imports greater perfection than not to know them; and then it would be very unreasonable, because we cannot show how this or that thing was performed, which manifestly is done, therefore to deny that it is done at all. It would be so highly unreasonable to conclude against any act of God, from our ignorance of the manner of it, that we should reckon it very absurd to conclude so, concerning any act of our own, or our ability thereto. What if it were hitherto an unknown thing, and impossible to be determined, how the act of vision is performed by us; were it a wise conclusion, that therefore we neither do, nor can, see? How much more rash and presuming a confidence were it to reason thus concerning the Divine acts and perfections! Would we not in any such case be determined rather by that which is more evident, than by what is more obscure? As in the assigned instance, we should have but these two propositions to compare—That I do (or have such a perfection belonging to me that I can) see, and,—That whatsoever act I do or can do, I am able to understand the course and method of nature's operations therein—and thereupon to judge which of these two is more evident. Wherein it may be supposed there is no man in his wits, to whom the determination would not be easy. Accordingly, in the present case, we have only these two assertions that can be in competition, in point of evidence, between which we are to make a comparison, and a consequent judgment; viz. Whatsoever perfection belongs to a Being absolutely perfect, enabling it to do this or that, the wit of man can comprehend the distinct way and manner of

doing it; and,—It imports greater perfection to know all things, than to be ignorant of some—and here surely whosoever shall think the determination difficult, accounts the wit of man so exceeding great, that he discovers his own to be very little. For what can the pretence of evidence be in the former assertion? Was it necessary that he, in whose choice it was, whether we should ever know anything or no, should make us capable of knowing everything belonging to his own being? Or will we adventure to be so assuming, as while we deny it to God that he knows all things, to attribute to ourselves that we do? But if we will think it not altogether unworthy of us to be ignorant of something, what is there of which we may with more probability, or with less disparagement be thought so, than the manner of God's knowing things? And what place is there for complaint of inevidence in the latter? Is not that knowledge more perfect, which so fully already comprehends all things, as upon that account to admit of no increase, than that which shall be every day growing, and have a continual succession of new objects emerging and coming into view before altogether unknown? And will not that be the case, if we suppose future contingencies to lie concealed from the penetrating eye of God? For whatsoever is future will some time be present, and then we will allow such contingencies to be known to him; that is, that God may know them, when we ourselves can; and that nothing of that kind is known to him, which is not knowable some way or other to ourselves, at least successively, and one thing after another. We will perhaps allow that prerogative to God, in point of this knowledge, that he can know these things now fallen out, all at once; we, but by degrees; while yet there is not any one that is absolutely unknowable to us. But why should it be thought, unreasonable, to attribute an excellency to the knowledge of God above ours, as well in respect of the manner of knowing, as the multitude of objects at once known? We will readily confess, in some creatures, an excellency of their visive faculty above our own; that they can see things in that

darkness wherein they are to us invisible. And will we not allow that to the eye of God, which is as a flame of fire, to be able to penetrate into the abstrusest darkness of futurity, though we know not the way how it is done; when yet we know that whatsoever belongs to the most perfect being, must belong to his; and that knowledge of all things imports more perfection, than if it were lessened by the ignorance of anything?

Some, who have thought the certain foreknowledge of future contingencies not attributable to God, have reckoned the matter sufficiently excused by this, That it no more detracts from the divine omniscience, to state without the object of it things not possible, or that imply a contradiction (as they suppose these do) to be known; than it doth from his omnipotency, that it cannot do what is impossible, or that implies a contradiction to be done. But against this there seems to lie this reasonable exception, that the two cases appear not sufficiently alike: inasmuch as the supposition of the former will be found not to leave the blessed God equally entitled to omniscience, as the latter to omnipotency. For all things should not be alike the object of both; and why should not that be understood to signify the knowledge of simply all things, as well as this the power of doing simply all things? Or why should all things, included in these two words, signify so very diversely; that is, there properly all things, here some things only? And why must we so difference the object of omniscience and omnipotency, as to make that so much narrower than this? And then, how is it all things, when so great a number of things will be left excluded? Whereas from the object of omnipotency (that we may prevent what would be replied) there will be no exclusion of any thing: not of the things which are actually already made; for they are still momentarily reproduced by the same power: not of the actions and effects of free causes yet future; for, when they become actual, God doth certainly perform the part of the first cause,

(even by common consent,) in order to their becoming so: which is certainly doing somewhat, though all be not agreed what that part is. Therefore they are, in the meantime, to be esteemed within the object of omnipotency, or to be of the things which God can do; viz. as the first cause virtually including the power of the second. But more strictly; all impossibility is either natural and absolute, or moral and conditional. What is absolutely or naturally impossible, or repugnant in itself, is not properly any thing. Whatsoever simple being, not yet existent, we can form any conception of, is producible, and so within the compass of omnipotency; for there is no repugnancy in simplicity. That wherein therefore we place natural impossibility, is the inconsistency of being this thing, whose notion is such, and another, wholly and entirely, whose notion is diverse, at the same time—that which (more barbarously than insignificantly) hath been wont to be called impossibility. But surely all things are properly enough said to be naturally possible to God, while all simple beings are producible by him, of which any notion can be formed; yea and compounded, so as by their composition to result into a third thing. So that it is not an exception, to say that it is naturally impossible this thing should be another thing, and yet be wholly itself still at once; that it should be and not be, or be without itself. There is not within the compass of actual or conceivable being, such a thing. Nor is it reasonable to except such actions as are naturally possible to other agents, but not to him; as to walk, for instance, or the like. Inasmuch as, though the excellency of his nature permits not they should be done by him, yet since their power of doing them proceeds wholly from him, he hath it virtually and eminently in himself: as was formerly said of the infiniteness of his being. And for moral impossibility, as to lie, to do an unjust act; that God never does them, proceeds not from want of power, but an eternal aversion of will. It cannot be said he is not able to do such a thing, if he would; but so is his will qualified and conditioned, by its

own unchangeable rectitude, that he most certainly never will; or, such things as are in themselves evil are never done by him, not through the defect of natural power, but from the permanent stability and fulness of all moral perfection. And it is not without the compass of absolute omnipotency to do what is but conditionally impossible, that absence of which restrictive condition would rather bespeak impotency and imperfection, than omnipotency. Therefore the object of omnipotence is simply all things; why not of omniscience as well? It may be said, all things, as it signifies the object of omniscience, is only restrained by the act or faculty, signified therewith in the same word, so as to denote the formal object of that faculty or act, viz. all knowable things. But surely that act must suppose some agent, whereto that knowable hath reference. Knowable! To whom? To others, or to God himself? If we say the former, it is indeed a great honour we put upon God, to say he can know as much as others; if the latter, we speak absurdly, and only say he can know all that he can know. It were fairer to deny omniscience than so interpret it. But if it be denied, what shall the pretence be? Why, that it implies a contradiction future contingents should be certainly known; for they are uncertain, and nothing can be otherwise truly known than as it is.*

And it must be acknowledged, that to whom any thing is uncertain, it is a contradiction that to him it should be certainly known; but that such things are uncertain to God, needs other proof than I have met with in what follows in that cited author, or elsewhere: all which will amount to no more than this, that such things as we cannot tell how God knows them, must needs be unknown to him. But since we are sure many such things have been certainly foretold by God, (and of them such as we may be also sure he never intended to effect,) we have reason enough to be confident that such things are not unknowable to him. And for the manner of his knowing them, it is

better to profess ignorance about it, than attempt the explication thereof, either unintelligibly, as some have to no purpose, or dangerously and impiously, as others have adventured to do to very bad purpose. And it well becomes us to suppose an infinite understanding may have ways of knowing things which we know nothing of. To my apprehension, that last-mentioned author doth with ill success attempt an explication of God's manner of knowing this sort of things, by the far less intelligible notion of the indivisibility of eternity, comprehending (as he says) all the parts of time, not successively, but together. And though he truly says that the Scotists' way of expressing how future contingents are present to God, i. e. according to their objective and intentional being only, affords us no account why God knows them; (for which cause he rejects it, and follows that of the Thomists, who will have them to be present according to their real and actual existence, I should yet prefer the deficiency of the former way, before the contradictiousness and repugnancy of the latter; and conceive those words in the Divine Dialogues,* as good an explication of the manner of his knowledge, as the case can admit, (which yet is but the Scotists' sense,) "That the whole evolution of times and ages is so collectedly and presentifickly represented to God at once, as if all things and actions which ever were, are, or shall be, were at this very instant, and so always really present and existent before him." Which is no wonder, the animadversion and intellectual comprehension of God being absolutely infinite, according to the truth of his idea. I do therefore think that a sober resolution in this matter, † "That it seems more safe to allow this privilege to the infinite understanding of God, than to venture at all to circumscribe his omniscience: for though it may safely be said that he knows not any thing that really implies a contradiction to be known, yet we are not assured but that may seem a contradiction to us, that is not so really in itself." And when we have only human wit to contest with in the case, reverence of this or

that man, though both in great vogue in that kind, needs not restrain us from distinguishing between a mere seeming latent contradiction, and a flat, downright open one. Only as to that instance of the commensurableness of the diagonal line of a quadrate to one of the sides; whereas though there are great difficulties on both sides, viz., that these are commensurable, and that they are not, yet any man's judgment would rather incline to the latter, as the easier part; I should therefore also think it more safe to make choice of that, as the parallel of the present difficulty. Upon the whole, we may conclude that the knowledge of God is every way perfect, and being so, extends to all our concernments: and that nothing remains, upon that account, to make us decline applying ourselves to religious converses with him, or to deny him the honour and entertainment of a temple; for which we shall yet see further cause, when we consider next,

IX. That his power is also omnipotent. Which (though the discourse of it have been somewhat mingled with that of the last) might be directly spoken of for the fuller eviction of that his conversableness with men, which religion and a temple do suppose. Nor indeed is it enough that he knows our concernments, except he can also provide effectually about them, and dispose of them to our advantage. And we cannot doubt but he, who could create us, and such a world as this, can do so, even though he were supposed not omnipotent. But even that itself seems a very unreasonable supposition, that less than infinite power should suffice to the creation of any thing. For however liable it may be to controversy, what a second cause might do herein, being assisted by the infinite power of the first; it seems altogether unimaginable to us, how, though the power of all men were met in one, (which we will easily suppose to be a very vast power,) it could, alone, be sufficient to make the minutest atom arise into being out of nothing. And that all the matter of the universe hath been so produced, viz. out of nothing, it will be no great presumption

to suppose already fully proved; in that though any such thing as necessary matter were admitted, yet its essential unalterableness would render it impossible it should be the matter of the universe. Therefore when we cannot devise what finite power can ever suffice (suppose we it never so much increased, but still finite) to the doing of that which we are sure is done, what is left us to suppose, but that the power which did it, is simply infinite: much more when we consider, not only that something is actually produced out of nothing, but do also seriously contemplate the nature of the production! Which carries so much of amazing wonder in it, every where, that even the least and most minute things might serve for sufficient instances of the unlimited greatness of that power which made them; as would be seen, if we did industriously set ourselves to compare the effects of divine power with those of human art and skill. As is the ingenious and pious observation of the most worthy Mr. Hooke,* who upon his viewing with his microscope the point of a small and very sharp needle, (than which we cannot conceive a smaller thing laboured by the hand of man,) takes notice of sundry sorts of natural things, "that have points many thousand times sharper; those of the hairs of insects, &c. that appearing broad, irregular, and uneven, having marks upon it, of the rudeness and bungling of art. So unaccurate (saith he) it is in all its productions, even in those that seem most neat, that if examined truly with an organ more acute than that by which they were made, the more we see of their shape the less appearance will there be of their beauty: whereas in the works of nature the deepest discoveries show us the greatest excellences: an evident argument that he, that was the Author of these things, was no other than omnipotent, being able to include as great a variety of parts, in the yet smallest discernible point, as in the vaster bodies, (which comparatively are called also points,) such as the earth, sun, or planets." And I may add, when

those appear but points, in comparison of his so much vaster work, how plainly doth that also argue to us the same thing?

And let us strictly consider the matter. Omnipotency, as hath been said, imports a power of doing all things possible to be done, or indeed, simply all things; unto which passive power, an active one must necessarily correspond; that is, there is nothing in itself possible to be done, but it is also possible to some one or other to do it. If we should therefore suppose God not omnipotent, it would follow some one or other were able to do more than God; for though possibility do import a non-repugnancy in the thing to be done; yet it also connotes an ability in some agent to do it: wherefore there is nothing possible which some agent cannot do. And if so, that agent must either be God, or some other. To say it is God, is what we intend: that is, there is nothing possible which God cannot do; or, he can do all things. But to say it is some other, and not God, were to open the door to the above-mentioned horrid consequence; which no one that acknowledges a God (and we are not now discoursing with them who simply deny his being) would not both blush and tremble to avow.

Some indeed have so overdone the business here as to deny any intrinsical possibility of any thing, and say that things are only said to be possible, because God can do them; which is the same thing as thus to explain God's omnipotency i. e. that he can do all things which he can do: and makes a chimera no more impossible in itself to be produced, than a not yet existent man. And the reason of the denial is, that what is only possible is nothing, and therefore can have nothing intrinsical to it: as if it were not sufficient to the intrinsical possibility of a thing, that its idea have no repugnancy in it. Yet entire and full possibility connotes a reference to the productive power of an agent; so that it is equally absurd to say that

things are only possible, because there is no repugnancy in their ideas, as it is to say they are only possible, because some agent can do them; inasmuch as the entire possibility of their existence imports both that there is no repugnancy in their ideas, which if there be, they are every way nothing, (as hath been said before,) and also that there is a sufficient power to produce them. Therefore, whereas we might believe him sufficient, every way for us, though we did not believe him simply omnipotent; how much more fully are we assured, when we consider that he is? Whereof also no place of doubt can remain, this being a most unquestionable perfection, necessarily included in the notion of an absolutely perfect Being. But here we need not further insist, having no peculiar adversary (in this matter singly) to contend with, as indeed he would have had a hard province, who should have undertaken to contend against omnipotency.

And now join herewith again, the boundlessness of his goodness, which upon the same ground of his absolute perfection, must be infinite also, and which it is of equal concernment to us to consider, that we may understand he not only can effectually provide about our concernments, but is most graciously inclined so to do. And then, what rational inducement is wanting to religion, and the dedication of a temple; if we consider the joint encouragement that arises from so unlimited power and goodness? Or what man would not become entirely devoted to him, who, by the one of these, we are assured,* can do all things, and by the other, will do what is best? Nor therefore is there anything immediately needful to our present purpose, (the eviction of God's conversableness with men,) more than hath been already said: that is, there is nothing else to be thought on, that hath any nearer influence thereon: the things that can be supposed to have such influence, being none else than his power, knowledge, and goodness, which have been particularly

evinced from the creation of the world, both to have been in some former subject, and to have all originally met in a necessary Being, that alone could be the Creator of it. Which necessary Being, as it is such, appearing also to be infinite, and absolutely perfect; the influence of these cannot but the more abundantly appear to be such as can, and may, most sufficiently and fully correspond, both in general to the several exigences of all creatures, and more especially to all the real necessities and reasonable desires of man: so that our main purpose seems already gained. Yet because it may be grateful when we are persuaded that things are so, to fortify (as much as we can) that persuasion; and because our persuasion concerning these attributes of God will be still liable to assault, unless we acknowledge him everywhere present; (nor can it well be conceivable, otherwise, how the influence of his knowledge, power, and goodness, can be so universal, as will be thought necessary to infer a universal obligation to religion;) it will be therefore requisite to add somewhat concerning his omnipresence, or because some, that love to be very strictly critical, will be apt to think that term restrictive of his presence to the universe, (as supposing to be present is relative to somewhat one may be said present unto, whereas, they will say, without the universe is nothing,) we will rather choose to call it immensity. For though it would sufficiently answer our purpose, that his presence be universal to all his creatures; yet even this is to be proved by such arguments as will conclude him simply immense; which therefore will, with the greater advantage, infer the thing we intend. This part of divine perfection we will acknowledge to have been impugned, by some that have professed much devotedness to a Deity and religion: we will therefore charitably suppose that opposition to have been joined with inadvertency of the ill tendency of it; that is, how unwarrantably it would maim the notion of the former, and shake the foundations of the latter. Nor therefore ought that charity to be any allay to a just zeal for so great concerns.

It seems then, first, manifestly repugnant to the notion of an infinitely perfect Being, to suppose it less than simply immense; for, upon that supposition, it must either be limited to some certain place, or excluded out of all. The latter of these would be most openly to deny it; as hath with irrefragable evidence been abundantly manifested by the most learned Dr. More,* whereto it would be needless and vain to attempt to add anything. Nor is that the thing pretended to by the sort of persons I now chiefly intend.

And for the former, I would inquire, Is amplitude of essence no perfection? Or were the confining of this Being to the very minutest space we can imagine, no detraction from the perfection of it? What if the amplitude of that glorious and ever-blessed Essence were said to be only of that extent (may it be spoken with all reverence, and resentment of the unhappy necessity we have of making so mean a supposition) as to have been confined unto that one temple to which of old he chose to confine his more solemn worship; that he could be essentially present, only here at once, and nowhere else; were this no detraction? They that think him only to replenish, and be present by his essence in, the highest heaven, (as some are wont to speak,) would they not confess it were a meaner and much lower thought, to suppose that presence circumscribed within the so unconceivably narrow limits as the walls of a house? If they would pretend to ascribe to him some perfection beyond this, by supposing his essential presence commensurable to the vaster territory of the highest heavens; even by the same supposition, should they deny to him greater perfection than they ascribe. For the perfection which in this kind they should ascribe, were finite only; but that which they should deny, were infinite.

Again, they will however acknowledge omnipotency a perfection included in the notion of an absolutely perfect Being; therefore they

will grant, he can create another world, (for they do not pretend to believe this infinite; and if they did, by their supposition, they should give away their cause) at any the greatest distance we can conceive from this; therefore so far his power can extend itself. But what, his power without his being? What then is his power? Something, or nothing? Nothing can do nothing; therefore not make a world. It is then some being, and whose being is it but his own? Is it a created being? That is to suppose him first, impotent, and then to have created omnipotency, when he could do nothing. Whence by the way we may see to how little purpose that distinction can be applied in the present case, of essential and virtual contact, where the essence and virtue cannot but be the same. But shall it be said, he must, in order to the creating such another world, locally move thither where he designs it? I ask then, But can he not at the same time create thousands of worlds at any distance from this round about it? No man can imagine this to be impossible to him that can do all things. Wherefore of such extent is his power, and consequently his being. Will they therefore say he can immensely, if he please, diffuse his being, but he voluntarily contracts it? It is answered, that is altogether impossible to a Being, that is whatsoever it is by a simple and absolute necessity; for whatsoever it is necessarily, it is unalterably and eternally, or is pure act, and in a possibility to be nothing which it already is not. Therefore since God can every way exert his power, he is necessarily, already, everywhere: and hence, God's immensity is the true reason of his immobility; there being no imaginable space, which he doth not necessarily replenish. Whence also, the supposition of his being so confined (as was said) is immediately repugnant to the notion of a necessary Being, as well as of an absolutely perfect, which hath been argued from it. We might moreover add, that upon the same supposition God might truly be said to have made a creature greater than himself, (for such this universe apparently were,) and that he can make one (as they must

confess who deny him not to be omnipotent) most unconceivably greater than this universe now is. Nothing therefore seems more manifest than that God is immense, or (as we may express it) extrinsically infinite, with respect to place; as well as intrinsically, in respect to the plenitude of his being and perfection. Only it may be requisite to consider briefly what is said against it by the otherwise minded, that pretend not to deny his infinity in that other sense. Wherein that this discourse swell not beyond just bounds, their strength of argument, (for it will not be so seasonable here to discuss with them the texts of scripture wont to be insisted on in this matter,) shall be viewed as it is collected and gathered up in one of them; and that shall be, Curcellæus,* who gives it as succinctly and fully as any I have met with of that sort of men. The doctrine itself we may take from him thus. First, on the negative part, by way of denial of what we have been hitherto asserting, he says, "The foundation," (that is, of a distinction of Maresius's to which he is replying, for so occasionally comes in the discourse,) "viz. the infinity of the divine essence, is not so firm as is commonly thought." And that therefore it may be thought less firm, he thinks fit to cast a slur upon it, by making it the doctrine of the Stoics, expressed by Virgil, *Jovis omnia plena*, (as if it must needs be false, because Virgil said it, though I could tell, if it were worth the while, where Virgil speaks more agreeably to his sense than ours, according to which he might as well have interpreted this passage, as divers texts of scripture; and then his authority might have been of some value;) and by Lucan, who helps, it seems, to disgrace and spoil it; *Jupiter est quodcunque vides, quocunque moveris*. He might, if he had a mind to make it thought Paganish, have quoted a good many more, but then there might have been some danger it should pass for a common notion. Next, he quotes some passages of the Fathers that import dislike of it, about which we need not concern ourselves; for the question is not what this or that man thought. And then, for the positive account of

his own judgment in the case, having recited divers texts out of the Bible that seemed, as he apprehended, to make against him, he would have us believe, that these all speak rather of God's providence and power by which he concerns himself in all our works, words, and thoughts, wheresoever we live, than of the absolute infinity of his essence. And afterwards,[†] That God is by his essence in the supreme heaven, where he inhabits the inaccessible light; but thence he sends out from himself a spirit, or a certain force, whither he pleases, by which he is truly present, and works there.

But we proceed to his reasons, which he saith are not to be contemned. We shall therefore not contemn them so far, as not to take notice of them; which trouble also the reader may please to be at, and afterward do as he think fit.

First, That no difference can be conceived between God and creatures, if God, as they commonly speak be wholly, in every point, or do fill all the points of the universe with his whole essence: for so whatsoever at all is, will be God himself.

Answ. And that is most marvellous, that the in-being of one thing in another must needs take away all their difference, and confound them each with other; which sure would much rather argue them distinct. For certainly it cannot, without great impropriety, be said that any thing is in itself; and is both the container and contained. How were these thoughts in his mind? And these very notions which he opposes to each other, so as not to be confounded with his mind, and consequently with one another; so that it is a great wonder he was not of both opinions at once? And how did he think his soul to be in his body, which, though substantially united with it, (and that is somewhat more, as we will suppose he knew was commonly held, that to be intimately present,) was not yet the same thing? However,

himself acknowledges the power and providence of God to be every where: and then at least every thing must, it seems, be the very power and providence of God. But he thought, it may be, only of confuting the words of Lucan, and chastising his poetic liberty. And if he would have been at the pains to turn all their strains and raptures into propositions, and so have gravely fallen to confuting them, he might perhaps have found as proper an exercise for his logic as this. As for his talk of a whole, whereof we acknowledge no parts, (as, if he imagined the divine essence to be compounded of such, he should have said so, and have proved it,) it is an absurd scheme of speech, which may be left to him, and them that use it, to make their best of.

Secondly, No Idolatry can be committed, if there be not the least point to be found, that is not wholly full of whole God: for whithersoever worship shall be directed, it shall be directed to God himself, who will be no less there than in heaven.

Answ. This proceeds upon the supposition that the former would be granted as soon as it should be heard, as a self-evident principle, that whatsoever is in another, is that in which it is; and so his consequence were most undeniable. But though we acknowledge God to be in every thing, yet so to worship him in any thing, as if his essential presence were confined thereto, while it ought to be conceived of as immense, this is idolatry: and therefore they who so conceive of it, as confined, (or tied in any respect, wherein he hath not so tied it himself,) are concerned to beware of running upon this rock.

Thirdly, Nor can the opinion of fanatics be solidly refuted, who call themselves spiritual, when they determine God to be all in all; to do not only good but evil things, because he is to be accounted to be

essentially in all the atoms of the world, in whole; and as a common soul, by which all the parts of the universe do act.

Answ. We may, in time, make trial whether they can be refuted or no, or whether any solid ground will be left for it; at this time it will suffice to say, that though he be present every where as a necessary Being, yet he acts as a free cause, and according as his wisdom, his good pleasure, his holiness and justice do guide his action.

Fourthly, So God will be equally present with the wicked, and with the holy and godly; with the damned in hell, and devils, as with the blessed in heaven, or Christ himself.

Answ. So he will, in respect of his essential presence. How he is otherwise (distinguishingly enough) present in his temple, we shall have occasion hereafter to show.

Fifthly, That I say not how shameful it is to think, that the most pure and holy God should be as much in the most nasty places as in heaven, &c. (I forbear to recite the rest of this uncleanly argument, which is strong in nothing but ill savour.) But for

Answ. How strange a notion was this of holiness, by which it is set in opposition to corporeal filthiness! As if a holy man should lose, or very much blemish, his sanctity, by a casual fall into a puddle! Indeed, if sense must give us measures of God, and everything must be reckoned an offence to him that is so to it, we shall soon frame to ourselves a God altogether such a one as ourselves. The Epicureans themselves would have been ashamed to reason or conceive thus of God, who tell us the Divine Being is as little capable of receiving a stroke, as the inane; and surely (in proportion) of any sensible offence. We might as well suppose him in danger, as Dr. More* fitly expresseth it, to be hurt with a thorn, as offended with an ill smell.

We have then enough to assure us of God's absolute immensity and omnipresence, and nothing of that value against it as ought to shake our belief herein. And surely the consideration of this, added to the other of his perfections, (and which tends so directly to facilitate and strengthen our persuasion concerning the rest) may render us assuredly certain, that we shall find him a conversable Being, if we seriously apply ourselves to converse with him, and will but allow him the liberty of that temple within us, whereof we are hereafter (with his leave and help) to treat more distinctly, and at large.

The Living Temple, Part II

A PREFACE

Showing the inducement and general contents of this Second Part. The occasion of considering Spinoza, and a French writer who pretends to confute him. A specimen of the way, and strength, of the former's reasoning, as an introduction to a more distinct examination of such of his positions, as the design of this discourse was more directly concerned in.

IT is not worth the while to trouble the reader with an account, why the progress of this work (begun many years ago, in a former Part) hath been so long delayed; or why it is now resumed. There are cases wherein things, too little for public notice, may be sufficient reasons to one's self: and such self-satisfaction is all that can be requisite, in a matter of no more importance than that circumstance only, of the

time of sending abroad a discourse, of such a nature and subject, as that, if it can be useful at any time, will be so at all times. The business of the present discourse, is RELIGION; which is not the concern of an age only, or of this or that time, but of all times; and which, in respect of its grounds and basis, is eternal, and can never cease or vary. But if in its use and exercise it do at any time more visibly languish by attempts against its foundations, an endeavour to establish them, if it be not altogether unfit to serve that purpose, will not be liable to be blamed as unseasonable. Every one will understand that a design further to establish the grounds of religion, can have no other meaning, than only to represent their stability unshaken by any attempts upon them; that being all that is either possible in this case, or needful. Nothing more is possible: for if there be not already, in the nature of things, a sufficient foundation of religion, it is now too late; for their course and order cannot begin again. Nor is anything, besides such a representation, needful: for have the adventures of daring wits (as they are fond of being thought) altered the nature of things? Or hath their mere breath thrown the world off from its ancient basis, and new-moulded the universe, so as to make things be after the way of their own hearts? Or have they prevailed upon themselves firmly to believe things are as they would wish?

One would be ashamed to be of that sort of creature, called MAN, and count it an insufferable reproach, to be long unresolved, Whether there ought to be such a thing in the world as religion, yea, or no. Whatever came of it, or whatsoever I did or did not besides, I would drive this business to an issue; I would never endure to be long in suspense about so weighty and important a question. But if I inclined to the negative, I would rest in nothing short of the plainest demonstration: for I am to dispute against mankind; and eternity hangs upon it! If I misjudge, I run counter to the common

sentiments of all the world, and I am lost for ever! The opposers of it have nothing but inclination to oppose to it, with a bold jest now and then. But if I consider the unrefuted demonstrations brought for it, with the consequences; religion is the last thing in all the world upon which I would adventure to break a jest. And I would ask such as have attempted to argue against it, Have their strongest arguments conquered their fear? Have they no suspicion left, that the other side of the question may prove true? They have done all they can, by often repeating their faint despairing wishes, and the mutterings of their hearts, "No God! no God!" to make themselves believe there is none; when yet the restless tossings to and fro of their uneasy minds; their tasking and torturing that little residue of wit and common sense, which their riot hath left them, (the excess of which latter, as well shows, as causes, the defect of the former,) to try every new method and scheme of atheism they hear of, implies their distrust of all; and their suspicion, that do what they can, things will still be as they were, i. e. most adverse and unfavourable to that way of living, which, however at a venture, they had before resolved on. Therefore they find it necessary to continue their contrivances, how more effectually to disburden themselves of any obligation to be religious; and hope, at least, some or other great wit may reach further than their own; and that either by some new model of thoughts, or by not thinking, it may be possible at length to argue or wink the Deity into nothing, and all religion out of the world.

And we are ready to do the age that right, as to acknowledge, the genius of it aims at more consistency and agreement with itself, and more cleverly to reconcile notions with common practice, than heretofore. Men seem to be grown weary of the old dull way of practising all manner of lewdnesses, and pretending to repent of them; to sin, and say they are sorry for it. The running this long-beaten circular tract of doing and repenting the same things, looks

ridiculously, and they begin to be ashamed of it. A less interrupted and more progressive course in their licentious ways, looks braver; and they count it more plausible to disbelieve this world to have any Ruler at all, than to suppose it to have such a one as they can cheat and mock with so easy and ludicrous a repentance, or reconcile to their wickedness, only by calling themselves wicked while they still mean to continue so. And perhaps of any other repentance they have not heard much; or if they have, they count it a more heroical, or feel it an easier thing to laugh away the fear of any future account or punishment, than to endure the severities of a serious repentance, and a regular life. Nor can they, however, think the torments of any hell so little tolerable as those of a sober and pious life upon earth; and for their happening to prove everlasting, they think they may run the hazard of that. For as they can make a sufficient shift to secure themselves from the latter sort of torments, so they believe the champions of their cause have taken sufficient care to secure them from the former.

As religion hath its gospel and evangelists, so hath atheism and irreligion too. There are tidings of peace sent to such as shall repent and turn to God: and there have been those appointed, whose business it should be to publish and expound them to the world. This also is the method for carrying on the design of irreligion. Doctrines are invented to make men fearless, and believe they need no repentance. And some have taken the part to assert and defend such doctrines, to evangelize the world, and cry "peace, peace," to men, upon these horrid terms. And these undertake for the common herd, encourage them to indulge themselves all manner of liberty, while they watch for them, and guard the coasts: and no faith was ever more implicit or resigned, than the infidelity and disbelief is, of the more unthinking sort of these men. They reckon it is not every one's part to think. It is enough for the most to be boldly wicked, and

credit their common cause, by an open contempt of God and religion. The other warrant them safe, and confidently tell them they may securely disbelieve all that ever hath been said to make a religious regular life be thought necessary, as only invented frauds of sour and ill-natured men, that envy to mankind the felicity whereof their nature hath made them capable, and which their own odd preternatural humour makes them neglect and censure.

And for these defenders of the atheistical cause, it being their part and province to cut off the aids of reason from religion; to make it seem an irrational and a ridiculous thing, and to warrant and justify the disuse and contempt of it; and, as it were, to cover the siege, wherewith the common rout have begirt the temple of God; they have had less leisure themselves to debauch and wallow in more grossly sensual impurities. Herewith the thinking part did less agree: and they might perhaps count it a greater thing to make debauchees than to be such, and reckon it was glory enough to them to head and lead on the numerous throng, and pleasure enough to see them they had so thoroughly disciplined to the service, throw dirt and squibs at the sacred pile, the dwelling of God among men on earth, and cry, Down with it even to the ground. Nor for this sort of men, whose business was only to be done by noise and clamour, or by jest and laughter, we could think them no more fit to be discoursed with than a whirlwind, or an ignis fatuus: but for such as have assumed to themselves the confidence to pretend to reason, it was not fit they should have cause to think themselves neglected. Considering, therefore, that if the existence of a Deity were fully proved, (i. e. such as must be the fit object of religion, or of the honour of a temple,) all the little cavils against it must signify nothing, (because the same thing cannot be both true and false,) we have, in the former part of this discourse, endeavoured to assert so much in an argumentative way: and therefore first laid down such a notion of God, as even

atheists themselves, while they deny him to exist, cannot but grant to be the true notion of the thing they deny; viz. summarily, that he can be no other than a Being absolutely perfect; and thereupon next proceeded to evince the existence of such a Being. And whereas this might have been attempted in another method, as was noted Part 1, Ch. 2, by concluding the existence of such a Being first from the idea of it, which (as a fundamental perfection) involves existence, yea, and necessity of existence, most apparently in it:—because that was clamoured at as sophistical and captious, (though very firm unsliding steps might, with caution, be taken in that way,*) yet we rather chose the other as plainer, more upon the square, more easily intelligible and convictive, and less liable to exception in any kind; i. e. rather to begin at the bottom, and rise from necessity of existence, to absolute perfection, than to begin at the top, and prove downward, from absolute perfection, necessity of existence.

Now, if it do appear from what hath been said concerning the nature of necessary, self-existing being, that it cannot but be absolutely perfect, even as it is such; since nothing is more evident than that some being or other doth exist necessarily, or of itself, our point is gained without more ado: i. e. we have an object of religion, or one to whom a temple duly belongs. We thereupon used some endeavour to make that good, and secure that more compendious way to our end; as may be seen in the former Part: which was endeavoured as it was a nearer and more expeditious course; not that the main cause of religion did depend upon the immediate and self-evident reciprocal connexion of the terms, necessary existence, and absolute perfection, as we shall see hereafter in the following discourse: but because there are other hypotheses, that proceed either upon the denial of any necessary Being that is absolutely perfect, or upon the assertion of some necessary Being that is not absolutely perfect, it hence appears requisite to undertake the examination of what is said to either of

these purposes, and to show with how little pretence a necessary most perfect Being is denied, or any such imperfect necessary being, is either asserted or imagined.

We shall, therefore, in this Second Part,

First, take into consideration what is (with equal absurdity and impiety) asserted, by one author, of the identity of all substance; of the impossibility of one substance's being produced by another; and, consequently, of one necessary self-existing Being, pretended with gross self-repugnancy, to be endued with infinite perfections, but really represented the common receptacle of all imaginable imperfection and confusion:

Next, what is asserted by another in avowed opposition to him, of a necessary self-existent being, that is at the same time said to be essentially imperfect.

Then we shall recapitulate what had been discoursed in the former Part, for proof of such a necessarily existent and absolutely perfect Being as is there asserted:

Thence we shall proceed to show how reasonably scripture testimony is to be relied upon, in reference to some things concerning God and the religion of his temple, which either are not so clearly demonstrable, or not at all discoverable, the rational way.

And shall, lastly, show how it hath come to pass, if God be such as he hath been represented, so capable of a temple with man, so apt and inclined to inhabit such a one, that he should ever not do so; or how such a temple should ever cease, or be uninhabited and desolate, that the known way of its restitution may be the more regardable and marvellous in our eyes.

The authors against whom we are to be concerned, are Benedictus Spinoza, a Jew, and an anonymous French writer who pretends to confute him. And the better to prepare our way, we shall go on to preface something concerning the former, viz. Spinoza, whose scheme,* though, with great pretence of devotion, it acknowledges a Deity, yet so confounds this his fictitious Deity, with every substantial being in the world besides, that upon the whole it appears altogether inconsistent with any rational exercise, or sentiment, of religion at all. And indeed, the mere pointing with the finger at the most discernible and absurd weakness of some of his principal supports, might be sufficient to overturn his whole fabric; though perhaps he thought the fraudulent artifice of contriving it geometrically must confound all the world, and make men think it not liable to be attacked in any part.

But whether it can, or no, we shall make some present trial; and for a previous essay, (to show that he is not invulnerable, and that his scales do not more closely cohere, than those of his brother-leviathan,) do but compare his definition of an attribute,* "That which the understanding perceives of substance; as constituting the essence thereof," with his fifth Proposition; "There cannot be two, or more, substances of the same nature, or attribute;" which is as much as to say that two substances cannot be one and the same substance. For the attribute of any substance (saith he) constitutes its essence; whereas the essence therefore of one thing, cannot be the essence of another thing, if such an attribute be the essence of one substance, it cannot be the essence of another substance. A rare discovery! and which needed mathematical demonstration! Well, and what now? Nothing it is true can be plainer, if by the same attribute or nature, he means numerically the same; it only signifies one thing is not another thing. But if he means there cannot be two things or

substances, of the same special or general nature, he hath his whole business yet to do; which, how he does, we shall see in time.

But now compare herewith his definition of what he thinks fit to dignify with the sacred name of God: † By God (saith he) I understand a being absolutely infinite; i. e. a substance consisting of infinite attributes, every one whereof expresses an infinite essence; and behold the admirable agreement! how amicably his definition of an attribute, and that mentioned proposition, accord with this definition (as he calls it) of God! There cannot be two substances, he saith, that have the same attribute, i. e. the same essence. But now it seems the same substance may have infinite attributes, i. e. infinite essences! O yes, very conveniently: for, he tells you that two attributes, really distinct, we cannot conclude do constitute two divers substances.‡ And why do they not? Because it belongs to the nature of substance, that each of its attributes be conceived by itself, &c. Let us consider his assertion, and his reason for it. He determines, you see, two really distinct attributes do not constitute two divers substances. You must not here take any other men's notion of an attribute, according to which, there may be accidental attributes, that, we are sure, would not infer diversity of substances for their subjects; or, there may be also essential ones, that only flow from the essence of the thing to which they belong; so, too, nobody doubts one thing may have many properties. But we must take his own notion of an attribute, according whereto it constitutes, or (which is all one) is, that very essence. Now will not such attributes as these, being really distinct, make divers substances? Surely, what things are essentially diverse must be concluded to be most diverse. But these attributes are by himself supposed to be really distinct, and to constitute (which is to be) the essence of the substance. And how is that one thing, or one substance, which hath many essences? If the

essence of a thing be that, by which it is what it is, surely the plurality of essences must make a plurality of things.

But it may be said, Cannot one thing be compounded of two or more things essentially diverse, as the soul and body of a man; whence therefore, the same thing, viz. a man, will have two essences? This is true but impertinent; for the very notion of composition signifies these are two things united, not identified, that are capable of being again separated; and that the third thing, which results from them both united, contains them still distinct from one another, not the same.

But it may be said, though these attributes are acknowledged, and asserted to be distinct from one another, they are yet found in one and the same substance common to them all. And this no more ought to be reckoned repugnant to common reason, than the philosophy heretofore in credit, which taught that the vast diversity of forms throughout the universe, which were counted so many distinct essences, do yet all reside in the same first matter, as the common receptacle of them all.

Nor yet doth this salve the business, were that philosophy never so sure and sacred. For you must consider, he asserts an attribute is that which constitutes the essence of the substance in which it is: but that philosophy never taught the forms lodged in the same common matter were its essence, though they were supposed to essentiate the composita, which resulted from their union therewith. Yea, it did teach they were so little the essence of that common matter, that they might be expelled out of it, and succeeded by new ones, and yet the matter which received them still remain the same. But that an attribute should be supposed to be the essence of the substance to which it belongs; and that another superadded attribute, which is

also the essence of substance, should not make another substance essentially distinct, is an assertion as repugnant to common sense, as two and two make not four. But that which completes the jest, (though a tremendous one upon so awful a subject,) is, that this author should so gravely tell the world, They who are not of his sentiment, being ignorant of the causes of things, confound all things; imagine trees and men speaking alike, confound the divine nature with the human, &c.* Who would imagine this to be the complaining voice of one so industriously labouring to mingle heaven and earth! and to make God, and men, and beasts, and stones, and trees, all one and the same individual substance!

And now let us consider the reason of that assertion of his;† why two attributes really distinct, do not constitute two beings, or two distinct substances; because, saith he, it is of the nature of substance that each of its attributes be conceived by itself, &c. A marvellous reason! Divers attributes, each whereof, as before, constitutes the essence of substance, do not make divers substances; because those attributes may be conceived apart from each other, and are not produced by one another. It was too plain to need a proof, (as was observed before,) that there cannot be two substances of one attribute, or of one essence, (as his notion of an attribute is,) i. e. two are not one. But that two attributes, or essences of substance, cannot make two substances because they are diverse, is very surprisingly strange. This was (as Cicero upon as good an occasion speaks) not to consider, but cast lots what to say. And it deserves observation too, how well this assertion, That two distinct attributes do not constitute two distinct substances, agrees with that,* Two substances having divers attributes, have nothing common between them. This must certainly suppose the diversity of attributes to make the greatest diversity of substances imaginable, when they admit not there should

be anything (not the least thing) common between them! And yet they make not distinct substances!

But this was only to make way for what was to follow, the overthrow of the creation. A thing he was so over intent upon, that in the heat of his zeal and haste he makes all fly asunder before him, and overturns even his own batteries as fast as he raises them; says and unsays, does and undoes, at all adventures. Here two substances are supposed having distinct attributes, that is, distinct essences, to have therefore nothing common between them; and yet presently after, though two, or never so many, distinct attributes, give unto substance two, or never so many distinct essences, yet they shall not be so much as two, but one only. For to the query put by himself, By what sign one may discern the diversity of substances? he roundly answers,[†] The following propositions would show there was no other substance but one, and that one infinite; and therefore how substances were to be diversified would be inquired in vain. Indeed, it would be in vain, if knowing them to have different essences, we must not yet call them different substances. But how "the following propositions" do show there can be no more than one substance, we shall see in time. We shall for the present take leave of him, until we meet him again in the following DISCOURSE.

CHAPTER VII

Wherein is shown the destructiveness of Spinosas scheme and design to religion and the temple of God. The repugnancy of his doctrine to this assertion—That whatsoever exists necessarily and of

itself, is absolutely perfect; which is therefore further weighed. His vain attempt to prove what he designs. His second proposition considered. His definition of a substance defective. Proves not his purpose. His third, fourth, and fifth, proposition. His eighth Scholium. The *manuductio ad pantosophiam*.

HITHERTO we have discoursed only of the Owner of this Temple, and shown to whom it rightfully belongs; viz. That there is one only necessary, self-existing, and most absolutely perfect Being, the glorious and ever-blessed God; who is capable of our converse, and inclined thereto; whom we are to conceive as justly claiming a temple with us, and ready, upon our willing surrender, to erect in us, or repair, such a one, make it habitable, to inhabit and replenish it with his holy and most delectable presence, and converse with us therein suitably to himself and us; i. e. to his own excellency and fulness, and to our indigency and wretchedness. And now the order of discourse would lead us to behold the sacred structure rising, and view the surprising methods by which it is brought about that any such thing should have place in such a world as this. But we must yield to stay, and be detained a little by some things of greater importance than merely the more even shape and order of a discourse; that is, looking back upon what hath been much insisted on in the former Part—That some being or other doth exist necessarily and of itself, which is of absolute or universal perfection—and taking notice of the opposite sentiments of some hereto; because the whole design of evincing an object of religion would manifestly be much served hereby, we could not but reckon it of great importance to consider what is said against it. We have observed in the Preface a two-fold opposite hypothesis, which therefore, before we go further in the discourse of this temple of God, require to be discussed.

I. The first is that of Spinoza, which he hath more expressly stated, and undertaken with great pomp and boast to demonstrate, in his Posthumous Ethics; which we shall therefore so far consider, as doth concern our present design. He there, as hath been noted in the Preface, asserts all "substance to be self-existent, and to be infinite; that one substance is improducible by another; that there is but one, and this one he calls God," &c.

Now this horrid scheme of his, though he and his followers would cheat the world with names, and with a specious show of piety, is as directly levelled against all religion, as any the most avowed atheism: for, as to religion, it is all one whether we make nothing to be God, or every thing; whether we allow of no God to be worshipped, or leave none to worship him. His portentous attempt to identify and deify all substance, attended with that strange pair of attributes, extension and thought, (and an infinite number of others besides,) hath a manifest design to throw religion out of the world that way.

II. And it most directly opposes the notion of a self-existent Being, which is absolutely perfect: for such a being must be a substance, if it be any thing; and he allows no substance but one, and therefore none to be perfect, unless all be so. And since we are sure some is imperfect, it will be consequent there is none absolutely perfect; for that the same should be imperfect, and absolutely perfect, is impossible. Besides that, he makes it no way possible to one substance to produce another, and what is so impotent must be very imperfect: yea, and whatsoever is not omnipotent, is evidently not absolutely perfect. We are therefore cast upon reconsidering this proposition—Whatsoever being exists necessarily and of itself, is absolutely perfect. It is true that if any being be evinced to exist necessarily and of itself, which is absolutely perfect, this gives us an object of religion, and throws Spinoza's farrago, his confused heap

and jumble of self-existent being, into nothing. But if we carry the universal proposition as it is laid down, though that will oblige us afterwards as well to confute his French confuter, as him, it carries the cause of religion with much the greater clearness, and with evident, unexceptionable self-consistency. For indeed that being cannot be understood to be absolutely perfect, which doth not eminently comprehend the entire fulness of all being in itself; as that must be an heap of imperfection, an everlasting chaos, an impossible self-repugnant medley, that should be pretended to contain all the varieties, the diversifications, compositions, and mixtures of things in itself formally. And for the universal proposition, the matter itself requires not an immediate, self-evident, reciprocal connexion of the terms—necessarily self-existent, and absolutely perfect;—it is enough that it however be brought about by gradual steps, in a way that at length cannot fail; and I conceive hath been in the method that was followed in the former Part.

For, to bring the business now within as narrow a compass as is possible: nothing is more evident than that some Being exists necessarily, or of itself; otherwise nothing at all could now exist. Again, for the same reason, there is some necessary or self-existent Being that is the cause of whatsoever being exists not of itself; otherwise, nothing of that kind could ever come into being. Now that necessary Being, which is the cause of all other being, will most manifestly appear to be absolutely perfect; for, if it be universally causative of all other being, it must both have been the actual cause of all being that doth actually exist, and can only be the possible cause of all that is possible to exist. Now so universal a cause can be no other than an absolutely, or universally, perfect being; for it could be the cause of nothing, which it did not virtually, or formally, comprehend in itself. And that Being which comprehends in itself all perfection, both actual and possible, must be absolutely or

universally perfect. And such a Being, as hath also further more particularly been made apparent, must be an intelligent and a designing agent, or cause; because, upon the whole universe of produced beings, there are most manifest characters of design, in the passive sense. They are designed to serve ends to which they have so direct and constant an aptitude, as that the attempt to make it be believed they were forced or fell into that posture of subserviency to such and such ends, by any pretended necessity upon their principal cause or causes, or by mere casualty, looks like the most ludicrous trifling to any man of sense: and, because that among produced beings there are many that are themselves actively designing, and that do understandingly intend and pursue ends; and consequently that they themselves must partake of an intelligent, spiritual nature, since mere matter is most manifestly incapable of thought or design; and further, by the most evident consequence, that their productive Cause, viz. the necessary, self-existing Being, whereto all other things owe themselves, must be a Mind or Spirit; inasmuch as to suppose any effect to have any thing more of excellency in it than the cause from whence it proceeded, is to suppose all that excellency to be effected without a cause, or to have arisen of itself out of nothing. See former Part, Chap.III. Sect. 12, &c.

Therefore if it did not immediately appear that necessary being, as such, is absolutely perfect being, yet, by this series of discourse, it appears the main cause of religion is still safe; inasmuch as that necessary Being which is the cause of all things else, is however evinced to be an absolutely perfect Being, and particularly a necessary self-existent Mind or Spirit, which is therefore a most apparently fit and most deserving object of religion, or of the honour of a temple; which is the sum of what we were concerned for. Nor needed we be solicitous, but that the unity or onliness of the necessary Being, would afterwards be made appear, as also we think

it was. For since the whole universe of produced being must arise out of that which was necessary self-existent Being, it must therefore comprehend all being in itself; its own formally, and eminently all other; i. e. what was its own, being formally its own, must be eminently also all being else contained, in all possible simplicity, within the productive power of its own. This Being therefore, containing in itself all that exists necessarily, with the power of producing all the rest, which together make up all being, can primarily be but one, inasmuch as there can be but one all. Upon the whole therefore, our general proposition is sufficiently evident, and out of question—That whatever exists necessarily, and of itself, is absolutely perfect. Nor is it at all incongruous that this matter should be thus argued out, by such a train and deduction of consequences, drawn from effects that come under our present notice; for how come we to know that there is any self-existing Being at all, but that we find there is somewhat in being that is subject to continual mutation, and which therefore exists not necessarily, (for whatsoever is what it is necessarily, can never change, or be other than what it is,) but must be caused by that which is necessary and self-existent? Nothing could be more reasonable or more certain than the deduction from what appears of excellency and perfection in such being as is caused; of the correspondent, and far-transcendent excellency and perfection of its Cause. But yet, after all this, if one set himself attentively to consider, there must appear so near a connexion between the very things themselves, self-existence and absolute perfection, that it can be no easy matter to conceive them separately.

Self-existence! Into how profound an abyss is a man cast at the thought of it! How doth it overwhelm and swallow up his mind and whole soul! With what satisfaction and delight must he see himself comprehended of what he finds he can never comprehend! For

contemplating the self-existent Being, he finds it eternally, necessarily, never-not existing! He can have no thought of the self-existing Being, as such,* but as always existing, as having existed always, as always certain to exist. Inquiring into the spring and source of this Being's existence, Whence is it that it doth exist? His own notion of a self-existing Being, which is not arbitrarily taken up, but which the reason of things hath imposed upon him, gives him his answer, and it can be no other, in that it is a self-existent Being; it hath it of itself, that it doth exist. It is an eternal, everlasting, Spring and Fountain of perpetually-existent being to itself. What a glorious excellency of being is this! What can this mean, but the greatest remoteness from nothing that is possible; i. e. the most absolute fulness and plenitude of all being and perfection? And whereas all caused being, as such, is, to every man's understanding, confined within certain limits; what can the uncaused self-existent Being be, but most unlimited, infinite, all-comprehending, and most absolutely perfect? Nothing therefore can be more evident, than that the self-existent Being must be the absolutely perfect Being.

And again, if you simply convert the terms, and let this be the proposition,—That the absolutely-perfect Being is the self-existent Being—it is most obvious to every one, that the very notion of an absolutely perfect Being carries necessity of existence, or self-existence, in it; which the notion of nothing else doth. And indeed one great master* of this argument for the existence of God, hath himself told me, That though when he had puzzled divers atheists with it they had been wont to quarrel at it, as sophistical and fallacious, he could never meet with any that could detect the sophism, or tell where any fallacy in it lay; and that upon the whole, he relied upon it as most solid and firm. And I doubt not but it may be managed with that advantage as to be very clearly concluding; yet, because I reckoned the way I have taken more clear, I chose it rather.

But finding that so near cognation and reciprocal connexion between the terms both ways, I reckoned this short representation hereof, annexed to the larger course of evincing the same thing, might add no unuseful strength to it; and doubt not to conclude, upon the whole, that—whatsoever Being exists necessarily, and of itself, is absolutely perfect—and can, therefore, be no other than an intelligent Being; i. e. an infinite, eternal Mind, and so a most fit, and the only fit deserving object of religion, or of the honour of a temple.

III. But now, be all this never so plain, it will, by some, be thought all false, if they find any man to have contrivance enough to devise come contrary scheme of things, and confidence enough to pretend to prove it till that proof be detected of weakness and vanity, which must first be our further business with Spinoso. And not intending to examine particularly the several parts and junctures of his model, inasmuch as I find his whole design is lost, if he fail of evincing these things,—That it belongs to all substance, as such, to exist of itself, and be infinite—And, (which will be sufficiently consequent hereupon,) That substance is but one, and that it is impossible for one substance to produce another; I shall only attend to what he more directly says to this effect, and shall particularly apply myself to consider such of his propositions as more immediately respect this his main design: for they will bring us back to the definitions and axioms, or other parts of his discourse, whereon those are grounded, and even into all the darker and more pernicious recesses of his labyrinth; so as every thing of importance to the mentioned purpose will be drawn under our consideration, as this thread shall lead us.

His first Proposition we let pass; "That a substance is, in order of nature, before its affections;" having nothing applicable to his purpose in it, which we shall not otherwise meet with.

His second, "That two substances, having divers attributes, have nothing common between them;" or, which must be all one, do agree in nothing, I conceive it will be no great presumption to deny. And since he is pleased herein to be divided from himself, it is a civility to his later and wiser self to do so, who will afterwards have substance, having a multitude of distinct attributes, i. e. essences,* and which therefore cannot but be manifold, to have every thing common. So little hath he common with himself.

And it will increase the obligation upon him, to deliver him from the entanglement of his demonstration, as he calls it, of this proposition; as I hope we shall also of the other too, for no doubt they are both false. Of this proposition his demonstration is fetched from his third definition, viz. of a substance, "That which is in itself, and conceived by itself, i. e. whose conception needs the conception of nothing else, whereby it ought to be formed;" so is his definition defined over and over.

We are here to inquire, 1st. Into his definition of a substance: and, 2ndly, Whether it sufficiently prove his proposition.

IV. First, For his definition of a substance. He himself tells us,† "a definition ought to express nothing but the simple nature of the thing defined;" and we may as well expect it distinctly to express that. Doth this definition express the simple nature of a substance, That which is in itself, when it is left to divination what is meant by is, whether essence, or existence, or subsistence? And when we are to be at as random a guess, what is intended by being in itself;—whether being only contained, or being also sustained in, and by, or of itself? And supposing this latter to be meant, whether that self-subsistence exclude dependence only on another, as a subject, which we acknowledge true of all substance; or dependence as on an efficient,

which if he will have to be taken for true of all, he was in reason to expect it should be so taken from his effectual proof, not from the reverence of his authority only: for what he adds, "And that is conceived by itself; and whose conception needs not the conception of any other thing by which it ought to be formed;"—would he have us believe this to be true, when afterward his tenth proposition is, "That every attribute of substance ought to be conceived by itself?" Whereupon then so many attributes, so many substances, it being the nature of a substance to be conceived by itself?

V. But passing from his notion of a substance, let us consider, secondly, how it proves his proposition, that "two substances, having different attributes, have nothing common between them." According to him, every attribute of substance is to be conceived by itself, and yet have one and the same substance common to them all: therefore the distinct conception of things is, even with him, no reason why they should have nothing common between them. But as to the thing itself, he must have somewhat more enforcing than his definition of a substance, to prove that two (or many) individual substances may not have the same special nature common to them, and yet be conceived by themselves, having different individual natures or attributes; or different special natures, having the same general nature: yea, and an equal dependence on the same common cause, which is less ingredient into the conception of a thing, than the general or special nature is. And, I doubt not, we shall find he hath not disproved but that there is somewhat, in a true sense, common to them and their cause, that is of a conception much more vastly different from them both.

Whereupon, it is necessary to take distinct notice of his third Proposition, "What things have nothing common between them, of them the one cannot be the cause of the other." In which nothing is

to be peculiarly animadverted on, besides the contradiction in the very terms wherein it is proposed, What things have nothing common between them. How can they be things, and have nothing common between them? If they be things, they have sure the general notion of things common to them; there can therefore be no such things, that have nothing common. And let this be supposed to have been absurdly set down on purpose; yet now, for his demonstration hereof, it rests upon a palpable falsehood—that causes and effects must be mutually understood by one another; as we shall see more hereafter. His fourth we let pass; what it hath regardable in it being as fitly to be considered under the fifth:—

VI. "There cannot be two or more substances, in the whole universe, of the same nature or attribute;" unto which, besides what hath been said already, we need only here to add, that (whereas he hath told us, by the attribute of a substance, he means the essence of it) if he here speak of the same numerical essence or attribute, it is ridiculously true; and is no more than if he had said, One thing is but one thing. If he speak of the same special, or general, attribute or essence, it is as absurdly false; and for the proof of it, in the latter sense, his demonstration signifies nothing. There may be more than one (as a stone, a tree, an animal) that agree in the same general attribute of corporeity, and are diversified by their special attributes; and there may be many of the same special attribute, (viz. of rationality,) as John, Peter, Thomas, &c. that are distinguished by their individual ones. He might as well prove, by the same method, the identity of his modi, as of substances; as that there can be but one individual triangle in all the world of one attribute or property, as but one substance. Let (for instance) one at Paris, another at Vienna, a third at Rome, a fourth at London, describe each an equilateral triangle of the same dimensions, or in a thousand places besides; each one of these do only make one and the same numerical triangle, because

they have each the same attribute! But how are the attributes of these several triangles the same? What! the same numerically? Then indeed they are all the same numerical triangle; for one and the same numerical essence makes but one and the same numerical thing. But who that is in his right wits would say so? And if it be only said they have all attributes of one and the same kind, what then is consequent, but that they are all triangles of one kind? Which who in his right wits will deny? And if the attribute of a substance be that which constitutes its essence, the attribute of anything else is that which constitutes its essence. See then how far Spinoza hath advanced with his demonstration of the identity of substance! If he prove not all substance to be numerically the same, he hath done nothing to his purpose. And it is now obvious to every eye how effectually he hath done that. Whence also, it is further equally evident, his demonstration dwindles into nothing; and gives no support to,

VII. His sixth Proposition, which contains the malignity of his whole design, viz. "That one substance cannot be produced by another substance," which rests (as you see) partly upon the fifth, "That there cannot be two substances of the same attribute," which in his sense is, as hath been shown, most absurdly false, and the attempt of proving it as absurd; partly upon his second, "That two substances, of different attributes, have nothing common between them," which might be said of whatsoever else, as truly as of substances, but which is also most evidently untrue; and, partly, upon his third, "That such things as have nothing common between them, the one of them cannot be the cause of the other," which depends upon two false suppositions,—"That there can be two things, which have nothing common between them;" which, as hath been noted, contradicts itself, and needs not be further stood upon. 2nd. "That whatsoever things are cause and effect, the one to the other, must be mutually

understood by one another," which we shall here more distinctly consider, it being also his second demonstration of the corollary of this his sixth proposition, (which nothing but a disposition to trifle, or having nothing to say, could have made him mention as a corollary from this proposition, it being in effect but a repetition of the same thing,) viz. "That if one substance can be produced by another, (agent, or substance, which you please,) the knowledge of it must depend upon the knowledge of its cause, (by the fourth axiom,) and thereupon (by definition third) it should not be a substance."

We are here to consider, First, this his fourth Axiom, "That the knowledge of an effect depends upon the knowledge of its cause, and doth involve it." An effect may be considered two ways; absolutely, as it is in itself; or relatively, as it is the effect of an efficient cause. It cannot, it is true, be understood to be the effect of such an efficient, but the knowledge that this was its efficient is involved therein; for it is the same thing, and so much may be known without knowing anything of the nature of either the efficient or effect. But this signifies nothing to his purpose. He must therefore mean, that the knowledge of an effect absolutely considered, and in its own nature, depends upon and involves the knowledge of the nature of its efficient. Surely the nature of a thing may be competently known by its true definition. But is the efficient cause wont to be universally put into definitions? He tells us himself (Scholium 2 upon proposition 8) "A true definition contains, or expresses, nothing, besides the mere nature of the thing defined." And let any man that thinks it worth it, be at the pains to examine his own definitions in the several parts of this ethico-geometrical tract, and see whether he always puts the efficient cause into every definition: and (no doubt) he thought himself to define accurately. If all other men, who have so generally reckoned the efficient and end, external causes, and only matter and form internal and ingredient into the nature of things,

and, therefore, only fit to be put into definitions, were thought by him mistaken and out in their reckoning, it was however neither modest nor wise to lay down for an axiom a thing so contrary to the common sentiment of mankind; and, without the least attempt to prove it, go about to demonstrate by it, in so portentous a cause, and lay the whole weight of his horrid cause upon it; expecting all the world should be awed into an assent, by the authority of his bare word; and not presume to disbelieve or doubt it, only because he is pleased to stamp the magisterial name of an axiom upon it. If therefore any man assume the boldness to deny his axiom, what is become of his demonstration? And whereas it is commonly apprehended, that definitions are not of individual things, but of special kinds, and is acknowledged by himself,* "That the essence of things produced by God, involves not existence; and the production of a thing is nothing else but the putting it into actual existence;" why may not the abstract essence, or nature of things, be well enough conceived and defined, without involving the conception of their productive cause? And this enough shows, Secondly, That his definition of a substance proves not that one substance cannot be produced by another, viz. That which can be conceived by itself, for so it may, without involving the conception of that which produces it; and so be a substance sufficiently according to his definition. Though there can be no inconveniency in admitting that things, understood apart by themselves, may be afterwards further and more clearly understood, by considering and comparing them in the habitudes and references which they bear as causes and effects (or otherwise) to one another. And now is his

VIII. Seventh proposition, "That it belongs to the nature of substance to exist," which is so great a pillar, left itself without support; and being understood of substance as such, as his terms and design require it to be, it is manifestly impious, communicating the most

fundamental attribute of the Deity, to all substance. And it is as little befriended by reason, as it befriends religion; for it rests upon nothing but the foregoing baffled proposition: and this definition* of that which is its own cause, which is, "That whose essence involves existence, or which cannot be conceived otherwise than as existing," whereas it is sufficiently plain we have a conception clear enough of the general nature of a substance as such, abstracted from existence, or non-existence, conceiving it only to be such as, if it exist, doth subsist in and by itself, i. e. without having a subject to support it; though it may be such as to have needed a productive, and continually to need a sustaining efficient, cause. Nor is there less clearness in this abstract conception of a substance, than there is in that of a modus, or accident, which we may conceive in an equal abstraction from actual existence or non-existence; understanding it to be such as that if it exist, it doth inexist, or exist only in another.

And now is our way sufficiently prepared to the consideration of his 8th proposition, "That all substance is necessarily infinite." And how is it demonstrated? Why, by his 5th proposition,— "That there can be but one substance, of one and the same attribute,"—which hath been sufficiently unravelled and exposed, so as not to be left capable of signifying anything here, as the reader will see by looking back to what hath been said upon it. And now it must quite sink, its next reliance failing it, viz. the foregoing 7th proposition,— "That it belongs to it, to exist necessarily." I grant the consequence to be good, and reckon it a truth of great evidence and concernment, "That whatsoever exists necessarily, is infinite." I heartily congratulate Spinoza's acknowledgment of so very clear and important an assertion; and do hope, as in the foregoing discourse I have made some, to make further, good use of it. But for what he assumes, that all substance necessarily exists; you see it rests upon nothing, and so consequently doth what he would conclude from it, that all substance

is infinite. And his further proof of it avails as little, viz. that it cannot be finite, because (by his 2nd definition) if it be so, it must be limited by something of the same nature, &c. Which would be absurd by proposition 5,—“That there cannot be two substances of the same attribute:” for that there be two, of the same individual attribute, to bound one another, is unnecessary (as well as impossible) and absurdly supposed for this purpose. For if there were two of the same individual nature and attribute, they would not bound one another, but run into one; inasmuch as having but one attribute, they should, according to him, have but one and the same essence, and so be most entirely one; and that there cannot be two, or many times two, of the same special or general nature, is unproved; and the contrary most evident, as may be seen in what hath been said upon that 5th proposition.

IX. No man needs wish an easier task, than it would be to show the falsehood or impertinency of his Scholia upon this proposition, and of his following discourse to the purpose above mentioned. But I reckon it unnecessary, his principal supports being (I will not say overthrown, but) discovered to be none at all. I shall therefore follow his footsteps no further, only take notice of some few things that have a more direct aspect upon his main design, and make all the haste I can to take leave of him, that I may be at liberty to pursue my own. What is in his first Scholium follows, he says, only upon his 7th proposition, which itself follows upon nothing; and, therefore, I further regard it not. His 2nd Scholium would have his 7th proposition pass for a common notion; and so it will, when he hath inspired all mankind with his sentiments. But why must it do so? Because substance is that which is in itself, and is conceived by itself. Now compare that with his 10th proposition,—“Every attribute of substance ought to be conceived by itself.” There the definition of substance, is given to every attribute of substance; therefore, every

attribute of substance is a substance, since the definition of substance* to which he refers us in the demonstration of that proposition, agrees to it; therefore, so many attributes, so many substances. What can be plainer? We have then his one substance multiplied into an infinite number of substances; by his 6th definition we shall see his own confession of this consequence by and by.

And whereas in this Scholium he would make us believe, that modifications, men may conceive as not existing, but substances they cannot: let the reason of this assigned difference be considered: "That by substance they must understand that which is in itself, and is conceived by itself, its knowledge not needing the knowledge of another thing. But by modifications they are to understand that which is in another, and whose conception is formed by the conception of that thing in which they are: wherefore, we can have true ideas of not-existing modifications, inasmuch as though they may not actually exist, otherwise than in the understanding, yet their essence is so comprehended in another, that they may be conceived by the same. But the truth of substances is not otherwise without the understanding, than in themselves, because they are conceived by themselves," &c. Which reason is evidently no reason. For with the same clearness, wherewith I conceive a substance, whensoever it exists, as existing in itself; I conceive a modification, whensoever it exists, as existing in another. If, therefore, anything existing in another be as truly existing, as existing in itself, the existence of a substance is no more necessary, than the existence of a modification. And if we can have true ideas of not-existing modifications, we may have as true, of not-existing substances: especially since (according to him) we cannot conceive of substance, without conceiving in it some or other modifications; for he tells us, "The essence of modifications is so comprehended in another, that they may be

conceived by the same." Now, what means he by the essence of modifications being comprehended in another? By that other, he must mean substance: for modifications do modify substances, or nothing; and if the essences of modifications be contained in substances, they must (according to him) be contained in the essence of substances. For there is, saith he, nothing in nature, besides substances and their affections or modifications, (Demonstration of Proposition 4th, and Definition 5th.) Therefore, since nothing can be conceived in substance, antecedent to these modifications, besides its own naked essence, they must be contained, immediately, in the very essence of substance, or in substance itself; wherefore, if all substance be necessarily existent, they must be necessarily inexistent. And if the essence of substance contains the inexistent modi, the essence of the modi doth equally contain their inexistence in substance. Whereupon, by consequence also, the essence of these modifications doth as much involve existence (since no one can affirm inexistence to be existence) as the essence of substance doth, in direct contradiction to Proposition 24th, which expressly (and most truly) says, "The essence of things produced by God" (which he, as untruly, intends of these modifications alone) "do not involve existence."

And now for his notanda in this Scholium, by which he would conclude, that there is no other than this one infinite substance in being.* It is true, indeed, that the definition of a thing (which we have before said is of specific natures, not of individuals) expresses not any certain number of existing individuals (be it man, or triangle, or what else you please) nor any at all; for surely the definition of man, or triangle, would be the same, if every individual of each should be abolished and cease. But that, if any do exist, some cause must be assignable why they exist, and why so many only; what is to be inferred from this? That the reason being the same, as to every

substance whose essence involves not existence in it, (which that the essence of every substance doth, or of substance as such, he hath not proved, nor ever can,) when any such substance is found to exist, the cause of its existence, not being in its own nature, must be external; and therefore so many only do exist, because a free Agent, able to produce them, (for the very substance of created beings itself, owes not its production to a merely natural, undesigning, or to any subordinate, agent only,) was pleased to produce so many, and no more. And so hath this unhappy author himself, with great pains and sweat, reasoned out for us the very thing we assert.

But that it may be further seen how incurious a writer this man of demonstration is, and how fatally, while he is designing the overthrow of religion, he overthrows his own design, I shall not let pass what he says in demonstrating his 12th Proposition,—“That no attribute of substance can be truly conceived, from which it may follow, that substance can be divided.” How he proves it by Proposition 8th, and after by the 6th, I shall not regard, until I see those propositions better proved. But that which I at present remark, is his argument from Proposition 5th,—“That if substance could be divided, each part must consist of a different attribute; and so of one substance many might be constituted:” a fair confession that many attributes will constitute many substances. And himself acknowledges many attributes of substance, (Definition 6th, and Proposition 11th.) And therefore, though he here call this an absurdity, it is an absurdity which he hath inevitably now fastened upon himself, having here allowed, plainly, the consequence (as was above promised to be shown) that if there be diversity of attributes, they will constitute a diversity of substances, which it was before impossible to him to disallow, having defined an attribute (as was formerly noted) to be † that which constitutes the essence of substance. Therefore, his whole cause is here fairly given away; for

his one substance is now scattered into many, and the pretended impossibility of the creation of any substantial being quite vanished into thin and empty air. The many inconsistencies to be noted also in his annexed letters, with several parts of his discourse, it is not my business particularly to reflect on. It is enough, to my purpose, to have shown he comes short of his.

X. Upon the whole, little more seems needful for the refutation of this his horrid doctrine of the unity, self-existence, and infinity of all substance, than only to oppose Spinoza to Spinoza. Nor have I ever met with a discourse so equally inconsistent with all principles of reason, and religion, and with itself. And so frequently doth he overthrow his own ill design, in this very discourse, that it is altogether unnecessary to insist on the inconsistencies of this, with his Demonstrations of Des Cartes' Principles, written divers years before. Against which, every one that hath compared knows these his later sentiments to import so manifest hostility, that I may well spare that vain and useless labour, it being sufficient only to note the more principal, in the margin.*

His following Propositions (and among them those most surprising ones, the 16th and 28th) tend to evince the onliness of substance, and the absolute necessity of all actions; but upon grounds so plainly already discovered to be vain and false, that we need follow him no further. Nor is it necessary to disprove his hypothesis, or charge it with the many absurdities that belong to it; they are so horrid and notorious, that to any one who is not in love with absurdity for itself, it will abundantly suffice to have shown he hath not proved it.

XI. I cannot but, in the meantime, take some notice of the genius, which seems to have inspired both him, and his devotees; a fraudulent pretence to religion, while they conspire against it.

Whereof many instances might be given; as the prefixing that text of holy Scripture to so impure a volume, on the title page, 1 John 4:13, By this we know that we dwell in God, and God dwelleth in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit: that the preface to his posthumous works is filled up with quotations out of the Bible; which it is their whole design to make signify nothing. The divine authority whereof, an anonymous defender of his, in that part of his work which he entitles, *Specimen artis ratiocinandi naturalis et artificialis, ad pantosophiæ principia manuducens*, undertakes to demonstrate (because, as he says, "all religion depends upon the word of God) by an argument, which, he says, he can glory, that after many years' meditation, the divine grace favouring him, he hath found out," by which he tells us,* "he is able (to do what, that he knows, no man hath ever done before him) to demonstrate naturally the truth of the sacred Scripture, i. e. That it is the word of God. An argument, he says, able to convince the most pertinacious Pagan," &c. And it is taken from the idea of God, compared with that divine saying, *Exod. 3:14*, I am that I am. Whereupon, what he says, will, to any one who attentively reads, show his design, viz. at once to expose religion, and hide himself. And so doth his collusion sufficiently appear in making the soul philosophically mortal, and Christianly immortal.† But if the Philosopher perish for ever, what will become of the Christian?

This author also finds great fault with the instances usually given to exemplify the common definition of substance, That is, a being subsisting by itself, or in itself, ‡ because he thought them not agreeable enough to his master Spinoza's notion of the unity and identity of all substances, and consequently of the improducibility of any. And he fancies them to contradict themselves, that while they call the sun, the moon, the earth, this or that tree, or stone, substances, they yet admit them to be produced by another. For how

can it be, saith lie, that they should be in, or by themselves, and yet depend on another, as on a subject, or as an efficient cause? He is very angry, and says they by it do but crucify and mock their readers, only because it crosses and disappoints his and his master's impious purpose of deifying every substance. And therefore, to serve that purpose, as he fancies, the better, he would more aptly model all things and reduce them to two distinct kinds only, viz. "Of things that may be conceived primarily and in themselves, without involving the conception of another;" and again, "of things that we conceive not primarily and in themselves, but secondarily and by another, whose conception is involved in their conception." But all the while, what is there in this more than what is common and acknowledged on all hands? as the sense of the trivial distich he takes the pains to recite,

Summus Aristoteles, &c.

But when all this is granted, what is he nearer his mark? Of that former sort, still some are from another; and one other only of and from itself. But then (says he) how are those former conceived in and by themselves? Well enough, say I; for they are to be conceived, as they are to be defined; but the definition of a thing is to express only its own nature and essence (as Spinoza himself says, Schol. 2, in Proposition 8,) considered apart by itself, into which (as hath been said) the efficient cause, which is extrinsical to it, enters not; and without considering whether it exist or exist not: because definitions are of special kinds, or common natures, that exist not as such; not of existing individuals, except the one, only self-subsisting, original Being, of whose essence existence is; which Spinoza himself acknowledges, and makes his 20th Proposition; as, on the other hand, that "The essence of things produced by God involves not existence," is his 24th.

XII. But that the substance of things, whose essence involves existence, and whose essence involves it not, should be one and the same, exceeds all wonder! One would think, so vastly different essences of substance should at least make different substances; and that when Spinoza hath told us so expressly, that an "attribute of substance constitutes the essence of substance; and that all the attributes of substance are distinctly conceived, the conception of the one, not involving the conception of another;" and so do most really differ from each other, and make so many essences, therefore, of substance really distinct, (though he once thought otherwise of the divine attributes, that they did only differ from each other ratione, and that God was a most simple Being, which he also takes pains to prove, R. D. Cartes. Princip. Philos. Append. part 2d. cap. 5. pp. 117, 118,) one would surely hereupon think, that so vastly different attributes, as necessary existence, and contingent, should constitute the most different substances imaginable. For what is an attribute? *Id quod intellectus de substantia percipit, tanquam ejus essentiam constituent,*—Def. 4.) Now the essence of some substance the understanding most clearly perceives as involving existence in it; existence therefore constitutes the essence of such substance, and is therefore an attribute of it. Some other essence it as clearly perceives, that involves not existence; now this sort of essence is the attribute of somewhat; and of what is it the attribute? Why, he hath told us, "An attribute is what the understanding perceives of substance as constituting its essence;" therefore, some substance hath such an essence as involves not existence.

Now let it hereupon be considered (albeit that I affect not to give high titles to any reasonings of mine) whether this amount not to a demonstration against the hypothesis of Spinoza, and the rest of his way, that all substance is self-existent; and that, even upon their own principles and concessions, so frequently acknowledging the world to

be produced, and not self-existent, that even the substance of it is produced also; which they deny, viz.* That whose essence, this unnamed author says, includes not existence, either hath some substance belonging to its essence, or it hath not. If not, it may exist without substance; and then unto what is it an attribute, or what doth it modify? If yea, there is then some substance, and particularly that of this world, in whose essence existence is not included; and that, by consequence, the substance of this world is produced. But if any make a difficulty of it to understand how all being and perfection should be included in the Divine Being, and not be very God; so much is already said to this in the former Part of this discourse, (viz. Chap. 4. Sect. 12, &c.) that as I shall not here repeat what hath been said, so I think it unnecessary to say more.

And it is what Spinoza himself had once such sobriety of mind as to apprehend, when (Princip. R. D. Cart. Philosoph. more Geometr. Demonstrat. Append. Part 1. Cap.2.) he says thus of God, or of increate substance, "that God doth eminently contain that which is found formally in created things, i. e. God hath that in his own nature, in which all created things are contained in a more eminent manner;" and that "there is some attribute in God, wherein all the perfections, even of matter, are after a more excellent manner themselves contained." Having before told us, (Princip. Part 1. Axiom. 8.) "That by eminently, he understood when a cause did contain all the reality of its effect more perfectly, than the effect itself; by formally, when it contained it in equal perfection." And so he might have told himself of somewhat sufficiently common (though not univocally) to the substance of the Divine Nature, and that of creatures; whereon to found the causality of the former, in reference to the latter, as effected thereby. But as he grew elder, his understanding either became less clear, or was more perverted, by ill design.

CHAPTER. VIII

Animadversions upon a French writer, nameless. His pretence to confute Spinosa. The opinion of the world's being made of independent self-existing matter, chosen by him, and asserted against two other opinions. That of matter's being created out of nothing rejected, and falsely charged with novelty. Moses, and the author to the Hebrews misalleged, vindicated. Self-originate, independent matter disproved. Asserted by this author with evident self-contradiction. And without necessity.

I. BUT having here done with him and that sort of men, I shall now briefly consider the forementioned Monsieur's way of confuting him. The conceit, that there must be such a thing as necessary self-subsisting matter, hath I confess seemed to be favoured by some or other name among the Ethnics, of that value as to have given some countenance to a better cause; besides some others, who with greater incongruity, and more injury to it, have professed the Christian name. It hath been of late espoused, and asserted more expressly, by this French gentleman, who hath not thought fit to dignify it with his name, doubting perhaps whether the acquainting the world with it, might not more discredit his cause, than his cause (in this part of it) could better the reputation of his name. However it be, though my inquiry, and credible information, hath not left me ignorant, I shall not give him occasion to think himself uncivilly treated, by divulging what he seems willing should be a secret: for though it was not intrusted to me as such, I shall be loath to disoblige him by that, whereby that I know I can oblige nobody else. It is enough that his book may be known by its title, *L'Impie Convaincu*. It is professedly

written against the atheism of Spinoso; and when I first looked into it, I could not refrain thinking of Plato's repartee to Diogenes, when the latter undertook to reprehend the other's pride, that he did it with greater pride. Although I think not the application is to be made in the strictest terms. For I will neither be so indulgent to Spinoso, as to reckon that any man's atheism can be greater than his; nor so severe to this his adversary, as positively to conclude he designed the service of any atheism at all. But I think him at least, unwarily, and without any necessity, to have quitted one of the principal supports of the doctrine of a Deity; and that he hath undertaken the confutation of atheism, upon a ground that leads to atheism.

II. He thinks, it seems, Spinoso not otherwise confutable, than upon the hypothesis of eternal, independent matter, which he thus explains in his preface, it being the second of the three distinct hypotheses whereof he there gives an account.

"The second,* (he says,) is theirs who assert two beings or two substances increate, eternal, independent, as to their simple existence, though very differently; the former whereof is God, the infinitely perfect Being, Almighty, the Principle of all perfection; and the second, matter, a being essentially imperfect, without power, without life, without knowledge; but capable nevertheless of all these perfections, by impression from God, and his operations upon it." This he pretends to have been the hypothesis of the ancient philosophers and divines (after he had acknowledged the former hypothesis—"That the world, and the matter of it, were drawn out of nothing by the infinite power of the first and supreme Being, which itself alone was eternal and independent,"—was the hypothesis of the greater part of Christian divines, and philosophers.) And this second, he says, is the hypothesis which he shall follow, rejecting the first, but now mentioned; and in opposition to the third, which makes "the

world and its production to be nothing else than an emanation of the Divine Substance, whereby a part of itself is formed into a world." And this, he says, was "the opinion of the ancient Gnostics and Priscillianists, and is for the most part of the Cabbalists, of the new Adamites or the illuminated, and of an infinite number of Asiatic and Indian philosophers."

III. To qualify the ill savour of that second opinion which he follows, he would have us believe it to be the more creditable than the (rejected) first, which he says "is a new thing in the world, and that it was not born until some ages after Christ;" which is gratis dictum. And whereas he tells us, he takes notice that Tertullian was the first that maintained it against a Christian philosopher, who defended the eternal existence of matter; he had only reason to take notice, that the philosopher he mentions, was the first that, calling himself a Christian, had the confidence to assert an opinion so repugnant to Christianity and to all religion, and who therefore first gave so considerable an occasion to one who was a Christian indeed, to confute it. Nor was Hermogenes a much more creditable name with the orthodox, ancient Christians, than those wherewith he graces the third opinion; besides the other ill company which might be assigned it, if that were a convictive way of fighting, by names.

IV. And for what he adds, "That Moses was, he dares say, of his opinion; because he only gives such an account of the creation, as that it was made of an unformed pre-existent matter: and the apostle Paul to the Hebrews, saying, God drew these visible things out of those that were not visible;" he shows indeed, more daringness than solid judgment, in venturing to say the one or the other upon so slender ground. As if everything were false, which Moses and Paul did not say. But it appears rather from his way of quoting, (who, it is like, did not much concern himself to turn over the leaves of the

Bible, that he might be sure to quote right,) that God did create that unformed matter, as he calls it. For it is expressly said, God created heaven, and earth, and that this earth (not matter) was without form, and void, Gen. 1:1, 2. And if this unformed earth and matter be, as with him it seems, all one, then the unformed matter is said to have been created. For God is said to have created that unformed earth; which must indeed pre-exist, unformed, to its being brought into form, not unto all creation. And the same thing must be understood of the unformed heaven too, though Moses' design was to give us a more distinct account of what was nearer us, and wherein we were more concerned. And, indeed, it seems most agreeable to the letter of the text, and to the following history, so to understand those words; In the beginning God created heaven and earth, viz. that in the beginning, he created that, which afterwards became heaven and earth, i. e. unformed matter. For heaven and earth as now they are, or as they were in their formed state, were not created in a moment, in the very beginning; but in several successive days, as the following history shows. And so much Tertullian aptly enough intimates to that pseudo-christian Hermogenes, *Terre nomen radigit in materiam, &c.* Nor is Heb. 11:3, capable of being tortured into any sense more favourable to his gross fancy, which (as the Greek text, if any will consult it, shows) doth not say, The things that are seen were made of things not appearing, but were not made of things appearing. As to what he adds touching the word *créer*, &c. I let it pass, not liking to contend about words often promiscuously used, but shall apply myself to the consideration of the thing in question, and show, 1st, how inconsistently this author asserts independent matter, both with the truth, and with himself; and, 2ndly, how unnecessarily he doth it, and that the defence of the common cause against Spinoza, did no way oblige him to it.

V. First, How inconsistently he asserts it, 1. With the truth of the thing; for,

(1.) Whatsoever exists independently and necessarily, is infinite. And herein I must do Spinoza that right, as to acknowledge he hath, in asserting it, done right to truth; though the grounds upon which he asserts it, are most perniciously false. But I conceive it is capable of being clearly proved (and hath been proved, Part 1st) otherwise, viz. that necessary, self-originate Being, is the root and fountain of all being, whether actual or possible; since there is nothing actually brought into being, which is not actually from it, and nothing possible, but whose possibility depends upon it. And that which virtually comprehends all being, actual and possible, cannot but be infinite; for without the compass of such all-comprehending Being, there is nothing to bound it; and what is bounded by nothing is unbounded, or infinite. Whereupon also, matter plainly appears not to be of itself. For if it were, for the same reason it must be infinite and all-comprehending. But nothing were more apparently contradictory and self-repugnant, than the assertion of two all-comprehending beings; and if there be but one, that matter is not that one. But that it must be a necessary, self-originate, intelligent Being, which is the root of all being, I conceive already sufficiently proved in the former part of this discourse. Wherein it is also shown that finite created beings, arising from that infinite self-originate one, limit it not, nor do detract anything from its infinity, but concur to evidence its infinity rather; inasmuch as they could never have been, had they not been before contained within the productive power of that infinite self-originate being. It is, by the way, to be noted that the notion of infinity we now intend, doth not merely import unconfinedness to this or that certain space, (though it include that too,) for that, alone, were a very maimed, defective notion of infiniteness; but we understand by it the absolute all-

comprehending profundity and plenitude of essence and perfection. Whereupon, it signifies nothing to the preserving entire the infinity of the self-originate, intelligent Being, only to suppose it such, as that it can permeate all the space that can be taken up by another (supposed) self-originate being; for still, since its essence were of itself, it were not virtually contained in the other: which therefore would evince that other not to be, in the true sense, infinite. Whereupon we

(2.) Prove the impossibility of independent, self-originate matter, from the known, agreed notion of God, viz. That he is a Being absolutely perfect, or comprehensive of all perfection. Even they that deny his existence confess (though to the contradiction of themselves) this to be the notion of the thing they deny. Now, though this assertor of independent matter acknowledges it a being essentially imperfect, he can only mean by that, less perfect; not that it hath, simply, no perfection at all. It is idle trifling, to brangle about words. Perfection hath been wont to go for an attribute of being; he calls it a being; it must therefore have some perfection, some goodness, be of some value. Is it not better than nothing? Then, that perfection must be eminently contained in God; otherwise, how is he a Being comprehensive of all perfection? The imperfections of matter belong not to him; nor of anything else, for imperfection is nothing. Nor do the perfections of any creature belong to him formally, or in the same special kind, but eminently, and in a higher and more noble kind. And so, to have all being and perfection, either for his own, or within his productive power, cannot, without contradiction, be denied of him, who is confessed to be God. And again, to be able to create is surely a perfection: omnipotency more a perfection than partial impotency. Wherefore to assert matter could not be created by God, is to assert an impotent, imperfect God; or (since God can be

conceived under no other notion than of a Being absolutely perfect) to assert none at all.

(3.) This supposition not only denies to God all perfection, but it ascribes to matter, which he himself confesses the meanest sort of being, (as shortly it will be fitter to take further notice,) the high excellency of self-subsistence, the first and most fundamental of all divine perfections.

(4.) If matter be, as such, an independent, self-originate thing, then every part or particle of matter must be so. And then, let such matter be supposed to fill up infinite space, we shall have an infinite number of independent entities, co-existing for ever; for a finite number cannot replenish infinite space: or let it be supposed (more agreeably to the pretended sentiments of this author) confined within the limits of the formed universe; and how unreasonably is such a thing as independent matter, supposed to be of itself, limited to one spot of immense space! For let the universe be supposed finite, though ever so vast, it must yet be conceived but as a minute spot, to the infinite unbounded vacuity that lies without it; and which yet he seems to acknowledge replenished with the Divine Being. Now let a man set himself to consider, and try how easy it will be to his thoughts to conceive one little portion of boundless space, taken up with a mean being, next to nothing, that is of itself there, and cannot but be there, and nowhere else, imposed upon the infinitely perfect Being, the all-wise and almighty God, who fills up all space unavoidably and from all eternity; so that he could not, if he thought it a cumber, disencumber or rid himself of it; and rather seemed of necessity, than of choice, to have made a world of it, as not knowing else what to do with it; with which imagination also the youth of the world so ill agrees, for why then was it so lately made?

(5.) But it further seems very evident, and more fully evidential of the absurdity of this conceit, that if there were such matter, the world could never have been made of it: for how great alterations must such rude, undigested, unformed matter have undergone, in forming of such a world as this? But what greater inconsistency can we imagine, than that what exists necessarily, or of itself, should be alterable? What is of itself what it is, must be eternally and without change what it is. So absurd, as well as profane, it will be to ascribe to dull and senseless matter, or to anything else, so peculiar and appropriate an attribute and name as that of the Deity, I am that I am! For, hereupon, such matter were not only supposed vainly and to no purpose, being never possible to be the matter of the world, but destructively, and against the very purpose that should be served by it. For such matter, being supposed to occupy the space of the formed world, must exclude thence any other matter of which it could be formed; and make it, consequently, impossible there should ever have been any such world as this, where the supposition itself makes it be. This see discoursed more at large, Part 1, ch. 2.

(6.) And whereas his great reason for such self-originate, independent matter, viz. the imagined impossibility of creation, or that anything can be produced out of nothing, (which so far as is needful, we partly have, and further shall consider, in its proper place,) doth as much oppose the creation of any spiritual being, as material; if all that hath been said in the former Part of this discourse, and by many authors besides, do sufficiently prove there are such spiritual or immaterial beings that are created, or are not of themselves; and that, of the property of thought, which is found belonging to them, matter is not capable, (which I shall think to have been done till I see the contrary evinced,) we must judge him very absurdly to have asserted such self-originate, independent matter.

And as he hath asserted it very inconsistently with the truth of the thing; so

VI. 2. It will appear he hath done it as little consistently with himself. For

(1.) He acknowledges God to be *L'être infiniment parfait, tout puissant, & le principe de toute perfection*—"a Being infinitely perfect, almighty, and the principle of all perfection." Now how is he infinitely perfect, if his being include not all perfection? How is he almighty, if he cannot create? How is he the fountain or principle of all perfection, if the perfection of matter (which, as hath been said, though he make it essentially imperfect, must have some perfection belonging to it, since it is not mere nothing) be not eminently comprehended in his being?

Besides that here acknowledging God to be omnipotent, and having denied the necessary, eternal, independent matter, which he imagines to be infinite, but limited and confined to the created universe only; I would hereupon demand of him, Cannot the blessed God, if he pleases, create many worlds? If he say, No, then how is he omnipotent?—If Yea, of what matter must they be made? Not of his (imagined) necessary, independent matter, for of that really none could; but according to him the present universe is made, it is already taken up, and pre-engaged therein, and it is limited thereto. Therefore the matter is yet to be created, of which the other worlds are to be made; and it can be so, otherwise no more worlds can be made: and thereupon the great God is not, without blasphemy, said to have gone to the utmost of his power, to have done in this kind all that he can. And this must be said, by this author, in express contradiction to the truth of the thing; to the most common and agreed idea or notion of the Divine Being; and now, most apparently,

to himself. And therefore his high rant against Spinoza,* (in this point more orthodox than himself,) That he confounds in his philosophy being and perfection, *Pretendant que ce qui est, & ne renferme aucune negation d'être, est une perfection,*—"Pretending that whatsoever is, and includes not in its notion any negation of being, is a perfection," &c. is vain, and as much without cause, as what he afterwards says about it is without sense; for he adds, "That for his part he finds nothing more false or extravagant;" and why so? "Because then pain and sorrow must be reckoned among perfections, and such real perfections as are worthy of God, or a Being infinitely perfect." And upon this, he triumphs over such men, as "supplanters of the Deity, instead of defenders of so great a Being, and as having lost their senses and their reason," &c. But if he had not lost his own, and abandoned himself to that fury and rage of insolence which he there imputes to his opposers, he might have been capable of so much calm and sober consideration, as to have bethought himself that among creatures a sense of pain, real grief and sorrow, correspondent to their present, true causes, import more perfection than stupidity, insensibleness, and apathy; and if so, though pain and grief cannot formally agree to the most perfect Being of God, to whom their causes cannot agree, that the life and percipiency do eminently agree to him, by which he can apprehend an injury, though not a real hurt, (which he can therefore only not apprehend, not because the perceptive principle is wanting, but the object,) and by the power of imparting whereof, he is able to make a creature capable of pain and grief, where the objects shall (as they may deservedly) occur, and meet the perceptive principle; and that the power of making such a creature, is a greater perfection than an impotency of doing it. Which perfection, therefore, he could not, consistently with himself, deny to God, having acknowledged him a Being infinitely perfect, or comprehensive of all perfection. Nor,

(2.) Doth he assert necessary increate matter, consistently with his own reasonings for the possibility of a vacuum,* where he takes it for granted that God can *aneantur une petite partie de la matière, &c.*—"annihilate some small particle of matter," one stone, for example, or one grain of sand. Which how ridiculously is it supposed, by one who supposes such matter necessarily self-existent! For who sees not that necessity of existence, and impossibility of non-existence, do infer one another, or signify rather the same thing? Therefore, no man, except Spinosa, could be at once more daring and more unhappy than this author. And as it hath thus appeared that he hath asserted such self-originate, independent matter, very inconsistently both with the truth of the thing and himself; so,

VII. Secondly, It will also appear he hath done it very unnecessarily; and particularly, without that necessity which he pretends of answering Spinosa. For there is no necessity of it so much as pretended, upon any account besides that of the common maxim, that nothing can come out of nothing; the sense whereof must first be inquired before it can be understood how far it will serve his purpose, or infer the necessity of independent matter. The sense of it must either be this—That a being could never arise out of no-being, of itself, without a pre-existent, creative cause; which is most evidently true, but as evidently not to his purpose: or this—That what once was not, could never be produced into being by a pre-existent, omnipotent Cause; which were to his purpose, but is evidently, and by apparent self-contradiction, untrue.* And what can make it have so much as the least semblance of truth? Either the authority of the maxim, or some plausible reason? For its authority: though that which he claims to it of the ancient philosophers were little considerable, if ever so truly claimed, we have no ground to think it otherwise claimed than most untruly. Its authority, as he represents it, depends upon a worse authority. He is so modest as to expect it to

be believed, upon his bare word, that this was the opinion of all the ancient philosophers before Christ's time; while yet he thinks not fit to tell us his name. But if their reasonings from it be considered, that generations are out of matter, and corruptions are into matter, we have no cause to apprehend they understood it otherwise than that natural agents did neither create nor annihilate anything. Besides that, there is positive ground enough to conclude that the more instructed and wiser Pagans, long before Christ's time, did believe all things to have sprung from one intelligent, self-subsisting original, matter itself not being excepted. As, with the Egyptians, the inscription of the temple at Sais shows, I am all that is, or was, or shall be, &c. and with the Grecians, their worshipping God under the name of Pan; which could mean no other thing, than that they thought the Deity to comprehend eminently or virtually all beings besides, in its creative or productive power. And we have reason to think that Pagan philosophers since Christ, such as Hierocles, Jamblichus, Porphyry, Plotinus, &c. who (as others have observed) were manifestly of this sentiment, understood the minds of the more ancient philosophers as well as this Monsieur; nor do they pretend to contradict them herein.

And for the reason of the thing itself, he hath not the least appearance of any on his part, but that, because the finite power of a creature cannot bring a thing out of nothing, therefore omnipotency cannot; which is so far from concluding for him, that (as hath been intimated) it manifestly contradicts itself, and concludes the contrary. For how is that omnipotency, which cannot do everything that implies not a contradiction? And how is that a contradiction, that what once was not, should afterwards come to be; there being no objective impossibility or intrinsic repugnancy in the thing itself to exist, but that it were truly ens possibile (and we are out of doubt concerning matter, for instance, or whatsoever else we are sure doth

exist, that it could exist;) and supposing also that there be a sufficient causative power to make it exist, or produce it into being: and what cause can be more sufficient than an omnipotent one, such as our author confesses God to be?

Nor doth this author deny that there are intelligent spirits, that were not of themselves; only he would have us think them but finer matter, impressed with intellectual power. But what akin is a mind to matter, except his own? And supposing a mind or intellect be stamped upon matter, it is then but added to it, not drawn out of it, as if matter had before contained it. And even thus, since mind or intellect is not nothing, (unless he will say himself differs by nothing from unthinking clay,) we have something out of nothing. And who can think it more impossible to Omnipotency, to create matter, than a mind.

But if he reckon thought, or intellect, is contained in matter, or included in the notion of it, then matter, as such, must be intelligent, and consequently all matter; and this will be absurdity enough, to give him as good a title to the privilege of not being reasoned against, as, from his magisterial way of writing, we may count Spinoza thought himself to have. Nor indeed will it leave any man so much as a conjecture at the reason why he should pretend to differ from him; for who can imagine why his Matter, endued with the attributes of extension and thought, might not do as well as Spinoza's Substance?

Or if he think matter, as such, to have only seminal reason or intellect in it, antecedently to his supposed divine impress upon it, how will that agree with his making it essentiellement imparfait—essentially imperfect?* Or what means his added capable neanmoins, its being nevertheless capable of all such perfections, by the impression of God upon it? Is that capacity something, or nothing?

Or what sense is it to make it capable of having those perfections, which it is essential to it not to have?

And surely, as he will attribute to matter more perfection than he intended, so he will attribute less to God: for he will, at this rate, attribute no more to him, than hath been generally ascribed to ordinary natural agents; i. e. to produce into actual being, out of matter, that whereto there was in it some seminal disposition before.

And here, indeed, is the source of his error, his reducing infinite power to the measures of finite; an insolent presuming to circumscribe Omnipotency, and making that simply impossible, even to Almightyness itself, which is only so to created agents. And to this purpose, I find some reasonings in Sextus Empiricus, who tells us how the sceptics attempt to prove (besides their disputing against the other three sorts of causation) that ἀσώματον, an incorporeal thing, cannot be αἴτιον σώματος, the cause of anything corporeal; arguing (and slightly enough) from the common methods of subordinate agents, to the operations of the supreme Cause. Nor is it apprehensible how one can find a medium; or while they make matter independent, how not to make God dependent.

And when the Monsieur we are concerned with took a friendly notice of Hermogenes' consent with him upon this subject, he might as well have been at the pains to consider somewhat of what Tertullian wrote against him, that hereby, in some respect, God is made inferior and subject to matter, when without it he could not have made a world. "Materia superior invenitur, quæ illi copiam operandi subministravit, et Deus subjectus materiæ videtur, cujus substantiæ eguit; nemo non subjicitur ei cujus eget," &c.—Every one is subject to what he stands in need of.*

CHAPTER IX

The reason of what next follows. Directions to readers not wont to inquire into the grounds of their religion. A summary and plainer proposal unto such, of what hath been said in the former Part, concerning God's existence and conversableness with men. The reasonableness (so much being already evinced) of alleging, and relying upon the testimony of the holy Scriptures. The expressness of that testimony, concerning the unity of the Godhead, the Trinity therein. The absolute perfection of the Divine Nature. The infiniteness of God's knowledge, power, goodness, and presence. His propensions towards men, and aptness (supposing there were no obstruction) to human converse. Matters of doubt herein resolved.

I. AND having thus far established and vindicated so principal a ground-work in this important cause,—That what is necessarily, or of itself, is an absolutely perfect Being, distinct from all things else; and a proper Object of religion, or whereto a temple, and all the worship thereof, duly belong—I shall now only suffer myself to be a little further diverted from my intended course, apprehending that their case is also to be considered, who have been less accustomed to this course, of reasoning out to themselves the principles of their religion: unto whom therefore what hath been hitherto attempted may seem, if not obscure in its parts, yet so tiresome in the whole, as not to meet with patience enough to trace the design that hath been driven on, to its issue and period; it being very incident to unexercised and less-attentive readers, to lose their thread, and forget the scope of a discourse, and so still have the truth to seek even in the midst of it. And if what hath been hitherto said, prove unsatisfying to any, that justice must be done to the cause itself and to them, as to avow it must rather proceed either from this infirmity in the reader, or from

the unskilfulness of the writer to propound things happily and to advantage, than either from the inevidence of the things themselves, or from want of capacity, even in an ordinary understanding. Nor doth any undertaking seem more feasible, or less to be despaired of, than plainly and satisfyingly to evince, to an unprejudiced understanding that shall attend, these first foundations of religion, and a temple, namely, That God is; and—That he is conversable with men, or is such as is capable, and apt, to receive worship from them, and impart blessedness to them. We shall therefore so far interrupt the current of this discourse, as to endeavour this, by giving a brief and plain sum of the more principal things that have been said to this purpose already; and to prepare for it, must desire you that have not been, as yet, wont to employ your minds this way, to observe the following directions.

First, That you would not give place to discouragement, nor think too meanly of the understanding whereby God hath distinguished you from the inferior creatures. There is that mind and spirit in man, which doth compass many things of far greater difficulty than it is here to be employed about; though it can be exercised about nothing of so great consequence. That apprehensive power that can take in the orderly frame of such notions as are requisite to the exact skill of numbering or of measuring things, of navigation, of trade, of managing the common affairs of human life; that can lay down to itself such prudent maxims and rules whereby the inconveniences may in great part be avoided which are incident to common conversation, and the advantages gained which may serve one's own private and secular interests; that understanding which can do all this, would far more easily comprehend as much as is needful to the certain knowledge of God's existence, and that he is such as we ought to worship, and may enjoy, if it apply itself hereto. Do not so despair

as not to make an attempt; you know not the strength of your own mind till you have tried it.

Secondly, That you indulge not, or do not suffer yourselves to be insensibly seized by a mean and sordid sloth. Set your thoughts awork with vigorous diligence. Give not out before you have well begun. Resolve, since you have a thinking power about you, you will use it to this most necessary purpose, and hold your thoughts to it. See that your minds do not presently tire and flag; that you be rationally peremptory, and soberly obstinate, in this pursuit. Yield not to be diverted. Disdain, having minds that can reach up to the great Original and Author of all things, that they should be confined to this dirty earth, or only to things low and mean.

Thirdly, Look on things that are rationally evident to your understandings, as equally certain with what you see with your eyes. Are you not as sure that two and two make four (which judgment is the act of your mind) as that this thing which you look upon is black or white, or of this or that shape or figure? Do not so debase your own understandings, as to think nothing certain that comes under their judgment. It is true, they are apt enough to be deceived in many things, and so is your sense too; but if your sense could make you certain of nothing, what would become of justice and government among men? Who could take an oath before a magistrate? What would become of the common actions and affairs of life? How could you eat or drink, or buy or sell, if you could not certainly distinguish one thing from another? Some things are so plain as that you can be in no doubt about them, as that this is bread, not a stone; that a horse, not a sheep; otherwise all the world must stand still, and all commerce and action cease. And if there were not some things sure to your minds, that you may certainly say, in some plain cases at least, this is true and that false, this right and that wrong, you would

be at as great a loss. Otherwise, you might be apt to think a part of a thing greater than the whole, or that the same man might be at London and at Rome at the same time; and you might be as ready to kill your own father as to do him reverence, or to commit robbery upon your rich neighbour as relieve the poor, and judge the one as good an action as the other.

Fourthly, As any particular thing is offered to you, for the purpose we are here aiming at, consider it well by itself, before you go further; and think thus, Is this plain and certain, yea or no? If at the first sight you think it not so, observe diligently what is brought for the proof of it, and see whether now it be not manifestly certain; and when you once find it is, fix it in your mind as a certainty; say, Thus far I am sure. Let not your thoughts run back to this, as a doubtful thing, any more, or unravel their own work; but make use of it as a certainty, to your further purpose.

II. Being thus prepared, take this brief account of what hath before been discoursed more at large. And,

First, As to this first and great principle,—That there is a God. Be but patient of being led by the hand a few easy steps in a way that is in some part sufficiently beaten, however that is sufficiently plain, and it is to be hoped you will soon see that matter put out of all doubt. Let this then be your first step:

First, That somewhat or other there is, that hath been from all eternity, necessarily and of itself, without dependence upon any thing else. If this be not at the first view evident to you, or if it seem too large a step, we will divide it into parts, and consider well what is said for the proof of it, by these degrees.

(1.) Somewhat or other must ever have been: for otherwise, how could any thing come to be at all? Do you think it was possible, if ever there was nothing at all in being, of one sort or other, that any thing should have come into being? No surely; for which way should it be? It could not be made by another, there being no other to make it; and it could not make itself, itself being as yet nothing. But sure you can easily apprehend, that to make a thing be, is to do something; and as easily, that what is nothing can do nothing. Therefore, when your own eyes tell you that something now is, you may be as sure, as of what you see with your eyes, that somewhat or other hath ever been. Say with yourself, Somewhat now is, therefore somewhat hath ever been. If you discern not the clearness of this consequence, take the opposite to it: Nothing now is, therefore nothing will ever be; it is as broad as long.

(2.) You may next proceed thus, that something or other hath ever been of itself; that is, without depending upon any thing else, or being beholden to any other thing for its being. Now here pause awhile, and consider what is said to make this plain to you. Either you must acknowledge something hath ever been of itself, or you must say that all things that are, or ever have been, were from another, without any exception. But mark now, if you say that all things that are, or ever have been, without excepting any, were from another, you contradict yourself; for besides all things that are, or ever have been, without excepting any, there is not another from whom they could be. Therefore it is impossible that all things, without exception, should have been from another; whence then it is plain that something must have been of itself, without depending for its being upon any thing else: for it will come to the same contradiction, if you say all things depend upon some other; since there is nothing beyond all things: therefore, to say that all things depend, is to say they depend on nothing, that is, they do not

depend. And to say they have all depended on one another for their being, or made one another, is altogether as absurd; for it will make the whole compass or circle of all being to depend upon nothing, or come at length to this, that some one made itself, or even (which is more gross) made its own maker; unless you will rest in some one that made all the other, and was itself not made by any of them. If you do not apprehend this yourself, desire any one that hath a better understanding to explain it to you, and you will soon see the matter intended by it to be as evident as your heart can wish. And so this will be out of question with you—That somewhat was of itself; which added to what was proved before, comes to this—That somewhat was ever of itself. And both these thus conjoined, plainly appear from what hath been said. For we have seen that nothing could possibly make itself, (which would absurdly imply, that before, it both was and was not,) and therefore, whatsoever was of itself, must ever have been, or never had beginning of being. So much then, I suppose, you take to be most certain, that something hath ever been of itself. Whereupon you may further add,

(3.) That what was ever of itself, was necessarily. I hope you understand what is meant by being necessarily, that is, being so as that it could not possibly but be. You may perceive that some things are so as that it was possible they might not have been, as a house, a town, a garment, or whatsoever was made by such makers as might have chosen whether they would have made it, or no: yea, or whatsoever is any way made to be, having before not been; for what once was not, it is manifest it was then possible for it not to be. But to be necessarily, is to be so as that it could never possibly but have been; that is, that what is necessarily, is somewhat of so excellent a nature, as that it could never be out of being. Now what was ever of itself, it was in this sense, necessarily; viz. so as that the excellency of its nature was such, as could never permit that it should not be;

whence the name I AM agrees peculiarly and always thereunto. Nothing can otherwise be of itself, (not by making itself, which you have seen is impossible,) but by an everlasting possession of that excellency of being, which excludes all possibility of not being. It depends upon no one's choice or power, whether that which is of itself shall be or not be.

(4.) What hath thus ever been necessarily, still is, and will ever be; which is plain upon the same ground. What could never but be, can never but be; for its nature is such, as whereto not to be is impossible. Otherwise, if its nature had not been such, there being nothing else by which it should be made, it could never have been. Wherefore thus far you have firm footing in this first step; no part of the ground which it measures shakes under you. You may say you are sure of this—That somewhat there now is, that hath been from all eternity, necessarily and of itself, without dependence upon any thing else, and that can never cease to be.—Set this down therefore for a certainty, and then add to it.

Secondly, That whatsoever is not necessarily and of itself, is from and by that which is necessarily and of itself, as the first Author and cause thereof. This is so certain, that nothing needs to be said for the proof of it more than hath been said already, so that you do but understand the meaning of it; which you cannot but do, if you consider that all things that are, or ever were, must be of these two sorts, viz. what was of itself, and what was not of itself, but from another: therefore, what is not of the first sort, must be of the second; that is, what was not of itself, must be from another; and then, what other must it be from? Surely from what was of itself, as its first and chief Cause, whatsoever inferior or secondary causes it may have had besides, that were, before it, caused by that first. So that you have now plainly before you, and in view, some or other

eternal, necessary Being, not only to be considered as it is in itself, but as the Original and Root of all besides. Then go forward a little, and further add,

Thirdly, Neither this visible world, nor any thing of it, is necessarily, or of itself, without depending upon any thing else; and was therefore created, and made by some more excellent Being that was so, and is quite distinct and diverse from it. That this may be made evident to you, consider,

(1.) That whatsoever is changeable or imperfect, and capable of becoming more perfect, is not necessarily and of itself, without dependence on any thing else. For what is of itself necessarily, and without dependence on any other, must have whatsoever belongs to it, all at once; for from whence should any addition or change happen any way to it? Not from any other, for it no more depends on another for addition, than it is liable to diminution by another, being what it is necessarily, or from itself: for nothing can impart or add what it hath not; and what it hath was in it before, and was in it necessarily, and therefore unalterably, and without possibility of any change. Now you know this visible world is continually changing, and in an imperfect state; and we may add, that there is somewhat invisible, of whose present being we are certain, that was not of itself, and that did not make this world. For instance, we are certain of the present being of our own mind and spirit, which we cannot see with our eyes, but by self-reflection we are sure we have somewhat in us that can think. Nor is there anything that comes under our immediate certain observation, more excellent than man himself, especially his mind and soul. And do you not yourself know, and find how changeable, indigent, and imperfect that is? Therefore you may be sure it is not of itself, nor the maker of this visible world. If all the men in the world should join all their wit and power together, which way would they

go to work to make such a world as this; yea, or even to make one single pile of grass, or grain of sand? Which way can you devise then, it should make the sun or stars, or such an earth as this? It is plain, then, that all this world had a Maker, distinct from itself.

(2.) Whatsoever Being is of itself, is more excellent than what is not of itself. This you cannot but assent to at the first sight: for besides that you must needs acknowledge it better to live of one's self than to be beholden to another, you must also know that whatever being is not of itself, hath no excellency in it, but what was in that being that was of itself before; and therefore it had in it all the excellency that is in such things as proceeded from it, (unabated because in it necessarily,) together with the proper excellency of its own being, whereas the other sort of beings have but their own derived excellency only. Wherefore this also is most evident, that this world had a maker distinct from and more excellent than itself, that changes not, and whereto that name most properly agrees, I AM THAT I AM. Being sure of this, you may proceed, and conclude,

Fourthly, That the things which are manifestly not of themselves, but created and made, do plainly show that the Maker of them doth excel in power, wisdom, and goodness. The greatness of his works shows his mighty power; the nature, exactness, and order of them, his admirable wisdom; and his own self-sufficiency, and independency on the things made, show his rich and vast goodness in making them; as you may see more at large in Part I.

Now therefore, if you have attended, you cannot but find that you are sure and at a plain certainty concerning these four things:—(1) That somewhat was ever, and is necessarily;—(2) that what was not so, did arise from that which was;—(3) that this world being not so, did therefore spring from that eternal, necessary, self-subsisting Being;—

(4) and that this Being hath those particular excellences, whereof there are the manifest appearances and footsteps in the works that are made by him, (viz. especially power, wisdom, and goodness,) in himself. And thus "the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and godhead; so that they who see them not are without excuse." Rom. 1:20. If you be sure that anything is, you may be sure somewhat was ever of itself. If you be sure anything that was not of itself hath appearances of power, wisdom, and goodness in the frame of it, you may be sure that Being which was of itself is the powerful, wise, and good Creator and Maker of it. It is to be hoped, then, you are at a certainty,—THAT GOD IS.

III. 2, And now as to the second principle, that hath been insisted on also in the former Part,—THAT THIS GOD IS CONVERSABLE WITH MEN. You cannot surely doubt, but that he that made you, and gave you all that any way belongs to your being, can apply himself to you, or any of his creatures, in a way suitable to the natures which he hath put into you and them; nor that he is ready to converse with you, in a way suitable to the nature he hath given you, if you be such towards him, and so apply yourself to him, as you ought. For it is not a greater thing to do so, nor more exceeding, or going beyond, the reach of his power, wisdom, and goodness, (as you cannot but see,) than to have given being to you, and all things.

But now if what is further discoursed in that former Part, concerning the oneness of the Divine Being, and the infiniteness thereof, or concerning any other perfections there particularly asserted unto it, seem not so plain to you as is requisite to guide and facilitate your applications to him; what hath been more plainly said in this is however sufficient, as more primarily fundamental, and prerequisite

to that further knowledge of his nature and will towards you, which in another way is to be had and sought after.

A cloud and darkness are now drawn over the world of mankind; and though it be still very easily discernible that God is, it is yet more difficult to attain to so distinct apprehensions what he is, as are necessary to our conversing with him. Against this difficulty, he hath afforded a gracious relief; that is, he hath provided there should be a more express discovery of him extant among men, than can be collected by their making observations upon this world. The case was such with man, (grown now so great a stranger to God,) as to require a written revelation of his nature and will; and we have it in those scriptures which bear with us the name of the Word of God. It were indeed very unseasonable and absurd to urge their authority in the inquiry, whether there be a God or no? For what authority have they more than other writings, but as they are God's word? Therefore to expect, or give, assent to them as such, while yet it remains an undecided controversy, whether there be any such one, or no, for whose sake the assent should be given, were to expose our religion, not to prove it. These holy writings were not intended, by their affirmation of it, to inform us of God's existence, which they suppose, and do not prove, as a thing we may otherwise be certain of; but to teach us our duty towards him, and what our expectations may be from him; and do therefore give us a true representation and discovery of his nature, (so far as it was needful for us preparatively first to know it,) and then, next, of the present state of things between him and us, that we might be directed how to apply ourselves to him suitably to both the one and the other. It is true, that we can never know that there is a God, without knowing somewhat of his nature, or what a one he is. We cannot so much as inquire whether he be or no, but we must have some notion in our minds of the thing we inquire about; and so much as is necessary to

this purpose may be plainly gathered in the way we have gone hitherto. For if we understand the difference between something and nothing, between being and no being, and find that something is, or that there is some being; and again, if we understand the difference between a thing's being of itself, and being of or from another, and find the former must be the original of the latter; we cannot but understand ourselves, when we say there is an Original Being. And having some understanding what is meant by power, wisdom, and goodness; withal finding that not only the effects of these, but these very things themselves, are in the world; we cannot but be sure (because these things come not of nothing) that the Original Being is powerful, wise, and good. And now when we have thus found out an Original Being, that is of wisdom, power, and goodness sufficient to be the Author of such a world as this, we at once know both what God is, (sufficiently to distinguish him from all things else,) and are at a certainty that he is.

When we perceive that he hath given to all breath and being and all things, we have sought, and even felt and found him out, and found that he is not far from any one of us, since in him we live and move and have our being; that he is everywhere present, in this his creation, as the great Sustainer and the Life of the universe; and forasmuch, especially, as we are his offspring, (as even the light of a Heathen poet could reach to discover,) a sort of intelligent, designing, active, beings, that therefore the Godhead is not like silver, or gold, &c. but of a nature more nearly resembling that of our own souls, and the higher excellences of the best of his creatures, although eminently containing in himself also all the real perfections, virtues, and powers of all the rest: when we understand so much of God, (as we may by the light of our own reason,) we understand enough to give a foundation to religion, and to let us see he ought to have a temple, and worship; and another sort of temple

than is made by men's hands, other worship than can be performed by the hands of men; as is there clearly argued, and inferred by the apostle, upon those plain grounds. Now when we are arrived thus far, it is seasonable to make use of the further help which we may observe the great, and wise, and good God to have most condescendingly, most aptly, and most mercifully afforded us, for our more distinct understanding of his nature, and our own state; and how we are to behave ourselves towards him thereupon.

IV. Taking notice therefore that there is a written revelation of him extant in the world, that bears his name, and gives itself out to be from him; if now we look into it, observe the import and design of it, compare it with what we before knew of his nature and our own; consider what is most obvious to an easy self-reflection in our own state and case, and how exactly this written revelation agrees and corresponds to those our former notices; taking in withal the many considerations that concur besides, to evidence to us the divine original and authority thereof: we cannot but have much rational inducement and obligation to receive, with all reverence and gratitude, this revelation, as from God; and to rely upon it, as a sure and sacred light sent down from heaven, to direct us in all our concernments God-ward. For finding our own great need of such an additional light, and apprehending it sufficiently agreeable to the divine goodness to afford it, and expecting it to be such, in its scope and design, as we find it is: if we further consider it must have had some author, and perceiving it not easy, with any plausible pretence, to affix it to any other than God himself: if we consider that it was impossible it could be invented by men, without some design of self-advantage, either in this world or in the other; and how absurd any such expectation must be, either from men here, (the contents thereof being so repugnant to the common inclinations of men, as to oblige those that owned them to the severest sufferings on that

account,) or from God hereafter, who could not be expected to reward forgery, falsehood, and the usurpation of his name: if again, we further observe the positive attestations whereby he hath challenged and owned it as his own, and wherein the divine power hath borne witness to the divine truth contained in it; if the matters of fact on which all depends appear not less certain than that there were men and nations in the world, that we have not seen, and before we were born; if we see it not only improbable, but even next to impossible, that the records of those miraculous attestations should have been forged, and nations imposed upon thereby, and amongst them, many of the wisest of men in those very times when the things recorded were alleged to have been done, and in a matter wherein their eternal hope was concerned:* we shall upon the whole see cause to judge, That as it were most absurd to suppose such a revelation given by God, and no sufficient rational evidence withal given that it is from him, (without which it cannot serve its end, and so would signify nothing,) so that there is nothing wanting, in divine estimate itself, to make up such a sufficient, rational evidence; nor in our own, unless we would suppose it necessary that every man should have a Bible reached him down by an immediate hand from heaven, or make some other supposition as fond and vain as that; or that we count not that sufficient evidence, which ought to satisfy our reason, if it do not gratify our fancy and curiosity too. It is not fit, here, to say more of the divine original of those holy writings; nor needful, so much being written already,* with so great clearness, on that subject, by many. That therefore being out of question; what you cannot reason out yourselves, or apprehend from the reasonings of others, concerning God's nature, tending to represent him worthy of a temple with you, and capable of receiving and rewarding your sincere and spiritual worship, fetch out from that divine volume; for you may be sure, though you cannot "search him out unto perfection," he perfectly understands himself, and is certainly such

as he there tells you he is. And he there reveals himself to be such, as to whom the temple and worship we here intend, cannot be doubted (as he hath ordered things) to be both due and grateful. Whatever might be, otherwise, matter of doubt, is by his express discovery of himself, taken away.

V. If it were still a doubt, after all that hath been formerly said for the reasoning out of these things, whether the Deity be one only, or manifold; whether the world had but one, or had not many makers; and so, whether there be no danger of misapplying our religion, or of mistaking the object of our worship; this word plainly tells us, "there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things." 1 Cor. 8:6, "that he is God, and there is none else." Isa. 45:21, 22. and that however there be three that bear witness in heaven, and the stamp of whose name is, in our baptism, distinctly and solemnly put upon us; Mat. 28:19. 1 John 5 yet (as in many other instances, that may be in some respect three, which in some other respect is but one) without the unnecessary, punctual declaration how these are three, and how but one, it expressly tells us, these three are one.

And if it be yet a doubt with us (in which the reasonings of some may be too short to determine and resolve them) whether this one God be so absolutely and every way perfect as to be sufficient for us all; whether he can understand all our concernments, relieve us in all our necessities, hear our prayers, satisfy our desires, receive our acknowledgements and thanksgivings, and take notice with what love and sincerity they are tendered unto him; or, if he can do for us according to our necessities, and reasonable desires, whether we have any ground to believe that he will; this word of his plainly assures us, that he is God all-sufficient; Gen. 17:1. that he hath all fulness in him. It often represents him to us, under the name of the Lord God Almighty: tells us that he can "do every thing," and "that he

doth whatsoever it pleaseth him." It tells us "his understanding is infinite," and particularly assures us that "he searches the hearts of men, and tries their reins;" that they "cannot think a thought, or speak a word, but he understands them afar off, and knows them altogether;" that his eyes are upon all the ways of men; that he knows all things, and therefore knows if they love him.

And that we may be the more fully put out of doubt how easy it is to him to do so, we are assured that he is "every where present," that he "fills heaven and earth," that "the heaven and heaven of heavens, cannot contain him," that there is "no going from his Spirit, or flying from his presence;" that "if one go up to heaven, he is there; lie down in hell, he is there; go to the uttermost part of the sea, yet there his hand shall lead, and his right hand hold him."

VI. And that all doubt may vanish, concerning his will and gracious inclination, how expressly doth he make himself known by this name? viz. That he is "the Lord, the Lord God, merciful, and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth," &c. Exod. 34:7. And by the same blessed and inspired penman of a part of these holy writings, (the beloved disciple, who lay in the bosom of his only-begotten Son; who also is in the bosom of the Father, and hath declared him,) we are not only told that God is Light, whereby the knowledge, purity, simplicity, and glory of the Divine Being are represented; but, also, once and again, that God is Love, that we might understand him as a Being not of more glorious excellency in himself, than of gracious propensions towards his creatures. And lest it should be thought our meanness should exempt us, and put us beneath his regard, we are told, "He taketh care for sparrows, he heareth the ravens when they cry;" and generally, that "the eyes of all wait upon him, and he gives them their meat in season," Ps. 145 (which even the brute creatures are emphatically said to seek of

God,) and that he opens his hand, and satisfies the desire of every living thing," Ps. 104. And besides what he hath so expressly testified concerning his own nature, his favourable inclinations towards men might sufficiently be collected from that very nature which he hath given to man, considered in comparison and reference to his own: that he made him in his own image; and that he being the Father of spirits, hath placed a spirit in man, so agreeable to his own spiritual nature; and by his own inspiration given him that understanding that the mind begotten corresponds, by its most natural frame and constitution, to the mind that begot, the νοῦς πατρικὸς,* (as it was anciently called,) his own Eternal Mind: and that if its own original be remembered, it turns itself towards him, seeks his acquaintance by an instinct he hath himself implanted in it, and cannot rest until he have such a temple erected in it, wherein both he and it may cohabit together. By all this, his aptness to that converse with men, which is imported in the notion of a temple, doth so far appear, that at least it is evident such converse cannot fail to ensue, supposing that there were nothing in the way that might be a present obstruction thereto. And it will more appear, when we have considered (since there is somewhat that obstructs this converse) what he hath done to remove the obstruction, and how he hath provided that the intercourse may be restored, and his temple be resettled with men, upon everlasting foundations.

CHAPTER X

That there is an obstruction to this intercourse. The method of the following discourse. Man's apostacy from God, and the vitiated state of his nature. Not only represented in the sacred writings. But also

acknowledged and lamented by Pagans. Very mistakenly in some respects. Wherein perhaps some of them not justly understood. This not the primitive state of man. Therefore not to be imputed to the Author of nature. The temple of God hereby became unfit for the divine presence. Unsuitable. Disaffected. Hereupon forsaken; and must justly.

I. But so far it is, that there should want probability of a very inward commerce between God and man, that we have reason to think it rather strange, considering his nature and our own, it should not have been continual; and that his unbounded and self-communicative fulness was not by him always afforded, and always imbibed and drawn in by so capable and indigent a creature. One would wonder what should have discontinued this intercourse! What can be so apt to give and flow out, as fulness? What should be so apt to receive and take in, as want and emptiness? Such a commerce then as can be supposed between one* that is rich and full, and them that are poor and necessitous, one would think should have never failed. So a fabulous dream may be significant, and not uninformative, touching the reason and way of commerce between God and creature. We are therefore put upon a† new inquiry, and need no longer spend ourselves in anxious thoughts, Can there be any converse between God and men? that we may rather say, How can it not be? or, How strange is it there is not more! that he hath not a temple in every human breast, replenished with his vital presence! that there are nothing but ruins and desolation to be found, where one would expect a fabric worthy of God, and an indwelling Deity! This must therefore be the sad subject of our thoughts a while, What hath rendered the blessed God so much a stranger on earth, and occasioned him, in so great part, to forsake his terrestrial dwelling? Whence we shall have the advantage (seeing how just cause there was, on his part, for this deplorable distance) to adore the grace that

returns him to us, and inclined him to take that strange course, which we find he did, to repair his forlorn temple, and fill this desolate, forsaken world with the joyful sound of those glad tidings, The tabernacle of God is with men.

II. We shall find he is no further a stranger in this world, than as we have made and continued him so; no further a home-dweller in it, than as by an admirable contrivance of wisdom and love that will be the eternal wonder of the other world, he hath made way for himself. Whereby his propensions towards men, prevailing against so great an obstruction, do even now appear at once both evident and marvellous, and ought to be not only the matter of our belief but admiration.

Wherefore our discourse must here proceed by these steps, to show—
1. That mankind hath universally revolted, and been in a state of apostacy from God;—2. That hereby the temple of God in man hath been, generally, made waste and desolate;—3. That he hath laid both the new foundations and the platform of his present temple in Immanuel, God with us, his own incarnate Son; who rebuilds, beautifies, furnishes, inhabits it, and orders all the concernments of it.

III. The First we do little need to labour in; every man's own reflection upon the vitiated powers of his own soul, would soon, as to himself, put the matter out of doubt; whence each one's testimony concerning his own case, would amount to a universal testimony. No man that takes a view of his own dark and blinded mind, his slow and dull apprehension, his uncertain staggering judgment, roving conjectures, feeble and mistaken reasonings about matters that concern him most; ill inclinations, propension to what is unlawful to him and destructive, aversion to his truest interest and best good,

irresolution, drowsy sloth, exorbitant and ravenous appetites and desires, impotent and self-vexing passions—can think human nature, in him, is in its primitive integrity, and so pure as when it first issued from its high and most pure Original. By such reflection, every man may perceive his own ill case, in these and many more such respects; and by observing the complaints of the most serious, and such as have seemed most to study themselves, collect it is generally so with others also.

IV. They that have read the sacred volume, cannot be ignorant that "all flesh have corrupted their way;"* that the great God, "looking down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, that did seek God,"† hath only the unpleasing prospect before his eyes even of a universal depravation and defection; that "every one of them is gone back; they are altogether become filthy, there is none that doeth good, no not one; that all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;"* that "this world lieth in wickedness;"† and that this was not the first state of man, but that he is degenerated into it from a former and better state; that God "made him upright," but that he is become otherwise, by his own "many inventions;"‡ that by trying conclusions, to better a state already truly good, he brought himself into this woeful plight; and by aiming at somewhat above, sunk so far beneath, himself, into that gulf of impurity and misery, that is now become to him as his own element and natural state.

V. Yea and the matter hath that evidence, that even many of them who, for aught we know, never conversed with those sacred records, have no less clearly discovered their sense of the present evil state of man, than their ignorance of the original of that evil, though some of them carefully acquitting God of it.§ We find their complaints|| "of the malignity of ignorance surrounding all the earth, and that

corrupts the soul shut up in the body: that, as a garment and web, enwraps the minds of men, that they cannot look to him whose pleasure it is to be known, and who is not to be heard with ears, nor seen with eyes, nor expressed by words." That till it be rent in pieces, they have upon them¶ "the bond of corruption, the dark coverture, the living death, the sensible carcass, a moving sepulchre, which they carry about with them."

We find complaints, that** "by bonds and chains our mind is held, from our infancy:" of certain "mean and debasing passions, that do fasten and even nail the soul to the body:" of++ much greater evils, and more grievous, than the most painful bodily diseases, gouts, stranguries, dysenteries, and myriads of the like; viz. all manner of sins, wickednesses, transgressions, ungodlinesses, which we have to lament as the maladies or disaffections of our soul:" of certain‡ "old or inveterate spots, that are by all means to be 'washed and purged out:" that there are certain§§ "principles of viciousness, as pleasures, griefs, lusts, fears, enkindled from the body, but mixed with the soul, and that absurdly bear rule over it."

And the naturalness of these is more than intimated, while they are said to be|| || "rather from parents and our first elements than ourselves:" or,* "rather to be imputed," as is elsewhere said, "to those that plant, than those who are planted:" whence also,† "vice is said to be involuntary:" (being rooted in our natures:) that whosoever are vicious, become so, from such things as do even prevent our choice. And that‡ "all men do more evil than good, beginning even from their very childhood."

And (as another expresses it) we offend from certain§ "involuntary passions," in which the pravity of the soul is made to consist:| | or

"that we here partake a certain mundane nature, which, he says, is mixed of mind and necessity."

And even from hence that¶ "virtue is voluntary; vice is, by another, concluded to be involuntary." For, says that author, who can willingly, in the most lovely and most noble part of himself, choose that which is the greatest of all evils? esteeming vicious inclination the most repugnant thing to liberty, (as it is indeed in the moral sense,) and the greatest slavery. Whereupon, another inquiring, "since God doth nothing but what is good, whence evils should come," resolves that whatsoever is good is from heaven, but** all evil from our self-natural vileness. And another speaks of an evil adhering to our being, and not only acquired, but†† even connatural to us; yea, and this evil is said to be the very death of the soul." The sadness of the common case of man in this respect, hath been therefore emblematically represented by‡‡ "a potion of error and ignorance, presented to every one at their first coming into the world, and whereof it is said all do drink, more or less;" a woman called Imposture, accompanied by other harlots, Opinion, Lust, Pleasure, &c. seizing and leading away every one. And hence are§§ "bitter complaints and accusations poured forth even against nature itself, as being a mere force and war, and having nothing pure or sincere in it," but having its course amidst many unrighteous passions; yea, and its rise and first production is lamented, as founded in unrighteousness. The discontentful resentments whereof have made some not spare to censure our very make and frame, the uniting* of an immortal thing to a mortal in the composition of man, "as a kind of distortion of nature, that the thing produced, should be made to delight in having parts so unnaturally pulled and drawn together."

VI. So that some of the ethnick philosophers have been so far from denying a corruption and depravation of nature in man, that they have overstrained the matter, and thought vicious inclination more deeply natural than indeed it is; and so taxed and blamed nature, in the case of man, as to be too liable to implied reflections even on the blessed Author of nature himself. Whereto the known principles of the sect of the Stoics † do too plainly tend, who give in so vast a catalogue of the diseases and distempers of the mind of man: taking everything into the account that hath the least of perturbation in it, without excepting so much as mercy itself, or pity towards them that suffer unjustly; and yet seem to subject all things to fate and natural necessity, whereby all these evils in the mind of man would be rejected upon the holy God, as their original Cause. Whence therefore some that were more sober have made it their business to vindicate God from so horrid an imputation;‡ and one of much note animadvertes upon the mistakes of such as seemed so to charge him, sharply blaming them for such an intimation; but more sharply quarrelling with others in his own dubious twilight for the excuse they give of it, viz. That God doth what they attribute to him in this matter, for the punishment of wicked men;* alleging it were a grievous matter that God should will and revenge the same thing, that wickedness should both be, and be punished, according to the mind of God. † Some do, with great reverence of the divine majesty, confess the rise of all this evil to be from man himself, viz. even that sort of evil which is called by the name of wickedness, is said to be from an "innate principle, which the arbitrary power of a man's own soul hatcheth and fosters, and the fault is his who admits it; but God is faultless:"‡ "that God did place the soul over a terrene body, as a charioteer over a chariot, which it might govern or neglect," &c.§

So another says,|| "that whatsoever things come into this world from God, are good; but evils proceed from a certain ancient nature," &c.

By which what could he mean, but the hereditary pravity which hath in a long series descended from depraved progenitors, so as no longer to be a new thing; but of a forgotten original, and from of old reigning in the world?

They of this famous sect, the Platonists, seem often to attribute vicious inclination to the soul's being united with the body; (as supposing it to have existed pure and sinless before;) yet even they appear also not to have thought it impossible a human soul should, sometime, have been in an earthly body without sin. For their renowned leader discourses at large of a former incorrupt state of man in the body, (a golden age, as others also call it,) and of a defection or apostacy from it; which state, though his Egyptian tradition misinformed him about the continuance of it, he excellently describes (as also man's declining from it,) telling us, that¶ then, "God familiarly conversed with men, taking care of them, as a shepherd of his flock: that he was chiefly intent upon the ducture and government of their minds;" that (as he afterward says in another part of that unfinished discourse)* "while the godlike nature continued in sufficient vigour with them, they were obedient to laws, and behaved themselves friendly towards that† divine thing that was akin to them. Then they possessed thoughts that were true, and altogether great; using meekness and prudence in reference to their own conditions and one another: that they disregarded all things in comparison of virtue: they easily bore a prosperous condition, esteeming all outward things little: they were not intoxicated or drunken with sensual delights; but sober and quick-sighted, and all things increased upon them through their mutual love and virtue. But they growing at length into a too great esteem and love of terrene things ‡ and that participation which they had of God decaying (whereas all was well while the Divine Nature remained with them) and being variously intermingled with§ much deadly evil, and a kind

of human custom or course of living," as elsewhere he so expresses sinful corruption, "prevailing among them, and they not able to bear a prosperous condition, came to shame, and ruin with it; having lost the loveliest of their most precious things." Agreeably whereto, another, discoursing of the nature and original of evil, places it in our being "plunged and sunk into matter and corporeity:" and commenting upon a noted passage of his master,|| viz. "That our recovery must be by a speedy flight to God," &c. says, that¶ "this flight is not to depart from the earth, but that we become, even while we are on earth, righteous, and holy, and wise."

Therefore also have we, with this sort of men, so frequent discourses of the "purgative virtues, which suppose a lapse into great impurities; yet not so inseparable from our natures, but that by divine help (which they also sometimes speak of as necessary) a cure and redress may be wrought."

VII. Nor, if we consider, can it be so much as imaginable to us, that the present state of man is his primitive state, or that he is now such as he was at first made. For neither is it conceivable the blessed God should have made a creature with an aversion to the only important ends whereof it is naturally capable: nor particularly, that he created man with a disaffection to himself; or that ever he at first designed a being of so high excellency as the spirit of man, to drudge so meanly, and be so basely servile to terrene inclinations; or that, since there are manifestly powers in him of a superior and inferior sort and order, the meaner should have been, by original institution, framed to command, and the more noble and excellent only to obey and serve; as now, every one that observes may see, the common case with man is. And how far he is swerved from what he was, is easily conjecturable, by comparing him with the measures which show what he should be. For it cannot be conceived for what end laws were

ever given him, if, at least, we allow them not the measures of his primitive capacity, or deny him ever to have been in a possibility to obey. Could they be intended for his government, if conformity to them were against, or above, his nature? or were they only for his condemnation? or for that, if he was never capable of obeying them? How inconsistent were it with the goodness of the blessed God, that the condemnation of his creatures should be the first design of his giving them laws; and with his justice, to make his laws the rule of punishment to whom they could never be the rule of obedience and duty; or with his wisdom, to frame a system and body of laws, that should never serve for either purpose, and so be upon the whole useful for nothing? The common reason of mankind teacheth us to estimate the wisdom and equity of law-givers, by the suitableness of their constitutions to the genius and temper of the people for whom they are made; and we commonly reckon nothing can more slur and expose government, than the imposing of constitutions most probably impracticable, and which are never likely to obtain. How much more incongruous must it be esteemed to enjoin such as never possibly could! Prudent legislators and studious of the common good, would be shy to impose upon men under their power against their genius and common usages, laws neither alterable easily, nor to any advantage. Much more absurd were it, with great solemnity and weighty sanctions to enact statutes for brute creatures! And wherein were it more to purpose to prescribe unto men strict rules of piety and virtue, than to beasts or trees, if the former had not been capable of observing them, as the latter were not? We insist not on the written precepts in the sacred volume, (where we have also the history of man's creation and fall,) but let the law be considered which is written in men's hearts; the νόμος δημιουργικὸς, the τάξις ἔννομος, or the lex nata (in the ethnical language)* which the eternal lawgiving mind hath created in our souls; and how evidently doth that law convince, that we neither are, nor do what we should? How

gross and numerous deformities do we daily behold by that shattered and broken glass! How many things which we disapprove, or certainly would, if we discussed the matter with ourselves! How frequent buffetings are many, when they reflect, constrained to suffer at their own hands; even wherein (not having another law) they are only "a law to themselves," Rom. 2 and have only their own thoughts, either their excusers, or accusers! And what doth that signify, but a lapse and recess from their original state; the broken imperfect memorials whereof, are a standing testimony against their present course; their notions of right and wrong, comely and uncomely, remonstrating against their vicious inclinations and ways? For would they ever reprove themselves for what was not possible to be otherwise? Or was man created a mere piece of self-contradiction; or with a nature made up of repugnancies, and perpetually at war with itself? This I should do, but that which is clean contrary I have a mind to,—were these ever like to be impressions, both signed upon him by the same hand? Nothing is plainer therefore, than that he is corrupted from his primitive integrity, and become a depraved and a degenerate thing.

VIII. 2. We go on then, in the next place, to show,—That by this degeneracy, the temple of the living God, among men, became waste and desolate: viz. both uninhabitable or unfit for his blessed presence; and—thereupon, deserted and forsaken of it. And (because in breaches and disagreements man hath the first hand and part) we shall therefore treat,

First, Of the unfitness of man, in his state of apostacy, to entertain the divine presence, or be any longer God's temple.

Secondly, Of the blessed God's absenting himself, and estrangement from him hereupon.

1. That the spirit of man, by his having apostatized, became unfit to answer the purposes of a temple, will too plainly appear, by considering the nature of that apostacy; which, what was it but a severing himself from God; a recess and separation? Not in respect of place, (which was impossible,) but the temper of his mind and spirit; or not by a local removal, but by unsuitableness and disaffection, departing in heart from the living God. It is true indeed, that, by this his revolt, he became indisposed to all other converse which belonged to him as a creature intelligent and virtuous, but chiefly to divine: the blessed God being the chief term of this defection and revolt. For man, by his original rectitude, was principally determined towards God; and, by the same due bent and frame of spirit by which he stood rightly postured towards him, he was in a right disposition to every thing besides wherewith he had any concern; and adhering to him as his centre and prime object, he kept his due order towards all other things: whence by forcing and relaxing the bonds that held him united to God, and by changing his posture towards him, he came to stand right no way. Turning to him the back, and not the face, all things are inverted to him. He is now become most directly opposite to God, and unduly disposed towards other things only by means of that opposition. As then he is unfit for every other good use, so most of all for that of a temple; and that upon both the above-mentioned accounts, as being first unsuitable to the blessed God, and then thereupon disaffected.

(1.) Man was become most unsuitable to him, the divine image (which where should it be but in his temple?) being now defaced and torn down. We speak not now of the natural image of God in man, or the representation the soul of man hath of its Maker in the spiritual, intelligent, vital, and immortal nature thereof, which image we know cannot be lost; but its resemblance of him in the excellences which appear to be lost, and which were his duty, a debitum inesse, and

could not be lost but by his own great default. And those are both such as wherein the soul of man did imitate and resemble God, as knowledge, purity, justice, benignity, &c. and such as wherein though it could not imitate him, yet was to bear itself correspondently towards him; as he being the absolute Sovereign, to be subject to him, obey and serve him: and he being the all-sufficient Good, to trust in him, depend upon him, know, love, and delight in him, unite with him, and expect blessedness only in and from him. How unlike and disagreeable to God in all these respects is apostate man! That whereas the notion given us of God is, that he is Light, and with him is no darkness at all; (1 John 1) it is said of such as have been involved in the common apostacy, in reference to that their former state, "Ye were darkness;" as if that were the fittest and truest account that could be given of this revolted creature: not that he is in darkness, or there is much darkness in him, but, "He is darkness;" (Eph. 5.) He and darkness may define one another—That is he; and he is that. A dismal horrid cloud hath enwrapped his soul, that resists and yields not easily to the most piercing beams, excludes light wheresoever it would insinuate itself. This hath made the soul of man a most unmeet receptacle for the divine presence, and more like a dungeon than a temple. And as he is now sunk into carnality, and a low, abject, earthly spirit, how unfit is he for divine converse! How unapt to savour the things of God! How unlike the Father of Spirits! And whereas he was of a middle nature, partaking somewhat of the angelical, somewhat of the animal life; how is he swallowed up of the latter, and become like the beasts that perish; as the horse and mule without understanding; as the dog and swine both for fierceness and impurity, as the one is both apt to bite and devour, and return to his own vomit, and the other both to rend such as stand in his way, and wallow in the mire. We might add the sundry other Scripture resemblances of wolves, bears, lions, serpents, adders, vipers, &c. whereby many brutes seem to meet in one man,

and to have made a collection, and contributed their worst qualities, and all the venom of their natures, to the making up of one mischievous composition in him. So that instead of a temple, he is a cage of every unclean and hurtful thing: he is, in short, of a "reprobate mind, full of all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity," &c. How repugnant, in all respects, to the holy, pure, benign, merciful nature of God! How remote from the imitation of his Maker, wherein he hath offered himself as his most imitable pattern! And wherein he is not imitable, but requires a proportionable and correspondent deportment or conformity; as by trust, to his all-sufficiency; by subjection, to his sovereign power and government; how dismal is the case, and how horrid the effects of the apostacy in these regards! How preposterous and perverse are his dispositions and the course he hath run! For wherein it was permitted to him to imitate and affect likeness to a Deity; where he was put under no restraints, and his highest aspirings had been not only innocent, but most worthy of praise, (as to imitate God in wisdom, righteousness, sincerity, goodness, purity, &c.) here nothing would please but utmost dissimilitude, and to be as unlike God as he could devise. But in those things that were within the enclosure, and appropriate most peculiarly to the Godhead; to be the first and the last, the Alpha and Omega; the only One on whom all must depend, and to whom all must be subject and obey: these sacred regalia, the highest rights and flowers of the eternal crown, these are thought fine things, and beheld with a libidinous devouring eye, caught at by a profane sacrilegious hand. Nothing would satisfy but to be Godlike in this most disallowed and impossible sense. Man, when he hath reduced himself to the lowest pitch of vileness, misery, and penury, now will be self-sufficient; and when he is become the most abject slave to ignominious lusts and passions, now he will be supreme: that is, having made himself viler than the meanest creature, and

worse than nothing, he will be a God, even his own, a God to himself. Having severed and cut himself off from God, he will supply the room, and live only within himself; be to himself what God was, and should ever be. He now moves wholly in his own sphere, disjoined from that of the whole world, and is his own centre. All he does is from himself, and for himself. Thus is the true image of God torn down from his own temple, and that alienated, and become the temple of a false God, dedicate to that abominable idol, self.

IX. (2) Whence it comes to pass, that man is most disaffected to God, and full of enmity. So Scripture testifies concerning the carnal mind, Rom. 8:8. And whom it had before represented (ch. 2) full of all malignity, it afterwards speaks of as directing it (most horrid to think!) against this blessed object; "Haters of God, spiteful," &c. Nor is anything more natural; for, in part, the contrariety of their nature to his, more immediately begets this enmity, which always rises out of dissimilitude; and partly it is fomented and increased to a great degree, by a secret consciousness of that dissimilitude, and the misgivings of their own guilty fears thereupon: which must tell them, whensoever they have so much communication with themselves, that they are unlike, and cannot but be displeasing to him; and this infers some kind of dread; whence (as hath been commonly observed) the passage is short and easy unto hatred. And though the more positive workings of this enmity do not (perhaps with the most) so ordinarily discover themselves; and they do not see or suspect that they hate him, while they are not urged to self-reflection; and when they are, hardly admit a conviction that they do: yet the matter carries its own evidence with it, and would soon be put beyond a question, if men were willing to understand the truth of their own case. For whence else do they so slowly entertain the knowledge of God, when the whole earth is full of his glory? When so manifest prints and footsteps of his wisdom, power, and goodness, do offer themselves to

view in every creature, whence can it be, but that they "like not to retain him in their knowledge?" Rom. 1. And that their very hearts say to him, "Depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways?" Job 21. Why is so bright a light not observed, but that it shines amidst a malignant darkness, that, resisting, comprehends it not? Why are the thoughts of God so unpleasant to men and unfrequent, that when one would suppose no thoughts should be so obvious, none so welcome, yet it is become the character of an unrenewed man to "forget God," (Ps. 9) or "not to have him in all his thoughts?" Ps. 10. Why do men decline his acquaintance, live voluntary strangers to him all their days, and as "without him in the world?" Ephes 2. Why are men so averse to trust him, and turn to him, even upon so mighty assurances? What makes them shy to take his word, but rather count him a liar, though they know it inconsistent with his nature; and can form no notion of God, without including this conception therein, that he cannot lie; when as yet they can ordinarily trust one another, though there be so much colour to say, "All men are liars?" Why do they resist his authority, against which they cannot dispute, and disobey his commands, unto which they cannot devise to frame an exception? What, but the spirit of enmity, can make them regret so easy a yoke, reject so light a burden, shun and fly off from so peaceful and pleasant paths; yea, and take ways that so manifestly take hold of hell, and lead down to the chambers of death, rather choosing to perish than obey? Is not this the very height of enmity? What further proof would we seek of a disaffected and implacable heart? Yet to all this, we may cast in that fearful addition, their saying in their heart, "No God;" (Ps. 14) as if they should say, O that there were none! This is enmity, not only to the highest pitch of wickedness, (to wish their common Parent extinct, the Author of their being,) but even unto madness itself. For in the forgetful heat of this transport, it is not thought on that they wish the most absolute impossibility, and that, if it were possible,

they wish, with his, the extinction of their own, and of all being: and that the sense of their hearts, put into words, would amount to no less than a direful and most horrid execration and curse upon God, and the whole creation of God at once! as if by the blasphemy of their poisonous breath, they would wither all nature, blast the whole universe of being, and make it fade, languish, and drop into nothing. This is to set their mouth against heaven and earth, themselves, and all things at once, as if they thought their feeble breath should overpower the omnipotent word, shake and shiver the adamantine pillars of heaven and earth, and the almighty fiat be defeated by their nay, striking at the root of all! So fitly is it said, The fool hath in his heart muttered thus! Nor are there few such fools: but this is plainly given us as the common character of apostate man, the whole revolted race; of whom it is said, in very general terms, "They are all gone back, there is none that doeth good." This is their sense, one and all; that is, comparatively; and the true state of the case being laid before them, it is more their temper and sense to say "no God," than to repent, and turn to him. What mad enmity is this! Nor can we devise into what else to resolve it.

This enmity, indeed, more plainly shows itself where the Divine Glory (especially that of his grace, and good-will towards men, a thing not less evident, than strange!) more brightly shines: yet there are so manifest appearances of it everywhere, and he hath so little left himself "without witness" unto any, that the universal strangeness of men towards him apparently owes itself more to enmity than ignorance; and even where there is much darkness, there is more ill-will. For their ignorance, by which they are alienated from the life of God, is called "blindness of heart;" that is, voluntary, affected blindness, Eph. 4:18. It can be imputed to nothing else, that they who have God so "near to every one of them, who live, and move, and have their being in him," do not yet "seek after him, and

labour to feel and find him out;" that is, that they can miss of God so nigh at hand, when they have even palpable demonstrations of his nearness, and kind propensions towards them. Now this being the case, whatever this degenerate vile creature might serve for else, he was plainly most unfit for the use of a temple, or to be the dwelling-place of God.

2. Nor can it now be a wonder that the divine presence should be hereupon withdrawn; that the blessed God absents himself, and is become a stranger to this his once beloved mansion. "We shall here take notice how apparent it is,

1. That he hath done so.

2. That he was most highly justifiable herein.

And first, That He hath withdrawn himself, and left this his temple desolate, we have many sad and plain proofs before us. The stately ruins are visible to every eye, that bear in their front (yet extant) this doleful inscription—HERE GOD ONCE DWELT. Enough appears of the admirable frame and structure of the soul of man, to show the divine presence did sometime reside in it; more than enough of vicious deformity, to proclaim he is now retired and gone. The lamps are extinct, the altar overturned; the light and love are now vanished, which did the one shine with so heavenly brightness, the other burn with so pious fervour; the golden candlestick is displaced, and thrown away as a useless thing, to make room for the throne of the prince of darkness; the sacred incense, which sent rolling up in clouds its rich perfumes, is exchanged for a poisonous, hellish vapour, and here is, "instead of a sweet savour, a stench." The comely order of this house is turned all into confusion; "the beauties of holiness" into noisome impurities; the "house of prayer, into a den of thieves," and that of the worst and most horrid kind; for every lust is

a thief, and every theft sacrilege; continual rapine and robbery is committed upon holy things. The noble powers which were designed and dedicated to divine contemplation and delight, are alienated to the service of the most despicable idols, and employed unto vilest intuitions and embraces; to behold and admire lying vanities, to indulge and cherish lust and wickedness. What! have not the "enemies done wickedly in the sanctuary?" How have "they broken down the carved work thereof," and that too "with axes and hammers," the noise whereof was not to be heard in building, much less in the demolishing this sacred frame! Look upon the fragments of that curious sculpture which once adorned the palace of that great king; the relics of common notions; the lively prints of some undefaced truth; the fair ideas of things; the yet legible precepts that relate to practice. Behold! with what accuracy the broken pieces show these to have been engraven by the finger of God, and how they now lie torn and scattered, one in this dark corner, another in that, buried in heaps of dirt and rubbish! There is not now a system, an entire table of coherent truths to be found, or a frame of holiness, but some shivered parcels. And if any, with great toil and labour, apply themselves to draw out here one piece, and there another, and set them together, they serve rather to show how exquisite the divine workmanship was in the original composition, than for present use to the excellent purposes for which the whole was first designed. Some pieces agree, and own one another; but how soon are our inquiries and endeavours non-plussed and superseded! How many attempts have been made, since that fearful fall and ruin of this fabric, to compose again the truths of so many several kinds into their distinct orders, and make up frames of science, or useful knowledge; and, after so many ages, nothing is finished in any one kind! Sometimes truths are misplaced, and what belongs to one kind, is transferred to another, where it will not fitly match: sometimes falsehood inserted, which shatters or disturbs the whole frame. And

what is with much fruitless pains done by one hand, is dashed in pieces by another; and it is the work of a following age to sweep away the fine-spun cobwebs of a former. And those truths which are of greatest use, though not most out of sight, are least regarded; their tendency and design are overlooked; or they are so loosened and torn off, that they cannot be wrought in, so as to take hold of the soul, but hover as faint ineffectual notions, that signify nothing. Its very fundamental powers are shaken and disjointed, and their order towards one another confounded and broken: so that what is judged considerable is not considered, what is recommended as eligible and lovely is not loved and chosen. Yea, the truth which is after godliness is not so much disbelieved, as hated, held in unrighteousness; and shines as too feeble a light in that malignant "darkness which comprehends it not." You come, amidst all this confusion, as into the ruined palace of some great prince, in which you see here the fragments of a noble pillar, there the shattered pieces of some curious imagery, and all lying neglected and useless among heaps of dirt. He that invites you to take a view of the soul of man, gives you but such another prospect, and doth but say to you,—"Behold the desolation;" all things rude and waste. So that should there be any pretence to the divine presence, it might be said, "If God be here, why is it thus?" The faded glory, the darkness, the disorder, the impurity, the decayed state in all respects of this temple, too plainly show the great Inhabitant is gone.

X. (2.) And what was so manifest a sign of God's absence, was also a most righteous cause: for who have committed these great wastes, and made this temple uninhabitable, but men themselves? And what could be more injurious to the holy God, than to invade and profane his temple? Or for what could we suppose him to show more jealousy and concern? Whoever were a God, one would expect he should plead for himself, when men have cast down his altar. No words can

express the greatness of the indignity! For do but take the following state of the case, thus: Man was his own creature, raised out of nothing by his mighty and most arbitrary hand; it was in his power and choice, whether ever he should have being, any or none, another, or this of so noble an order and kind. The designation was most apt, of so excellent a creature to this office and use, to be immediately sacred to himself, and his own converse; his temple and habitation, the mansion and residence of his presence and indwelling glory! There was nothing whereto he was herein designed, whereof his nature was not capable. His soul was, after the required manner, receptive of a Deity; its powers were competent to their appointed work and employment; it could entertain God by knowledge and contemplation of his glorious excellences, by reverence and love, by adoration and praise. This was the highest kind of dignity whereto created nature could be raised—the most honourable state. How high and quick an advance! This moment, nothing, the next, a being capable and full of God!

It was a most delectable and pleasant state, to be separated to the entertainment of the divine presence; that as soon as man could first open his eyes, and behold the light and glory of this new-made world, the great Lord and Author of it should present himself, and say, Thou shall be mine. How grateful a welcome into being! "Thee, above all my works, which thou beholdest, I choose out for myself. Thine employment shall be no laborious, painful drudgery; unless it can be painful to receive the large communications of immense goodness, light, life, and love, that shall, of their own accord, be perpetually flowing in upon thee! Whatsoever thou espiest besides, that is even most excellent and pleasant to thy sense, is yet inferior to thee, and insufficient for thy satisfaction and highest delight, and but the faint shadow of that substantial fulness which I myself will be unto thee."

There was, in all this, the freest and most condescending vouchsafement; no necessity could urge the self-sufficient Good to affect union and familiarity with its own creature. Man's alienation of himself from God, was as entirely voluntary, nothing could force him to it; he could have no inducement, which it was not easy to resist; heaven and earth could not afford the matter of a regardable temptation, to withdraw him from what did so infinitely excel. But how mean things have become the tempting and prevailing objects! the momentary relishes of a merely sensual delight, that might have been had innocent and pure, without breaking the enclosure. Ravenous appetite, lust after forbidden pleasure, is impatient of restraint: reason, that should have restrained it, resigns its office, falls into a treacherous combination with usurping sense, chooses rather to obey than rule, to rebel than obey; for not to rule, being thereto enjoined by the supreme Ruler, was to rebel. The empire of rebellious appetite was reckoned more tolerable than God's: thus are his authority affronted and his goodness despised both at once. He is rejected both as ruler and benefactor, with equal disrespect to his majesty and grace, to his governing and his heart-delighting presence. And how ignominious, hereupon, is the rejection, when so vile things are chosen and preferred! The tyranny of lust, before his holy, reasonable, orderly government; the pleasures of sin, rather than those of the divine presence: this being the practical, decisive judgment given in the case, that these are better. It is better to be the meanest drudge and slave than his servant, and to feed upon husks or ashes than his pure and most satisfying communications. And what he chose to be, he is; that is, with the indignity done to God, he hath joined the vilest debasement of himself. For hence also, how loathsome a creature is he now become! How perverted in all his powers! How full of darkness, confusion, impurity, malignity, and venom! How universally and horridly deformed! And hereof an estimate may be made, from his unaptness to self-reflection; which

how notorious is it! What doth he not rather choose to do with his thoughts, than turn them inward? And how unfit is he for divine converse, that cannot endure his own; or to associate with God, that is become too foul a creature to have any satisfying converse with himself! Now what could be expected to ensue upon all this, but that he should be forsaken of God; that the blessed Presence be withdrawn, that had been so despitefully slighted, to return no more? No more, till at least a recompence should be made him for the wrong done, and a capacity be recovered for his future converse: viz. till both his honour should be repaired, and his temple; till he might again honourably return, and be fitly received. But who could have thought in what way these things should ever be brought to pass? i. e. neither could his departure but be expected, nor his return but be above all expectation. To depart was what became him; a thing, as the case was, most God-like, or worthy of God, and what he owed to himself. It was meet so great a Majesty, having been so condescendingly gracious, should not be also cheap, or appear unapprehensive of being neglected and set at naught. It became him, as the self-sufficient Being, to let it be seen he designed not man his temple for want of a house; that having of old inhabited his own eternity, and having now the heavens for his throne, the earth his footstool, he could dwell alone, or where he pleased else, in all his great creation; and did not need, where he was not desired. That of the Cynic was thought a brave saying, when his malcontented servant turned fugitive, and left him—"It were an unworthy thing Manes should think he can live without Diogenes, and that Diogenes cannot without Manes."* How much better would it suit with the real selffulness of a Deity, where nothing of this kind can look like an empty, hollow boast! It was becoming of his pure and glorious holiness, not to dwell amidst impurities, or let it be thought he was a God that took pleasure in wickedness: and most suitable to his equal justice to let them who said to him, "Depart from us," feel they spake that word

against their own life and soul; and that what was their rash and wilful choice, is their heaviest doom and punishment. It was only strange, that when he left his temple he did not consume it; and that not leaving it without being basely expelled, he hath thought of returning without being invited back again. Yea, and that whatsoever was necessary thereto, is designed by his own so strange contrivance, and done at his own so dear expense: his only-begotten Son most freely consenting with him, and in sundry capacities sustaining the weight and burden of this great undertaking.

CHAPTER XI

The restitution of this Temple, undertaken by the Immanuel. First, more darkly prefigured; afterward, more clearly manifested. The constitution of Immanuel sufficient. Necessary for this purpose. That He was himself to be the Platform, the Foundation, and the Founder of it. The Original Temple; and was, in order hereto, also a sacrifice. To procure that God might honourably and without wrong to his governing justice, return and have his abode with men. And that they might become prepared to receive his returning presence. For which purpose He hath in him the power of giving the Holy Spirit, on the account of this sacrifice. That when God is, for the sake of it, willing, we might no longer remain unwilling. That unwillingness to be overcome by the power and Spirit of Immanuel, as hereafter to be more fully shown. But working, suitably to an intelligent subject, in a rational way. To which a great accommodateness in the constitution of Immanuel. As demonstrating Divine love and holiness. In all its loveliness. Possibility of being attained.

AND, indeed, what was to be designed and done, did every way call for so great an Undertaker.

The indignity offered to the majesty of the most high God, in his so ignominious expulsion from his own temple, was to be recompensed.

And the ruin must he repaired which had befallen his temple, itself.

I. In reference to both these performances, it was determined Immanuel, i. e. his own Son, his substantial Image, the Brightness of his glory, the eternal Word, should become incarnate; and being so, should undertake several parts, and in distinct capacities, and be at

once a single Temple himself, and that this temple should be also a sacrifice, and thereby give rise to a manifold temple conformed to that original one, of each whereof, in the virtue of that sacrifice, he was himself to be the glorious Pattern, the firm Foundation, the magnificent Founder, and the most curious Architect and Former, by his own various and most peculiar influence.

This hath been the result of the divine counsel, and the Lord's own doing, most justly marvellous in our eyes, viz. (which we are next to consider,)

II. That the blessed God hath laid the platform and the foundations of his temple, as it was to be restored and set up again among men, in and by that great Immanuel, his own Son made flesh. It is to be considered that (as hath been shown) the world had a long time lain deluged with wickedness, sunk in sensuality, and a deep oblivion of God; his memorial was even lost among men, and nothing less thought of than a temple in the true design and meaning of it; the notices of God, and any inclination to religion that remained (too deeply infixed into the mind and nature of men to be quite extinct) were yet so faint and weak, carnal and terrene propensions so strong, that the vital religion which was the proper business of a living temple, could have no place. It was not only so in the Pagan world from which God had further withdrawn himself, but even with that select people to whom he vouchsafed more peculiar manifestations and symbols of his mind and presence.

They had a figurative temple by his own appointment, erected in much glory among them, that might have instructed them, and by degrees the rest of the world, if they would have understood its true meaning and signification, that God was yet willing to dwell with men on earth, and that it should be a "house of prayer for all

nations," who ought, upon those glorious appearances of God among that people, to have gradually proselyted themselves unto them. It prefigured what he intended, namely, in his appointed season, by his own Son to descend and inhabit, make and constitute him a much more glorious temple than could be built of wood or stone, or by the hands of men: that in after time "Shiloh should come, unto whom the gathering of the people should be," and by whom he would reconcile and recollect the apostate world back again to himself. But all this was as unintelligible mystery on all hands; entered not into the minds of men of either sort, but much less into their hearts; and the Jews did much more affect to paganize, and go further off from God, than the Pagans (which in this they ought) to judaize, and draw nearer to him. The natural sentiments of religion, which were common to all men, did run out only into mere external observances and empty (though somewhat different) formalities, that might well enough agree with a sensual life, transacted in habitual estrangement from God, and as without him in the world; so as not only not to answer the true intent and use of a temple, but to frustrate and elude it.

III. When this was the state of things with this world, and the fulness of time was now come, wherein God intended, with more vigour and efficacy, to renew and reinforce his mighty and merciful work of setting up his temple, and to make it rise in splendour and glory in the world, he at length sends down his Son: He puts on man; becomes Immanuel; an incarnate God among men; and a Man inhabited by all the fulness of God. This man was, therefore, a most perfect Temple; the original one: i. e. not only a single one himself, but an exemplary Temple, to which all others were to be conformed; the advantage whereof to the forming of more we shall see hereafter: whereby he was also a virtual one, from which life and influence were to be transfused to raise and form all others. But in order to its being

so, this very temple must become a sacrifice, and by dying, multiply; a seminal temple, as we shall hereafter show, and as he himself represents the matter, John 12:24, and which is in the full sense of it said, 1 Peter 2 where, when we were first told, (v. 4, 5,) we must "come to him as unto a living stone, and as lively stones be built up a spiritual house;" we are further told, (v. 24,) that "he himself bare our sins in his own body on the tree," (where he was offered as a sacrifice,) that we "might die to sin and live to righteousness." For now, a temple being, in its proper use and design, intended for divine honour, could not have its foundation in the ruin thereof, or be built upon his unremedied dishonour. The Son of God, by tendering himself for a valuable recompence, must be the Corner-stone of this new building. The wrong that man had done to the Divine Majesty should be expiated by none but man, and could be by none but God. Behold then the wonderful conjunction of both in the one Immanuel! who was, by his very constitution, an actual Temple; "God with us:" the habitation of the Deity returned, and resettling itself with men; and fitted to be (what it must be also) a most acceptable sacrifice. For here were met together man that could die, and God that could overcome death; man, that might suffer, and God, that could give sufficient value to those sufferings; sufficient to atone the offended Majesty, and procure that life might be diffused, and spread itself to all that should unite with him; whereby they might become living stones, joined to that living Corner-stone; a spiritual temple, again capable of that Divine Presence which they had forfeited, and whereof they were forsaken.

That all this may be the better understood, we shall endeavour to show, more distinctly,

I. The sufficiency and aptness of the constitution and appointment of Immanuel, (considering what he was, and what was undertaken to be

suffered and performed by him,) as the most proper and adequate means for the restoring of God's temple with men.

II. The necessity of this course for this end.

And for the former, the aptness and sufficiency of this course, or what the setting up of Immanuel might do for this purpose, may be seen in the suitableness hereof to the foregoing state of the case, and by comparing therewith what he is, and hath done and suffered in order hereto. We have seen that the former desolate state of this temple was occasioned and inferred by man's apostacy, (whereby he became incapable of serving any longer the purposes of a temple,) and God's departure thereupon. There was therefore the concurrence of somewhat on man's part, and somewhat on God's, unto this desolation: on man's, what was unjust, leading, and causal; on God's, what was most just, consequent, and caused thereby: man's unrighteous and ill-deserving aversion from God, and God's most righteous and deserved aversion hereupon from him: the one caused by the other, but both causing in different kinds the vacancy and deserted state of this temple which ensued; the former as a sinning cause, the latter as a punishing. Now what we have considerable in the Immanuel towards the restoration of this temple, and that it might become again habitable and replenished by the Divine Presence as before, is answerable to this state of the case; and directly tending to compose things between the distanced parties, both on the one part and the other. And because God was to have the first and leading part in reconciliations, as man hath in disagreements, we have enough in him, whereupon God might express himself willing to rebuild and return to his former dwelling; and man be willing to render it back to him, and admit the operation of the fashioning hand whereby it is to be prepared and refitted for its proper use.

IV. 1. The former is effected, and a foundation is laid for the effecting of the other too, in his becoming a sacrifice to justice; a sacrifice so rich and fragrant, so full of value and grateful savour, as that abundant recompence is made by it for the wrong man had done to the Majesty of heaven, by profaning and polluting this temple, and expelling so contumeliously its great Inhabitant:—an injury, to which the creation, consuming in a universal flame, had been an unproportionable sacrifice: but the sacrifice of himself, the Immanuel, God-Man, could be defective in nothing: was both suitable and equal to the exigency of the case. For the sacrifice of him who was man, was suitable to the offence of man; and of him who was God, was equal to the wrong done to God. Long before this sacrifice was offered, the expectation of it, and since, the remembrance, have been precious. It was of sufficient virtue to work and diffuse its influence at the greatest distance, and not of time only, but of place too; to perfume the world, and scatter blessings through all the parts and nations of it, as well as through all the ages. When no other sacrifice or offerings could avail anything, (Ps. 40; Heb. 10) lo! He comes into a body prepared on purpose: which, though it was not formed and assumed till the fulness of time, (Gal. 4:4,) was yet reckoned as slain from the beginning of it, Rev. 13:8. This was the seed in which, though it sprung up only in Judea, yet all the nations of the earth were to be blessed, Gen. 22:18. Long was this body in preparing, and the seed transmitted through many generations, whence it was at length to arise; into which as its last preparation, the Deity descended; and that it might be a sufficiently costly sacrifice, filled it with the divine fulness; for "in him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily," Col. 2:9. When we read Abel's sacrifice to have been more excellent than Cain's, (Heb. 11:4,) the Greek word is, it was fuller. How full a one was this! That was filled by faith with a derivative fulness; this, immediately by God himself,

with his own self-fulness, which filleth all in all, and whence all must receive.

Being so filled, it was a temple, and must now further be a sacrifice. Both are signified in that one short passage, which himself let fall, (John 2:19,) "Destroy this temple:" i. e. that he was a Temple, and was to be destroyed; which is carried in the notion of a sacrifice. This he said of his body, 5:21. Strange mystery! The very temple itself a consuming oblation, self-devoted even to destruction, and out of that again self-raised! The divine justice could not hereby but be well-satisfied, and say, It was enough, when the whole temple became all propitiatory, and the profanation of the former temple was expiated by the immolation of the new: so that, in point of honour and justice, no exception could now lie against the return of the divine presence to its wasted and forsaken temple.

Only his return could not, as yet, be presently to dwell there, (for it was most unfit,) but to refit and prepare it for his future dwelling. It had been long desolate, and hereby was become decayed and ruinous, full of noisome impurities, yea, the habitation of dragons and devils of Ziim, and Jiim, and Ochim. Many an abominable idol was set up here, that filled up the room of the one God that had forsaken and left it. It was wholly in the possession of false gods, for whose use it was the more fit, by how much it was the less fit for his; for amidst darkness, confusion, and filthiness, was the chosen seat of the principalities and powers that now did dwell and rule here. Here was the throne of the prince of darkness, the resort of his associates, the altars of as many lusts as the heart of man, now wholly given up to all manner of wickedness, could multiply unto itself; by whose consent and choice, this horrid alienation had been made and continued. Upon such terms the "strong man armed kept the house."

The blessed God might now return, but he must build before he dwell, and conquer ere he build. He might return, but not upon other terms than the expiatory value, and actual or ascertained oblation of that above-mentioned sacrifice: for when he forsook this his temple, he left it with just resentment, and his most righteous curse upon it—a curse that was of this import, "Never anything holy or pure any more come here, or anything good and pleasant. The light of the sun never shine any more at all on thee: the voice of joy and gladness never be heard any more at all in thee." The powerful horror of this curse held it doomed to all the desolation and misery that were upon it; confirmed it in the power of him that ruled here at his will. Hence had the magic and charms of the evil one their permitted, unresisted efficacy; rendered it an enchanted place; related and adjoined it to the nether world, the infernal region; made it the next neighbourhood, even of the very suburbs of hell; barred out all divine light and grace, all heavenly beams and influences from it. So that, had it not been for this Sacrifice, this temple had been and remained, even in the same kind, an accursed place as hell itself: the Spirit of God should have had no more to do here, than there; for so the sentence and curse of his violated law had determined: "Thou shalt die the death," did say no less.

VI. But now, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: that the blessing of Abraham might come on the gentiles; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith," Gal. 3. He was made a curse for us; not the same in kind which we had incurred, (which it were horrid to think,) but such as his state could admit, and ours could require. For that a person so immutably pure and holy should become an impure thing, was what his state could not admit: and that one of so high dignity should willingly suffer to that degree which he did for us, was a thing of so great merit

and value, as to answer the uttermost of our ill-deservings; than which the exigency of our case could not, in that respect, call for more. And the end or design of his becoming to that degree a curse for us, being expressly said to be this, "that we might receive the promise of the Spirit," (or the promised Spirit) implies, that the curse upon us had intercepted and cut off from us all influences of that holy blessed Spirit; for the fresh emission whereof, in God's own stated method, he had now again opened the way. That this blessing is hereby said to become the portion of the Gentiles, was enough to the apostle's present purpose, writing to the Galatians; the Jews having, upon the same terms, had the same privilege formerly from age to age: "Thou gavest thy good Spirit to instruct them;" (Nehem. 9:20,) which also is implied in their being charged with vexing and rejecting this blessed Spirit, one generation after another, Isa. 63:10, Acts 7:51. And they had now the same gospel, and are here also included, in that it is said to be the blessing of Abraham; into the communion whereof the Gentiles are now declared to have been admitted, about which so great doubt had been in those days. That therefore the Spirit might be given for the mentioned purpose, on the account of the Son of God's oblation of himself, is out of question. The necessity that he should be only given on these terms, will be seen hereafter, in its proper place, in ch. 9.

But whereas it hath been designed in all this discourse to represent the constitution of Immanuel (being first made a personal Temple, then a Sacrifice) as an apt and fit means to multiply this one temple into many, and bring it about, that upon just and honourable terms God might again return to inhabit the souls of men: it may perhaps be alleged, by some,—That it seems an unrighteous thing God should appoint his own innocent Son to be punished for the sins of offending creatures, and let them escape. And then how could an unjust act make for the honour of his justice, or that which was in

itself unfit, be a fit means to any good end?—The loud clamours wherewith some later contenders have filled the Christian world upon this subject, make it fit to say somewhat of it; and the thing itself needs not that we say much. We do know that the innocent Son of God was crucified; we know it was by God's determinate counsel; we know it was for the sins of men; (which the adversaries, in a laxer and less significant sense, deny not, though it must by no means be understood, say they, as a punishment of those sins;) we know many of those sinners do finally escape deserved punishment. The truth of these things, in fact, is disputed on neither side: all these then are acknowledged, reconcileable and consistent with the justice of God. What then is to be inferred? Not that these things are not so, for that they are is acknowledged on all hands. What then? That God is unjust? Will their zeal for the reputation of God's justice admit of this? No; but it is only unjust to count this suffering of his Son a punishment: that is, it is unjust he should suffer for a valuable and necessary purpose, not that he should suffer needlessly, or for no purpose that might not have been served without it! But why may not the sufferings of Christ be looked on as a punishment? Because they will have it be essential to punishment, that it be inflicted on the person that offended; and then inconsistent with its notion and essence, that it be inflicted on an innocent person. But if so, the pretence for the cry of injustice vanishes, unless they will be so absurd as to say, It is very just to afflict an innocent person, but not to punish him; when the punishment hath no more in it of real evil to him that suffers it, than the admitted affliction. And when they say, The very notion of punishment carries in it an essential respect to that personal guilt of him that bears it, it implies that in the present case punishment hath no place, not because it is unjust, but because it is impossible. In the meantime, how vain and ludicrous is that pretence that all the real evil which God determined should befall his Son he should let come upon him with acknowledged justice; but

that the injustice must lie only in a notion; i. e. if he look upon it as a punishment! Yet also the punishing of one for another's offence is forbidden to men, as themselves allege from Deut. 24:16, (as it is not strange God should disallow men that dominion over one another, which he may claim to himself, and which he is in no such possibility to abuse as they,) which therefore shows their notion of punishment is false, by which they would make it impossible for one man to be punished for another's faults, (as the learned Grotius acutely argues,*) inasmuch as it were absurd to forbid a thing that is impossible. And that God himself doth often punish the sins of some upon others, is evident enough from many places of holy Scripture; particularly the second commandment, (Exod. 20:5,) "I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children," &c. 2 Sam. 24:15, &c. 1 Kings 14. Lam. 5:7. Whereas therefore they are wont, on the contrary, to allege that of Ezek. 18. "Ye shall no more use this proverb, The fathers have eaten the sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge," v. 2, 3, and 19, 20, &c.; it is plain, in that it is said, "Ye shall no more," &c. that the blessed God speaks here of what, in merciful indulgence, he for the future would not do, not of what in strict justice he might not; for can it be supposed he owns himself to have dealt unjustly with them before?

It is evidently therefore neither impossible nor unjust to punish one for another's offence; and the matter only seems harsh to such as have misshapen to themselves the notion of punishment, and make it only correspond to the appetite of private revenge: whereas it only answers to a just will of vindicating the rights and honour of government; which may most fitly be done, upon another than the offender, not at random, or in an undistinguishing promiscuous hurry, but upon the two suppositions mentioned by the above-recited author. (1.) If there be a near conjunction between the person

punished, with the person offending. (2.) If there be a consent and voluntary susception of the former on behalf of the other. And we add, as a 3rd, Especially if there be thereupon a legal substitution, the Supreme Ruler upon that consent also agreeing, providing, by a special law made in the case, for such transferring of the guilt and punishment. All which have so eminently concurred in the present case, that it can proceed from nothing but a disposition to cavil, further to insist and contend about it. And we know that such translations have among men not only been esteemed just, but laudable; as in the known story of Zaleucus, who, having ordained that adultery among his Locrians should be punished with the loss of both eyes, and his own son afterwards being found guilty of that crime, was content to lose one of his own eyes, that justice might be done to the public constitution, and mercy be shown to his son in saving one of his: and that of the Pythagoreans, Damon and Pythias, the one of whom pawned his own life to the tyrant, to procure time for the other (condemned to die) wherein to settle some affairs abroad before his death; who, returning within the limited time to save his faith and his friend's life by surrendering his own, so moved the tyrant, that he spared both.

The common case of man forsaken of the Divine Presence, and not to be restored without recompence, was the most deplorable, and the most important, that could be thought. And it may now be compassionately cared for; this having been obtained by this great sacrifice, that the divine justice is so well satisfied, and his majesty and honour so fully asserted and vindicated, as that he now may, without wrong to himself, (his justice and the dignity of his government not reclaiming against it,) cast a compassionate and favourable eye upon the desolations of his temple; take up kind thoughts towards it; send forth his mightier Spirit to dispossess the "strong man armed," to vanquish the combined enemy-powers, to

build and cleanse and beautify the "habitation of his holiness," and then inhabit and dwell in it: upon which account, it is now called the "temple of the Holy Ghost;" the Spirit which the Father sends, in the name of the Son, upon this errand; he having obtained that it should be sent. By which Spirit also the Immanuel was sufficiently enabled to gain our consent unto all this; for his dying on the cross was not that he might have the Spirit in himself, but that he might have the power of communicating it: and so (as was before intimated) might the foundation be laid for what is to be done on our part, by the offering of this sacrifice; of which we are next further to treat.

VII. Wherefore, 2ndly, That which was to be done on our part, in order to the restoring of God's temple in us, was, that we be made willing of his return, and that there be wrought in us whatsoever might tend to make us fitly capable of so great a Presence. More needs not to be said (but much more easily might) to show that we were most unwilling. And that our becoming willing was requisite, is sufficiently evident. For what sort of a temple are we to be? Not of wood and stone; but as our worship must be all reasonable service, of the same constitution must the temple be whence it is to proceed. We are to be temples, by self-dedication, separating ourselves unto that purpose; and are to be the voluntary under-labourers in the work that is to be done for the preparing of this temple for its proper use: and the use which is to be made of it, that there the blessed God and we might amicably and with delight converse together, supposes our continual willingness, which therefore must be once obtained. Now unto this purpose also, the constitution of Immanuel was most suitable; or the setting up of this one eminent temple first, "God in Christ." This was a leading case, and had a further design: it was never meant that the Divine Presence should be confined to that one single Person, or only that God should have a temple on earth as long as the Man Christ should reside there; but he was to be the primary

original Temple; and his being so did contribute to the making us willing to become his temples also;

(1.) As here was the fulness of that Spirit, by whose power and influence that, and all the subsequent work, was to be wrought in us: which fulness is by that blessed name, IMMANUEL, signified to be in him on purpose to be communicated, or as what must be some way common unto "God with us." Our aversion was not easily vincible: the people, it was said, (speaking of the reign of Immanuel,) should be "willing in the day of his power;"* and, as it follows, in the "beauties of holiness." This was a known name of God's temple,† for the building whereof David was now preparing, and whereto the passages agree.‡ And that spiritual one whereof we speak must be here chiefly meant, whereof the Christian world, in its exterior frame, is but the outer court; or is subordinate to the interior frame, and to the work thereof, but as scaffolds to the building which they inclose. The people shall be willing, but not otherwise than being made so by his power; and that not always put forth, but in the day of his power; on a noted memorable day; a day intended for the demonstration and magnifying of his power; i. e. the season when Immanuel (the Lord to whom the speech is addressed) would apply and set himself, even with his might, to the great work of restoring and raising up the temple of God: a work not to be done by might and power, (according to the common, vulgar notion thereof, by which nothing is reckoned might and power but a visible arm of flesh, hosts and armies, horses and chariots,) "but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."* Then, though the spirits of men swell as mountains, in proud enmity and opposition, (which must be levelled where this building is designed,) those mountains shall appear bubbles: what are they before this great Undertaker? They shall "become a plain," when "the Head-stone is brought forth with shoutings, unto which the cry shall be, Grace, grace." This is "the Stone laid in Zion for a

foundation,[†] sure and tried, elect and precious;[‡] disallowed by men, but chosen of God; the chief Stone of the corner;[§] a living, spirituous Stone," from which is a mighty effluence of life and spirit, all to attract and animate other stones, and draw them into union with itself, so as to compact and raise up this admirable fabric, a "spiritual house for spiritual sacrifice, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ:" a Stone that shall spread life through the whole frame; called therefore a Branch|| as well as a Stone, whereto is attributed the work and the glory of building God's temple. "Behold the Man whose name is the Branch; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord; even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory," &c. ch. 6. A plain indication that the prophecies of that book did not ultimately terminate in the restoration of the temple at Jerusalem; but, more mystically, intended the great comprehensive temple of the living God, which the Messiah should extend and diffuse, by a mighty communication of his Spirit, through the world; when (as is afterwards said, v. 15,) "they that are afar off shall come and build in the temple of the Lord;" "and the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to pray before the Lord, and to seek the Lord of hosts; I will go also. Many people and strong nations," &c. (ch. 8:20–22) "Ten men out of all languages to one Jew, that shall say, We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you." See Mic. 4:2. This, it is said, shall be at Jerusalem, but it must be principally meant of the "New Jerusalem, that cometh down from heaven, that is from above, that is free with her children, and is the mother of us all." And how plentiful an effusion of Spirit, how mighty and general an attraction by it, is signified in all this! By which so deeply rooted an aversion to God and serious living religion, as is known to be common to men, is overcome, and turned into willingness and inclination towards him! And whereby that great primary Temple, CHRIST replenished with the divine fulness, multiplies itself into so

many, or enlarges itself into that one, his church; called also his body, (as both his very body and that church are called his temple,) "the fulness of him that filleth all in all." Nor needs it scruple us, or give us any trouble, that we find this name of a temple placed upon a good man singly and alone, sometimes upon the whole community of such together. Each one bears a double habitude; direct towards God, by which he is capable of being his private mansion; collateral towards our fellow Christians, whereby he is a part of his more enlarged dwelling. Whensoever then any accession is made to this spiritual temple, begun in Christ himself, it is done by a further diffusion of that Spirit, whereof that original Temple is the first receptacle.

VIII. But moreover, because it was a rational subject that was to be wrought upon, it is also to be expected that the work itself be done in a rational way. These that must be made living, and that were before intelligent stones, were not to be hewed, squared, polished, and moved to and fro by a violent hand; but being to be rendered willing, must be dealt with in a way suitable to the effect to be wrought. They are themselves to come as lively stones, to the living Corner-stone, by a vital act of their own will; which, we know, is not to be moved by force, but rational allurements. Wherefore this being the thing to be brought about, it is not enough to inquire or understand by what power, but one would also covet to know by what motive or inducement, is this willingness and vital co-operation brought to pass; and we shall find this original Temple, the Immanuel, had not only in it a spring of sufficient power, but also,

2ndly. Carried with it enough of argument and rational inducement, whereby to persuade and overcome our wills into a cheerful compliance and consent. And that,

IX. [1.] As it was itself the most significant demonstration of divine love, than which nothing is more apt to move and work upon the spirit of man. The bonds of love are "the cords of a man," (Hos. 11:4,) of an attractive power, most peculiarly suitable to human nature: "We love him, because he first loved us." 1 John 4. This is rational magnetism. When in the whole sphere of beings we have so numerous instances of things that propagate themselves, and beget their like; can we suppose the divine love to be only barren and destitute of this power? And we find, among those that are born of God, there is nothing more eminently conspicuous, in this production, than love. This new creature were otherwise a dead creature. This is its very heart, life, and soul; that which acts and moves it towards God, and is the spring of all holy operations. Since then love is found in it, and is so eminent a part of its composition, what should be the parent of this love, but love? Nor is this a blind or unintelligent production, in respect of the manner of it, either on the part of that which begets, or of that which is begotten: not only he who is propagating his own love, designs it, and knows what he is about; but he that is hereby made to love, knows whereto he is to be formed, and receives, through an enlightened mind, the very principle, power, and spirit of love. Is his love the cause of ours; or do we love him, because he loved us first? And what sort of cause is it? or how doth it work its effect, otherwise than as his love testified, and expressing itself, lets us see how reasonable and congruous it is, that we should love back again? As is more than intimated, by the same sacred writer, in that epistle: "Hereby perceive we the love of God," &c. chap. 3:16. Somewhat or other must first render his love perceivable to us, that thereby we may be induced to love him for his own, and our brother for his sake. And again, "We have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love," &c. After which it shortly follows, "We love him, because he loved us first;" q. d. The way of God's bringing us to that love-union with himself, that we by

love dwell in him, and he in us, is, by his representing himself a Being of love. Till he beget in us that apprehension of himself, and we be brought to know and believe the love that he hath towards us, this is not done. But where have we that representation of God's love towards us, save in Immanuel? This is the sum of the ministry of reconciliation, or, which is all one, of making men love God, to wit, "that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself," &c. 2 Cor. 5:18, 19. This was the very make and frame, the constitution and design, of the original Temple, to be the Tabernacle of witness; a visible testimony of the love of God, and of his kind and gracious propensions towards the race of men, however they were become an apostate and degenerate race; to let them see how inclined and willing he was to become acquainted again with them, and that the old intimacy and friendship, long since out-worn, might be renewed. And this gracious inclination was testified, partly by Christ's taking up his abode on earth; or by the erecting of this original Temple, by the "Word's being made flesh," (John 1:14,) wherein (as the Greek expresses it)* he did tabernacle among us. That whereas we did dwell here in earthly tabernacles, (only now destitute and devoid of the Divine Presence,) he most kindly comes and pitches his tent amongst our tents; sets up his tabernacle by ours, replenished and full of God: so that here the divine glory was familiarly visible, the glory of the only-begotten Son of the Father, shining with mild and gentle rays, such as should allure, not affright us, nor their terror make us afraid. A vail is most condescendingly put on, lest majesty should too potently strike disaccustomed and misgiving minds; and what is more terrible of this glory is allayed by being interwoven with "grace and truth." Upon this account might it now truly be proclaimed, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men!" That is performed which once seemed hardly credible, and (when that temple was raised that was intended but for a type and shadow of this) was spoken of with wondering expostulation: "In very deed will God

dwell with men on earth!" Whereas it might have been reasonably thought this world should have been for ever forsaken of God, and no appearance of him ever have been seen here, unless with a design of taking vengeance; how unexpected and surprising a thing was this, that in a state of so comfortless darkness and desolation, the "day-spring from on high should visit it," and that God should come down and settle himself in so mean a dwelling, on purpose to seek the acquaintance of his offending, disaffected creatures! But chiefly and more eminently this his gracious inclination was testified,—

By the manner and design of his leaving this his earthly abode, and yielding that his temple to destruction: "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it up." This being an animated living temple, could not be destroyed without sense of pain, unto which it could not willingly become subject, but upon design; and that could be no other than a design of love. When he could have commanded twelve legions of angels to have been the guardians of this temple, to expose it to the violence of profane and barbarous hands, this could proceed from nothing but love; and greater love could none show, especially if we consider what was the designed event. This temple was to fall but single, that it might be raised manifold: it was intended (as it came to pass) to be multiplied by being destroyed; as himself elegantly illustrates the matter: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit;" (John 12) which he afterwards expresses without a metaphor, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth," signifying, as it follows, the death he should die, "will draw all men unto me."

We will not here insist on what was said before, that hereby the way was opened for the emission of the Spirit, which, when it came forth, performed such wonders in this kind, creating and forming into

temples many a disaffected unwilling heart. Whence it may be seen, that he forsook that his present dwelling, not that he might dwell here no longer, but only to change the manner of his dwelling, and that he might dwell here more to common advantage: the thing he intended, when he came down. He came down, that by dying, and descending low "into the lower parts of the earth," he might make way for a glorious ascent; and ascended, "that he might fill all things;" (Eph. 4) that he might give "gifts to men, even the rebellious also, that he might dwell among them." Ps. 68. Not, I say, to insist on this, which shows the power by which those great effects were wrought, we may also here consider the way wherein they were wrought; i. e. by way of representation and demonstration of the divine love to men. How brightly did this shine, in the glorious ruin and fall of this temple! Herein, how did redeeming love triumph! how mightily did it conquer, and slay the enmity that wrought in the minds of men before! Here he overcame by dying, and slew by being slain. Now were "his arrows sharp in the hearts of enemies," by which they became subject. Ps. 45. What wounded him, did, by a strong reverberation, wound them back again. How inwardly were thousands of them pierced by the sight of him whom they had pierced! How sharp a sting was in those words, "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye crucified, both Lord and Christ!" Acts 2. For it immediately follows, "When they heard this, they were pricked to the heart." They that crucified him, are crucified with him; are now in agonies, and willing to yield to any thing they are required: "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" He may have temples now, for taking them; the most obdurate hearts are overcome: and what could be so potent an argument? what so accommodate to the nature of man? so irresistible by it? To behold this live-temple of the living God, the sacred habitation of a Deity, full of pure and holy life and vigour by vital union with the eternal Godhead, voluntarily devoted and made

subject to the most painful and ignominious suffering, purposely to make atonement for the offence done by revolted creatures against their rightful Lord! What rocks would not rend at this spectacle? Enough to put the creation (as it did) into a paroxysm, and bring upon it travailing pangs! And how strange if the hearts of men, only next and most closely concerned, should alone be unmoved, and without the sense of such pangs! Well might it be said, "I, if I be lift up, will draw all men," without any such diminishing sense as to mean by that all a very few only; not intending so much by it the effect wrought, (though that also be not inconsiderable,) as the power, or natural aptitude of the cause; q. d. This were enough to vanquish and subdue the world, to mollify every heart of man; and to leave the character upon them of most inhuman creatures, and unworthy to be called men, that shall not be drawn. It might be expected, that every one that hath not abandoned humanity, or hath the spirit of a man in him, should be wrought upon by this means: and they cannot but incur most fearful guilt, even all men, who once having notice of this matter, are not effectually wrought upon by it.

Upon which account, the apostle asks the Galatians, (who had not otherwise seen this sight than as the gospel-narrative had represented it to them,) "Who had bewitched them that they should not obey, before whose eyes Christ had been set forth crucified among them;" intimating, that he could not account them less than bewitched, whom the representation of Christ crucified did not captivate into his obedience. And since, in his crucifixion, he was a sacrifice, i. e. placatory and reconciling, and that reconciliations are always mutual, of both the contending parties to one another, it must have the proper influence of a sacrifice immediately upon both, and as well mollify men's hearts towards God, as procure that he should express favourable inclinations towards them. That is, that all enmity should cease, and be abolished for ever; that wrongs be forgotten,

rights restored, and entire friendship, amity, and free converse, be renewed and be made perpetual. All which signifies, that by this means the spirits of men be so wrought upon that they render back to God his own temple, most willingly, not merely from an apprehension of his right, but as overcome by his love; and valuing his Presence more than their own life.

Guilt is very apt to be always jealous. No wonder if the spirits of men, conscious of so great wrong done to God, (and a secret consciousness there may be even where there are not very distinct and explicit reflections upon the case,) be not very easily induced to think God reconcileable. And while he is not thought so, what can be expected but obstinate aversion on their part? For what so hardens as despair? Much indeed might be collected, by deeply-considering minds, of a propension, on God's part, to peace and friendship, from the course of his providence, and present dispensation towards the world; his clemency, long-suffering, and most of all his bounty, towards them. These lead to repentance in their own natural tendency: yet are they but dull, insipid gospel in themselves, to men drowned in sensuality, buried in earthliness, in whom the divine Spirit breathes not, and who have provoked the blessed Spirit to keep at a distance, by having stupified and laid asleep the considering power of their own spirit. Nor are these the usual means, apart and by themselves, which the Spirit of God is wont to work by upon the hearts of men, as experience and observation of the common state of the Pagan world doth sadly testify; and without the concurrence of that blessed Spirit, even the most apt and suitable means avail nothing.

But now, where there is so express a testification, as we find in the gospel of Christ, of God's willingness to be reconciled; a proclamation distinctly made, that imports no other thing but "Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and good will towards men;"

(for confirmation whereof, the Son of God incarnate is represented slain, and offered up a bloody sacrifice; and that we might see at once both that God is reconcilable, by the highest demonstration imaginable, and how or upon what terms he comes to be so;) no place for reasonable doubt any longer remains. We have before our eyes what, by the wonderful strangeness of it, should engage the most stupid minds to consider the matter; what ought to assure the most misgiving, doubtful mind, that God is in good earnest, and intends no mockery or deceit in his offer of peace; and what ought to melt, mollify, and overcome the most obdurate heart. Yea, not only what is in its own nature most apt to work towards the producing these happy effects is here to be found, but wherewith also the Spirit of grace is ready to concur and co-work; it being his pleasure and most fit and comely in itself, that he should choose to unite and fall in with the aptest means, and apply himself to the spirits of men in a way most suitable to their own natures, and most likely to take and prevail with them: whereupon the gospel is called the "ministration of spirit and life, and the power of God to salvation." But that this gospel, animated by that mighty and good Spirit, hath not universally spread itself over all the world, only its own resolved and resisting wickedness is the faulty cause; otherwise there had been gospel, and temples raised by it, everywhere.

X. [2.] This original primary temple hath matter of rational inducement in it, as it gives us a plain representation of divine holiness, brightly shining in human nature. For here was to be seen a most pure, serene, dispassionate mind, unpolluted by any earthly tincture, inhabiting an earthly tabernacle, like our own. A mind adorned with the most amiable, lovely virtues, faith, patience, temperance, godliness; full of all righteousness, goodness, meekness, mercifulness, sincerity, humility; most abstracted from this world, unmoveably intent upon what had reference to a future state of

things, and the affairs of another country; inflexible by the blandishments of sense; not apt to judge by the sight of the eye, or be charmed by what were most grateful to a voluptuous ear; full of pity towards a wretched, sinful world, compassionate to its calamities, unprovoked by its sharpest injuries; bent upon doing the greatest good, and prepared to the suffering of whatsoever evil. Here was presented to common view a life transacted agreeably to such a temper of mind; of one invariable tenor; equal, uniform, never unlike itself, or disagreeing with the exactest or most strict rules. Men might see a God was come down to dwell among them; "The Brightness of the Father's glory, and the express Image of his person;" a Deity inhabiting human flesh, for such purposes as he came for, could not be supposed to carry any more becoming appearance than he did. Here was, therefore, an exemplary example; the fair and lovely pattern of what we were each of us to be composed and formed unto: imitating us (for sweeter insinuation and allurements) in what was merely natural, and inviting us to imitate him in what was (in a communicable sort) supernatural and divine. Every one knows how great is the power of example, and may collect how apt a method this was to move and draw the spirits of men. Had only precepts and instructions been given men, how they were to prepare and adorn in themselves a temple for the living God, it had, indeed, been a great vouchsafement; but how much had it fallen short of what the present state of man did, in point of means, need, and call for! How great a defalcation were it from the gospel, if we did want the history of the life of Christ! But not only to have been told of what materials the temple of God must consist, but to have seen them composed and put together; to have opportunity of viewing the beautiful frame in every part, and of beholding the lovely, imitable glory of the whole, and which we are to follow, though we cannot with equal steps: how merciful condescension, and how great an advantage, is this unto us! We have here a state of entire devotedness to God (the principal

thing in the constitution of his temple) exemplified before our eyes, together with what was most suitable besides to such a state. Do we not see how, in a body of flesh, one may be subject to the will of God? To count the doing of it our meat and drink? When it imposes any thing grievous to be suffered, to say, "Not my will, but thine be done?" How in all things to seek not our own glory, but his; and not to please ourselves, but him? How hereby to keep his blessed Presence with us, and live in his constant converse and fellowship? Never to be left alone, but to have him ever with us, as always aiming to do the things that please him? Do we not know how to be tempted, and abstain; injured, and forgive; disobliged, and do good; to live in a tumultuous world, and be at peace within; to dwell on earth, and have our conversation in heaven? We see all this hath been done, and much more than we can here mention: and by so lively a representation of the brightest divine excellencies beautifying this original exemplary temple, we have a twofold most considerable advantage towards our becoming such; viz. that hereby both the possibility and the loveliness of a temple (the thing we are now ourselves to design) are here represented to our view: by the former whereof we might be encouraged, by the latter allured, unto imitation; that working upon our hope, this upon our desire and love, in order hereto.

First, The possibility. I mean it not in the strict sense only, as signifying no more than that the thing, simply considered, implies no repugnance in itself, nor is without the reach of absolute omnipotence; for as no one needs to be told that such a thing is (in this sense) possible, so to be told it, would signify little to his encouragement. There are many things in this sense not impossible, whereof no man can, however, have the least rational hope: as, that another world may shortly be made: that he may be a prince, or a great man therein; with a thousand the like. But I mean it of what is

possible to divine power, (i. e. to the grace and Spirit of God,) now ready to go forth in a way and method of operation already stated and pitched upon for such purposes. For having the representation before our eyes of this original Temple, i. e. God inhabiting human flesh on earth, we are not merely to consider it as it is in itself, and to look upon it as a strange thing, or as a glorious spectacle, wherein we are no further concerned, than only to look upon it, and take notice that there is or hath been such a thing; but we are to consider how it came to pass, and with what design it was that such a thing should be, and become obvious to our view. Why have we such a sight offered us? or what imports it unto us? And when we have informed ourselves, by taking the account the gospel gives us of this matter, and viewed the inscription of that great name Immanuel, by wonderful contrivance, inwrought into the very constitution of this temple, we shall then find this to be intended for a leading case; and that this temple was meant for a model and platform of that which we ourselves are to become; or, after which the temple of God in us must be composed and formed: and so, that this matter is possible to an ordinate, divine power, even to that mighty Spirit that resides eminently in this temple, on purpose to be transmitted thence to us, for the framing of us to the likeness of it; and so that the thing is not merely possible, but designed also, viz. that "as he was, so we might be in this world:" (1 John 4) unto which is necessary our believing intuition towards him, or a fiducial acknowledgment that this Jesus is the Son of God, come down on purpose into human flesh, to bring about a union between God and us; whereupon that union itself ensues: the matter is brought about, we come "to dwell in God, and he in us," v. 15. And this we collect and conclude from hence, that we find the same Spirit working and breathing in us, which did in him; "Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit," v. 13. And though it was an unmeasured fulness of this Spirit which dwelt in this primary temple, yet we are

taught and encouraged hence to expect that a sufficient and proportionable measure be imparted to us, that we may appear not altogether unlike or unworthy of him; that this temple and ours are of the same make, and "both he that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified, are all of one;" that we so far agree with our original, that he may "not be ashamed to call us brethren," Heb. 2. And how aptly doth this tend to excite and raise our hope of some great thing to be effected in this kind in us, when we have the matter thus exemplified already before our eyes, and do behold the exact and perfect model according whereto we ourselves are to be framed! Nor doth that signify a little to the drawing of our wills, or the engaging us to a consent and co-operation, as the under-builders, in the work of this temple. A design that in itself appears advantageous, needs no more to set it on foot, than that it be represented hopeful. No one, that understands anything of the nature of man, is ignorant of the power of hope. This one engine moves the world, and keeps all men busy. Every one soon finds his present state not perfectly good, and hopes some way to make it better; otherwise, the world were a dull scene. Endeavour would languish, or rather be none at all: for there were no room left for design, or a rational enterprising of anything; but a lazy unconcerned trifling, without care which end goes forward, and with an utter indifferency whether to stir or sit still. Men are not, in their other designs, without hope, but their hope is placed upon things of no value; and when they have gained the next thing they hoped for and pursued, they are as far still as they were from what they meant that for. They have obtained their nearer end, but therein mistook their way, which they designed by it, to their further end. When they have attained to be rich, yet they are not happy; perhaps much further from it than before. When they have preyed upon the pleasure they had in chase, they are still unsatisfied; it may be, guilty reflections turn it all to gall and wormwood. Many such disappointments might make them consider, at length, they have

been out all this while, and mistaken the whole nature and kind of the good that must make them happy. They may come to think with themselves, Somewhat is surely lacking, not only to our present enjoyment, but to our very design; somewhat it must be without the compass of all our former thoughts, wherein our satisfying good must lie. God may come into their minds; and they may cry out, Oh! that is it; here it was I mistook, and had forgot myself. Man once had a God! and that God had his temple, wherein he resided, and did converse with man: hither he must be invited back. Yea, but his temple lies all in ruin, long ago deserted and disused, forsaken upon provocation, and with just resentment; the ruin to be repaired by no mortal hand; the wrong done to be expiated by no ordinary sacrifice. All this imports nothing but despair. But let now the Immanuel be brought in, this original Temple be offered to view, and the design and intent of it be unfolded and laid open, and what a spring of hope is here! Or what can now be wanting to persuade a wretched soul of God's willingness to return? Or, being now sensible of his misery by his absence, to make it willing of his return; yea, and to contribute the utmost endeavour that all things may be prepared and put into due order for his reception? Or if anything should be still wanting, it is but what may more work upon desire, as well as beget hope; and to this purpose, a narrower view of this original Temple also serves; that is, it not only shows the possibility, but gives us opportunity to contemplate,

2. The loveliness too of such a temple. For here is the fairest representation that ever this world had, or that could be had, of this most delectable object. The divine holiness incarnate did never shine so bright. And we may easily apprehend the great advantage of having so lively and perfect a model set before us of what we are to design and aim at. Rules and precepts could never have afforded so full a description, or have furnished us with so perfect an idea. He

that goes to build a house, must have the project formed in his mind before; and (as hath been said) he is to make a material house of an immaterial. So here, we may say the real house is to be built out of the mental or notional one. It is true indeed, when we have got into our minds the true and full idea or model of this temple, our greatest difficulty is not yet over: how happy were it, if the rest of our work would as soon be done, and our hearts would presently obey our light; If they were ductile, and easy to yield, and receive the stamp and impression that would correspond to a well enlightened mind; if we could presently become conform and like to the notions we have of what we should be! What excellent creatures should we appear! if on the sudden our spirits did admit the habitual, fixed frame of holiness, whereof we sometimes have the idea framed in our minds! But though to have that model truly formed in our understandings be not sufficient, it is however necessary; and although our main work is not immediately done by it, it can never be done without it. Truth is the means of holiness: "Sanctify them through thy truth," John 17:17. "God hath chosen us to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth," 2 Thess. 2:3. Therefore it is our great advantage to have the most entire and full notion that may be, of that temper and frame of spirit we should be of. When the charge was given Moses of composing the tabernacle, (that moveable temple,) he had the perfect pattern of it shown him in the mount. And to receive the very notion aright of this spiritual living temple, requires a some-way prepared mind, purged from vicious prejudice and perverse thoughts, possessed with dislike of our former pollutions and deformities; antecedent whereto is a more general view of that frame whereunto we are to be composed, and then a more distinct representation is consequent thereon. As we find the prophet is directed first to "show the people the house, that they might be ashamed;" whereupon it follows, "if they be ashamed of all that they have done, then he must show them the form of the house, and the

fashion thereof, and the goings out thereof, and the comings in thereof, and all the ordinances thereof," Ezek. 43:10, 11. How much would it conduce to the work and service of God's temple in us, if upon our having had some general intimation of his gracious propensions towards us, to repair our ruins, and restore our forlorn, decayed state, we begin to lament after him, and conceive inward resentments of the impurities and desolations of our souls; and shall now have the distinct representation set before our eyes, of that glorious workmanship which he means to express in our renovation! How taking and transporting a sight will this be to a soul that is become vile and loathsome in its own eyes, and weary of being as "without God in the world!" But now, wherein shall he be understood to give us so exact an account of his merciful intendments and design in this matter, as by letting us see how his glory shone in his own incarnate Son, his express Image; and then signifying his pleasure and purpose to have us conformed to the same image. This is his most apt and efficacious method, when he goes about to raise his new creation, and erect his inner temple; (as it was, in some respect, his way, when he made his first great outer temple of the world;) "God, that commanded light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ," 2 Cor. 4. That glory shines with greatest advantage, to our transformation, in the face or aspect of Immanuel. When we set our faces that way, and our eye meets his, we put ourselves into a purposed posture of intuition, and do steadily "look to Jesus;" "when we, with open face, behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord, we are changed from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord," 2 Cor. 3. His very Spirit enters with those vital beams; enters at our eye, and is thence transfused through our whole soul.

The seed and generative principle of the new creature is truth; "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but incorruptible, the word of

God," 1 Pet. 1:23. We must understand it of practical truth, or that which serves to show what we are to be and do, (ch. 2:1–4,) in our new and regenerate state. Hereby souls are begotten to God, hereby they live and grow, hereby they come and join as living stones to the living Corner-stone, in the composition of this spiritual house: as we see the series of discourse runs in this context. Now we have this practical truth, not only exhibited in aphorisms and maxims in the word, but we have it exemplified in the life of Christ. And when the great renovating work is to be done, the old man to be put off, the new man to be put on, the spirit of our mind to be renewed; our business is to learn Christ, and "the truth as it is in Jesus:" (Eph. 4:20–24,) so is accomplished the formation of that new man that is "after God." And when we become his (second) workmanship, we are created in Christ Jesus unto good works; caught into union with that Spirit, which showed itself in the whole course of his conversation on earth, and is gradually to work and form us to an imitation of him. Whereunto we are not formed by mere looking on, or by our own contemplation of his life and actions, on the one hand: (our rigid hardness and stiff aversion to such a temper and course as his was, is not so easily altered and overcome:) nor, on the other hand, is our looking on useless and in vain, as if we were to be formed, like mere stones, into dead unmoving statues, rather than living temples; or as if his Spirit were to do that work upon us, by a violent hand, while we know nothing of the matter, nor any way comply to the design. But the work must be done by the holding up the representation of this primary Temple before our eyes, animated and replenished with divine life and glory, as our pattern, and the type by which we are to be formed; till our hearts be captivated and won to the love and liking of such a state, i. e. to be so united with God, so devoted to him, so stamped and impressed with all imitable Godlike excellencies, as he was;—we are to be so enamoured herewith, as to be impatient of remaining what we were before. And such a view

contributed directly hereto, and in a way suitable to our natures. Mere transient discourses of virtue and goodness seem cold and unsavoury things to a soul drenched in sensuality, sunk into deep forgetfulness of God, and filled with aversion to holiness: but the tract and course of a life evenly transacted in the power of the Holy Ghost, and that is throughout uniform, and constantly agreeable to itself, is apt, by often repeated insinuations, (as drops wear stones,) insensibly to recommend itself as amiable, and gain a liking even with them that were most opposite and disaffected. For the nature of man, in its most degenerate state, is not wholly destitute of the notions of virtue and goodness, nor of some faint approbation of them. The names of sincerity, humility, sobriety, meekness, are of better sound and import, even with the worst of men, than of deceit, pride, riot, and wrathfulness: nor are they wont to accuse any for those former things, under their own names. Only when they see the broken and more imperfect appearances of them, and that they are rather offered at than truly and constantly represented in practice; this begets a prejudice, and the pretenders to them become suspected of hypocrisy, or a conceited singularity, and are not censured as not being grossly evil, but rather that they are not thoroughly good. But when so unexceptionable a course is in constant view as our Saviour's was, this procures, even from the ruder vulgar, an acknowledgment, "He doth all things well," and carries that lustre and awful majesty, as to command a veneration and respect; yea, is apt to allure those that more narrowly observe into a real love both of him and his way; especially when it hath such a close and issue as appears no way unworthy of himself, or his former pretensions; but all being taken together, resolves into the plainest demonstration of most sincere devotedness to God, and "good will to men;" upon which the great stress is laid: "And I, if I be lift up, will draw all men unto me." And how great a thing is done towards our entire compliance with the Redeemer's design of making

us temples to the living God, as he himself was, when he, under that very notion, appears amiable in our eyes? How natural and easy is imitation unto love! All the powers of the soul are now, in the most natural way, excited and set on work; and we shall not easily be induced to satisfy ourselves, or admit of being at rest, till we attain a state with the loveliness whereof our hearts are once taken and possessed beforehand. But nothing of all this is said with design, nor hath any tendency to diminish or detract from that mighty power of the blessed Spirit of God, by whom men become willing of the return of the Divine Presence into its ancient residence, and, in subordination, active towards it; but rather to magnify the excellency of that wisdom, which conducts all the exertions and operations of that power so suitably to the subject to be wrought upon, and the ends and purposes to be effected thereby.

Upon the whole, the setting up of this original temple, inscribed with the great name Immanuel, or the whole constitution of Christ the Mediator, hath, we see, a very apparent aptitude and rich sufficiency in its kind, to the composing of things between God and men; the replenishing this desolate world with temples again every where, and those with the Divine Presence; both as there was enough in it to procure remission of sin, enough to procure the emission of the Holy Spirit: an immense fulness both of righteousness and Spirit; of righteousness for the former purpose, and of Spirit for the latter: and both of these, in distinct ways, capable of being imparted; because the power of imparting them was upon such terms obtained, as did satisfy the malediction and curse of the violated law, which must otherwise have everlastingly withheld both from apostate, offending creatures. It is not the righteousness of God, as such, that can make a guilty creature guiltless, (which must rather oblige him still to hold him guilty,) or the Spirit of God, as such, that can make him holy. Here is a full fountain, but sealed and shut up; and what are we the

better for that? But it is the righteousness and Spirit of Immanuel, "God with us;" of him "who was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him;" and "who was made a curse for us" that we might have "the blessing of the promised Spirit;" otherwise, there were not in him a sufficiency to answer the exigency of the case; but, as the matter is, here is abundant sufficiency in both respects, as we have already seen. And therefore, the only thing that remains to be shown herein,—is the necessity and requisiteness of such means as this, unto this end. For when we take notice of so great and so rare a thing as an Immanuel, set up in the world: and find by this solemn constitution of him, by the condition of his person, his accomplishments, performances, sufferings, acquisitions, the powers and virtues belonging to him, that every thing hath so apt an aspect, and is so accommodate to the restitution of lost man, and of God's temple in and with him; we cannot but confess, here is contrivance worthy of God, sufficient for its end. So that the work needs not fail of being done, if in this way it prove not to be overdone; or if the apparatus be not greater than was needful for the intended end; or that the same purposes might not have been effected at an easier rate. I design therefore to speak distinctly and severally of the necessity of this course, in reference, 1. to the remission of sin, and 2. to the emission or communication of the Spirit: and do purposely reserve several things concerning this latter, to be discoursed under this head: after the necessity of this same course for the former purpose, (wherein the latter also hath its foundation) hath been considered.

CHAPTER XII

The necessity of this constitution of Immanuel to the erecting God's temple in the world. The discoursing of this matter, proper on this occasion. As to God's part therein, first proposed to show both that a recompence was necessary to be made; and, that it could be made no other way. Towards the evincing the former, sundry things gradually laid down. The point itself argued, by comparing the injury done to the divine, with what we may suppose done to a human, government, where repentance not constantly thought a sufficient recompence; otherwise a penitent delinquent was never to be punished. Difference between God's pardon, and man's, in most usual cases. Recompence for wrong done to government, quite another thing from what answers the appetite of private revenge. Expressions that seem to import it in God, how to be understood. Shown that they import no more than a constant will so far to punish offences, as is necessary for the asserting and preserving the rights and dignity of his government. So much most agreeable, and necessarily belonging, to the perfection of the divine nature. And if the justice of a human government requires it, of the divine much more.

I. IT may here perhaps be said, Why might not the matter have been otherwise brought about? Or, might not God, of his mere sovereignty, have remitted the wrong done to him, without any such atonement; and, upon the same account, have sent forth his Spirit to turn men's hearts? And if that must work by arguments and rational persuasives, were there not others to have been used, sufficient to this purpose, though the Son of God had never become man, or died upon this account? To use means exceeding the value of the end may seem as unsuitable to the divine wisdom as not to have used sufficient. And who can think the concernments of silly worms impossible to be managed, and brought to a fair and happy issue, without so great things as the incarnation and death of God's own Son?

Wherefore, we proceed to show, as was promised,—

Secondly, The necessity, as the case stood, that this course should be taken for this end. No man can here think we mean that the end itself was otherwise necessary, than as the freest love and good will made it so; but that supposed, we are only to evince that this course was the necessary means to attain it. And as to this, if indeed that modesty and reverence were everywhere to be found, wherewith it would become dim-sighted man to judge of the ways of God, any inquiry of this kind might be forborne; and it would be enough to put us out of doubt that this was the most equal and fittest way, that we see it is the way which God hath taken. But that cross temper hath found much place in the world, rather to dispute God's methods, than comport with them, in an obedient, thankful compliance, and subserviency to their intended ends. And how deeply is it to be resented, that so momentous a thing in the religion of Christians—and that above all other should be the subject and incentive of admiring, devout thoughts and affections—should ever have been made intricate and perplexed by disputation! That the food of life should have been filled with thorns and gravel! And what was most apt to beget good blood, and turn all to strength, vigour, and spirit, should be rendered the matter of a disease! This can never enough be taken to heart. What complaints might the tortured, famished church of Christ send up against the ill instruments of so great a mischief! "Lord! we asked bread, and they gave us a stone. They have spoiled the provisions of thy house. Our pleasantest fare, most delicious and strengthening viands, they have made tasteless and unsavoury." What expostulations might it use with them! "Will you not let us live? Can nothing in our religion be so sacred, so important, as to escape your perverting hands?"

The urgency of the case itself permits not that this matter be silently passed over: a living temple needs the apt means of nourishment and growth; and it must be nourished and grow by what is suitable to its constitution: unto which nothing is more inward, than the laying this living Corner-stone.

We will acknowledge the reasons of divers things in God's determinations and appointments may be very deeply hidden, not only from our more easy view, but our most diligent search: where they are, his telling us the matter is so, or so, is reason enough to us to believe with reverence. But when they offer themselves, we need not be afraid to see them; and when the matter they concern is brought in question, should be afraid of being so treacherous as not to produce them.

Now that it was requisite this temple should be so founded as hath been said, is a matter not only not repugnant to the common reason of man, but which fairly approves itself thereunto: that is, so far as that, though it exceed all human thought the great Lord of heaven and earth, infinitely injured by the sin of man, should so wonderfully condescend, yet when his good pleasure is plainly expressed, touching the end, nothing could be so apparently congruous, so worthy of himself, so accommodate to his design, as the way which he hath avowedly taken to bring it about. That it might be brought about, (as in all reconciliations, and as hath been said concerning this,) a compliance was necessary, and a mutual yielding of both the distanced parties; i. e. that God consent to return to his desolate temple, and that man consent or be willing he should.

We have shown that the constitution and use of the original temple, whereof the account hath been given, was sufficient, and aptly conducing unto both. Now being to show wherein they were also

requisite or necessary to the one and the other, we must acknowledge them not alike immediately necessary to each of these; and must therefore divide the things in order whereto this course was taken, and speak of them severally. Nor are they to be so divided, as though the procurement of God's return for his part, and of man's admitting thereof for his part, were throughout to be severally considered; for God's part is larger than man's, and someway runs into it: he is not only to give his own consent, but to gain man's; and besides his own willing return to repossess this his temple, he is to make man willing also: or rather, that return or repossession, rightly understood, will be found to include the making of man willing; i. e. in that very return and repossession he is to put forth that measure of power and influence, by which he may be made so. All this is God's part, which he doth graciously undertake, and without which nothing could be effected in this matter. But then because man is to be wrought upon in a way suitable to his reasonable nature, he is to have such things offered to his consideration, as in their own nature tend to persuade him; and which that power and Spirit, to be put forth, may use as proper means to that purpose. Now it is man's part to consider such things, and consent thereupon. Our business here, therefore, is to show how necessary the constitution of Immanuel was, chiefly and principally as to what now appears to be God's part: and afterward, to say somewhat as to our own.—To the former it was requisite that the Original Temple, Immanuel, should be set up, and be used to such immediate purposes as have been expressed: to the latter, was requisite the declaration hereof.—To the one, that such a constitution should be; to the other, that it be made known to man.

II. First, then in reference to the former, this constitution was necessary, that so there might be a sufficient means for the previous expiation of the offence done to the majesty of God; or that the injurious violation of his sacred rights might be sufficiently

recompensed. And here, more particularly, two things are to be cleared;

First, That in order to God's return, it was necessary, such a full recompence should be made him.

Secondly, That it could not be full any other way than this by Immanuel.*

In discoursing of which things, it is not intended to go in the usual way of controversy, to heap up a great number of arguments, and discuss particularly every little cavil that may be raised on the contrary part; but plainly to offer such considerations as may tend to clear the truth, and rather prevent, than formally answer, objections against it.

Wherefore we say, 1 It was necessary God's return and vouchsafement of his gracious restored presence to man, as his temple, should be upon terms of recompence made him (or as certain to be made) for the indignity and wrong done in the former violation thereof.

We do not here need to be curious in inquiring whether the consideration of this recompence to be made, had influence on the gracious purpose of God in this matter, or only on the execution thereof. Nor indeed hath the doubt any proper ground in the present case which, where it hath disquieted the minds of any, seems to have proceeded from our too great aptness to measure God by ourselves, and prescribe to him the same methods we ourselves are wont to observe. That is, we find it is our way, when we have a design to bring about upon which we are intent first to propound the end to ourselves which we would have effected, then to deliberate and consult by what means to effect it: whereupon, we assign to the

blessed God the same course. But to him, all his works are known from the beginning of the world: and he ever beheld, at one view, the whole tract and course of means whereby any thing is to be done, which he intends, with the intended end itself. So that we have no reason to affix to him any thought or purpose of favour towards the sinful sons of men, ancients or more early than his prospect of the way wherein that favourable purpose was to be accomplished.

Nor again can any act or purpose of his towards his creatures be otherwise necessary to him, than from the essential rectitude of the counsels of his own will; the determinations whereof are such as might not have been, or might have been otherwise, where the thing determined was, by those measures, a matter of indifference. Where it was not so, they are (however necessary, yet also) in that sense most free; as they are directed and approved by his infinite wisdom, and attended with that complacency which naturally accompanies any act or purpose that is in itself most unexceptionably congruous, just, and good.

It may furthermore be truly said, that nothing ought to be reckoned possible to him, upon the agreement only which it holds to some one attribute of his, considered singly and apart from all the rest: as, for instance, in what is next our present case, to forgive all the sins that ever were committed against him, without insisting upon any compensation, were vainly alleged to be correspondent to boundless sovereign mercy, if it will not, as well, accord with infinite wisdom, justice, and holiness: as it would be unreasonably said to be agreeable enough to him, to throw all the creatures, that never offended him, into an endless nothingness, in consideration only of the absoluteness of his power and dominion. But whatsoever he can do, must be understood to be agreeable to a Being absolutely and every way perfect.

Moreover we add, that whatsoever is most congruous and fit for him to do, that is truly necessary to him: he cannot swerve in the least tittle, we will not only say from what strict and rigorous justice doth exact and challenge, but also from what is requisite, under the notion of most comely and decent. Hath it been said of a mortal man, that it was as easy to alter the course of the sun, as to turn him from the path of righteousness? We must suppose it of the eternal God equally impossible that he should be diverted from, or ever omit to do, what is most seemly, becoming, and worthy of himself. In such things wherein he is pleased to be our pattern, what we know to be our own duty, we must conclude is his nature: we ought to be found neither in an unjust act or omission, nor undecent one; and he cannot. And if it belong to us to do what is good, it more necessarily belongs to him to do what is best; i. e. in all things that are any way capable of coming under a moral consideration: for as in other matters it is permitted to us to act arbitrarily, so there is nothing hinders but he may much more. Wherefore it is not hence to be thought that therefore it was necessary this universe and everything in it should have been made as perfect as they could be: as, if we ourselves will make anything for our own use, nothing obliges us to be so very curious about it, as that it may be as neat and accurate as we can devise to make it; it will suffice if it be such as will serve our turn. And indeed, in the works of nature, it would have been less worthy of God to have expressed a scrupulous curiosity that nothing might ever fall out besides one fixed rule, (especially in a state of things designed for no long continuance,) that should extend to all imaginable particularities; as that all men should be of the comeliest stature, all faces of the most graceful aspect, with a thousand the like. But in matters wherein there can be better and worse, in a moral sense, it seems a principle of the plainest evidence, that the blessed God cannot but do that which is simply the best; yea, while a necessity is upon us not only to mind things that are true, and just, and pure, but also that are lovely

and of good report, we have no cause to doubt, but whatsoever is comely, and beseeming his most perfect excellences, is an eternal, indispensable law to him: wherefore it is not enough to consider, in the present case, what it were strictly not unjust for him to do, but what is fit and becoming so excellent and glorious a majesty as his.

Nor now can it be a doubt, but that he only is the competent Judge of what is becoming and worthy of himself; or what is most congruous, and fit in itself, to be done; (Isa. 40) "Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor, hath instructed him?" &c. Surely the best reason we can exercise in this case, is to think that course reasonable which we find God hath chosen, although we had no insight at all into the matter. There are many constitutions which we have occasion to observe in the course of God's government over the world, which, by the constancy of them, we have ground to think founded in indispensable necessity; though the reasons, whereupon they are necessary, are most deeply latent and hidden from us. Not to speak of the abstruser paths and methods of nature, wherein while we observe a constancy, yet perhaps we apprehend it might have been some other way, as well; perhaps it might, but it is more than we know: and though, as hath been said, we have reason to suppose that the ways God hath taken in matters of this sort may be more absolutely arbitrary, yet the constant iteration of the same thing, or continuation of the ancient settled course, shows the peremptoriness of the Creator's counsel, and seems to carry with it an implied rebuke of our ignorant rashness, in thinking it might as well be otherwise, and a stiff asserting of his determinations against us. There are none so well studied naturalists, as to be able to give a rational account why it is so, and so, in many instances; wherein they may yet discern the inflexibleness of nature, and perceive her methods to be as unalterable as they are unaccountable. It is true, this is obvious to be seen by any eye, that where things are well, as they are, constancy

doth better than innovation or change; but it very much becomes human modesty to suppose that there may, in many cases, be other reasons to justify the present course, which we see not. But we may, with more advantage, consider the fixedness of that order which God hath set unto the course of his dispensation towards his intelligent creatures, wherein we shall only instance in some few particulars.

As, first, that there is so little discernible commerce, in the present state, between the superior rank of these creatures, and the inferior; that whereas we are well assured there are intelligent creatures, which inhabit not earthly bodies like ours, but hold an agreement with us in greater things; they yet so rarely converse with us. When we consider, that such of them as remain innocent, and such of us as are, by divine mercy, recovered out of a state of apostacy, are all subject to the same common Lord; observe the more substantial things of the same law; have all the same common end; are acted by the same principle of love, devotedness, and zeal for the interest and honour of the great Maker and Lord of all things; we are all to make up one community with them, and be associates in the same future blessed state: yet they have little intercourse with us—they shun our sight. If sometimes they appear, it is by transient, hasty glances: they are strangely shy and reserved towards us; they check our inquiries; put us, and appear to be themselves, in reference thereto, under awful restraints. We know not the reason of all this: sometimes we may think with ourselves, Those pure and holy spirits cannot but be full of kindness, benignity, and love, and concerned for us poor mortals, whom they see put to tug and conflict with many difficulties and calamities; abused by the cunning malice of their and our enemy; imposed upon by the illusions of our own senses: how easily might they make many useful discoveries to us, relieve our ignorance in many things, acquaint us more expressly with the state of things in the other world, rectify our dark or mistaken apprehensions

concerning many both religious and philosophical matters! But they refrain, and we know not why.

Again, that in the days of our Saviour's converse on earth, there should be so strange a connexion, as to them on whom he wrought miraculous cures, between the divine power and their faith; so that sometimes we find it expressly said, "He could do no mighty work, because of their unbelief."

And we, lastly, instance in the fixedness of that course which God hath set for making known to the world the contents of the gospel of Christ: so that little is ever done therein, immediately, or by extraordinary means. The apostle Paul is stopped in the career of his persecution, by an amazing voice and vision; but he is left for instruction as to his future course, to Ananias. Unto Cornelius an angel is sent, not to preach the gospel, but to direct him to send for Peter for that purpose. The Lord doth not immediately himself instruct the Eunuch in the faith of Christ, but directs Philip to do it. And experience shows, that (according to the rule set in that case, Rom. 10) where they have no preachers they have no gospel.

Now as to all these cases, and many more that might be thought on, can it be said it would have been unjust, if God had ordered the matter otherwise than he hath? That we cannot so much as imagine; nor are we to think the matter determined as it is, in all such cases, by mere will and pleasure, without a reason; which were an imagination altogether unworthy the supreme wisdom: but that there are reasons of mighty force and weight, or certain congruities, in the natures of things themselves, obvious to the divine understanding, which do either wholly escape ours, or whereof we have but very shallow, dark, conjectural apprehensions; as he that saw men as trees, or as some creatures of very acute sight perceive

what to us seems invisible. And yet those occult and hidden reasons and congruities have been the foundation of constitutions and laws that hold things more steadily than adamantine bands, and are of more stability than the foundations of heaven and earth.

Furthermore, it is to be considered that the rights of the divine government; the quality and measure of offences committed against it, and when or upon what terms they may be remitted; or in what case it may be congruous to the dignity of that government to recede from such rights; are matters of so high a nature, that it becomes us to be very sparing in making an estimate about them; especially a more diminishing one than the general strain of Scripture seems to hold forth. Even among men, how sacred things are majesty and the rights of government, and how much above the reach of a vulgar judgment! Suppose a company of peasants, that understand little more than what is within the compass of their mattock, plough, and shovel, should take upon them to judge of the rights of their prince, and make an estimate of the measure of offences committed against the majesty and dignity of government; how competent judges would we think them! And will we not acknowledge the most refined human understanding as incompetent to judge of the rights of the divine government, or measure the injuriousness of an offence done against it, as the meanest peasant to make an estimate of these matters in a human government? If only the reputation be wronged of a person of better quality, how strictly is it insisted on to have the matter tried by peers, or persons of equal rank; such as are capable of understanding honour and reputation! How would it be resented, if an affront put upon a nobleman should be committed to the judgment of smiths and cobblers; especially if they were participes criminis, and as well parties as judges.

When the regalia of the great Ruler, and Lord of heaven and earth, are invaded, his temple violated, his presence despised, his image torn down thence and defaced; who among the sons of men are either great, or knowing, or innocent enough, to judge of the offence and wrong; or how fit it is that it be remitted without recompence; or what recompence would be proportionable? How supposable is it, that there may be congruities in this matter obvious to the divine understanding, which infinitely exceed the measure of ours?

III. And yet, because God speaks to us about these matters, and they are our own concernments, as being of the offending parties, it is necessary we apply our minds to understand them, and possible to us to attain to a true, though not to a full, understanding of them. And though we can never fully comprehend in our own thoughts the horror of the case, that reasonable creatures, made after God's image, so highly favoured by him, capable of blessedness in him, uncapable of it any other way, should have arrived to that pitch of wickedness towards him, and unnaturalness towards themselves, as to say to him, "Depart from us," and cut themselves off from him; though we may sooner lose ourselves in the contemplation, and be overwhelmed by our own thoughts, than ever see through the monstrous evil of this defection; yet we may soon see it incomparably to transcend the measure of any offence that can ever be done by one creature against another, or of the most scandalous affront the meanest, the vilest, the most ungrateful, ill-natured wretch could have devised to put upon the greatest, the most benign, the best deserving prince the world ever knew. And if we can suppose an offence, of that kind, may be of so heinous a nature, and so circumstanced, as that it cannot be congruous it should be remitted without some reparation made to the majesty of the prince, and compensation for the scandal done to government, it is easy to suppose it much more incongruous it should be so in the present

case. Yea, and as it can never be thought congruous that such an offence against a human governor should be pardoned without the intervening repentance of the delinquent, so we may easily apprehend also the case to be such as that it cannot be fit it should be pardoned upon that alone, without other recompence. Whereof if any should doubt, I would demand, Is it in any case fit that a penitent delinquent against human laws and government should be punished, or a proportionable recompence be exacted for his offence, notwithstanding? Surely it will be acknowledged ordinarily fit: and who would take upon him to be the censor of the common justice of the world in all such cases; or to damn the proceedings of all times and nations wheresoever a penitent offender hath been made to suffer the legal punishment of his offence, notwithstanding his repentance? How strange a maxim of government would that be, That it is never fit an offender, of whatsoever kind, should be punished, if he repent himself of his offence! And surely if ever, in any case, somewhat else than repentance be fitly insisted on as a recompence for the violation of the sacred rights of government, it may well be supposed to be so in the case of man's common delinquency and revolt from God, much more.

Unto which purpose it is further to be considered, that in this case the matter is much otherwise between God and man, than for the most part between a secular prince and a delinquent subject; that is, that pardon, be it never so plenary, doth, as pardon, no more than restore the delinquent into as good a condition as he was in before. But what was, for the most part, the case before of delinquent subjects? There are very few that were before the prince's favourites, his intimate associates and friends, with whom he was wont familiarly to converse. Very often the condition of the offender was such before, that his pardon only saves him from the gallows; lets him live, and enjoy only the poor advantages of his former mean

condition; and not always that neither: yea, or if he were one whose higher rank and other circumstances had entitled him to a nearest attendance on the person of the prince, and a daily, inward conversation with him; it is possible he might be pardoned with limitation as to his life, or it may be, further, to his estate, without being restored to the honours and offices about the person of the prince, which he held only by royal favour: for though princely compassion might extend so far as to let his offence be expiated by less than his utter ruin, yet also his prudent respect to the dignity of his government might not admit that a person under public infamy should have the liberty of his presence, intermingle with his counsels, or be dignified with more special marks of his favour and kindness. Whereas, in the restitution of man, inasmuch as before he was the temple and residence of the great King, where he afforded his most inward, gracious presence; the design is to restore him into the same capacity, and to as good condition as he was in before in these respects: yea, and not only so, but unspeakably to better his case, to take him much nearer to himself than ever, and into a more exalted state. In order whereto, it was the more highly congruous that his offence be done away by a most perfect, unexceptionable expiation; that so high and great an advancement of the most heinous offenders, might not be brought about upon other terms than should well accord with the majesty of his government over the world.

IV. Here, therefore, let a comparative view be taken

Of the fearful malediction and curse of God's law upon the transgressors of it;

And of the copious blessing of the gospel.

That thereupon we may the more clearly judge how improbable it was there should be so vast a difference, and translation between two so distant states, without atonement made for transgression of so high demerit, and so deeply resented.

As to the former, we are in the general told, (Gal. 3) that "cursed is every one that continues not in all things written in the book of the law to do them." Astonishing thing! That He should curse me, who made me! That my being, and a curse upon me, should proceed from the word and breath of the same sacred mouth! Of how terrible import is his curse! To be made an anathema, separate and cut off from God, and from all the dutiful and loyal part of his creation! Driven forth from his delightful presence! In the same breath, it is said to the loathed wretch, "Depart—accursed!" To be reduced to the condition of a "vagabond on the earth," not knowing whither to go! Naked of divine protection from any violent hand: yea, marked out for the butt of the sharpest arrows of his own indignation! How voluminous and extensive is his curse! reaching to all one's concernments in both worlds, temporal and eternal, of outward and inward man. To be cursed in one's basket and store, in the city and field, in going out and coming in! Especially to have all God's curses and plagues meeting and centring in one's very heart, to be there smitten with blindness, madness, and astonishment! How efficacious is this curse! Not a faint, impotent wishing ill to a man, but under which he really wastes, and which certainly blasts, withers, and consumes him, and even turns his very blessings into curses! How closely adhering, as a garment wherewith he is clothed, and as a girdle with which he is girt continually! How secretly and subtly insinuating, as water into his bowels, and oil into his bones! And how deservedly doth it befall! The curse causeless shall not come; this can never be without a cause. If another curse me, it shows he hates me; if the righteous God do so, it signifies me to be in myself an hateful

creature, a son and heir, not of peace, but of wrath and a curse. And the effect must be of equal permanency with its cause; so as that "God is angry with the wicked every day," and "rains upon them fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest, as the portion of their cup;"—"indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that does evil;" and continually growing into a treasure, "against the day of wrath."

View, on the other hand, the copious, abundant blessing contained and conveyed in the gospel. It is a call to blessing, that we may inherit a blessing: it discovers a state begun with the blessedness of having iniquity forgiven; a course, under a continued blessing, of meditating on the word of God with delight, day and night; of being undefiled in the way: gives characters of the subjects of blessings showered down from the mouth of Christ on the "poor in spirit, pure in heart, the meek, merciful," &c.: aims at making them nigh, that were afar off; taking them into God's own family and household; making them friends, favourites, domestics, sons, and daughters; engaging them in a fellowship with the Father, and Son: yet were all these the children of wrath, by nature. Whence is this change? A regression became not the majesty of heaven: God's original constitution, that connected sin and the curse, was just; he abides by it, reverses it not. To have reversed it, was not to have judged the offenders, but himself: but having a mind to show men mercy, he provides for the expiation of sin, and salving the rights of his government, another way—by transferring guilt and the curse, not nulling them.

V. Whereupon, we may also see what made atonement for sin so fundamental to a design of grace; the "magnifying the divine law;" (Isa. 42:21,) the asserting the equity and righteousness of the supreme government: not, as some odiously suggest, the gratifying of

what, with us, is wont to go for a private appetite of revenge, from which the support of the honour and dignity of the government is most remote; yea, it were horrid to suppose that any such thing can have place with the blessed God, which is one of the most odious things in the disposition of lapsed, degenerate man—an aptness to take complacency in the pains and anguish of such as have offended us; unto which purpose, how feelingly would a malicious, ill-minded man, oftentimes utter the sense of his heart, and say, O the sweetness of revenge! So black a thought of God will be most remote from every pious breast, or that is capable of savouring real goodness. Nor doth any precept within the whole compass of that revelation which he hath given us, express more fully, at once, both our duty and his own nature, than that of loving our enemies, or of forgiving men their trespasses. There is, perhaps, somewhere (but O how rarely!) to be found among men, that benign, generous temper of mind, as when an enemy is perfectly within one's power, to be able to take a real solace in showing mercy; when he is in a fearful, trembling expectation, and hath even yielded himself a prey to revenge, to take pleasure in surprising him by acts of kindness and compassion: one that can avow the contrary sentiment to the spirit of the world, and to them who so emphatically say, How sweet is revenge! and can with greater πάθος—(pathos) oppose to it that, as the undisguised sense of his soul, O but how much sweeter is it to forgive! Than this, there is nowhere to be seen a more lively resemblance of God; a truer and more real part of His living image, who hath commanded us to "love our enemies;" if they "hunger, to feed them;" to "bless them that curse us;" "to pray for them that despitefully use us, and persecute us;" that we may be his children, that we may show ourselves born of him, and to have received from him a new, even a divine nature, one truly agreeable to, and resembling, his own. And unto Him the acts and operations that naturally proceed from this temper of spirit, are more grateful and

savoury than all whole burnt-offerings and sacrifice. So are we to frame our conceptions of the ever blessed God, if either we will take the rationally coherent and self-consistent idea of an absolutely perfect Being; or his own frequent affirmations who best understands his own nature; or the course of his actual dispensations towards a sinful world; for our measure of him.

VI. But is it a difficulty to us to reconcile with all this such frequent expressions in the sacred volume, as import a steady purpose that all the sins of men shall be answered with an exactly proportionable measure of punishment?—that "every transgression shall have a just recompence of reward?"—that "death is the stated wages of sin?" Or do we find ourselves more perplexed how to understand, consistently with such declarations of his merciful nature, those passages which sometimes also occur, that seem to intimate a complacential vindictiveness, and delight taken in punishing? The Lord is "jealous," the Lord "revengeth:" yea, he seems to appropriate it as peculiar to himself—"Vengeance is mine, and I will repay it:" "indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, shall be upon every soul of man that doeth evil." We meet with passages that speak of his "laying up sin, sealing it among his treasures;" of his waiting for "a day of recompences;" of his "whetting his glittering sword, his making his bow ready," and "preparing his arrows on the string;" of his being refreshed by acts of vengeance; his "satiating of his fury," and causing it hereupon to rest, as having highly pleased and satisfied himself therewith. If any thing alien to the divine nature, and disagreeable to the other so amiable discoveries of it, be thought imported in such expressions, let it only be considered, first, what must be allowed to be their import; and, next, how well so much will agree with a right conception of God.

For the former, it is not necessary that such expressions be understood to intend more, and it seems necessary they be not understood to import less, than a constant, calm, dispassionate, complacential will, so far to punish sin, as shall be necessary to the ends of his government. That they do import a will to punish, is evident; for they are manifest expressions of anger, whereof we can say nothing more gentle, than that it is a will to punish. It cannot signify punishment, without that will; for though the word anger, or wrath, be sometimes used in Scripture for the punishment itself, yet even then that will is supposed, otherwise what is said to be punishment, were an unintended accident; and then how were it a punishment? Much less can it signify only God's declaration of his will to punish, excluding that will itself; for then what is it a declaration of? Or what doth it declare? Surely we will acknowledge it a true declaration; then it cannot be the declaration of nothing, but must have somewhat in God correspondent to it; viz. the will which it declares. Which being plain, that it be also, a dispassionate will, accompanied with nothing of perturbation; that it be a constant will, in reference to all such occasions, wherein the sacredness of the divine government, violated, requires such reparation; and without any change, (other than what we may conceive imported in the different aspects of the same object, conceived as future, present, or past, and beheld before, with purpose, afterwards with continual approbation,) the most acknowledged perfection of the divine nature doth manifestly not admit only, but require. For that such a calm, sedate, steady, fixed temper of mind in a magistrate, is an excellency, even common reason apprehends: therefore is it said, by a noted Pagan, that judges ought to be *legum similes*—like the laws themselves; which are moved by no passion, yet inflexible: and then where can such an excellency have place in highest perfection, but in the blessed God himself? Yea, and that it be also a complacential will, as some of the expressions above recited seem to import, may very

well be admitted, if we rightly conceive and state in our own minds the thing willed by it; i. e. the preserving the honour and dignity of the supreme government. Indeed, simply to take pleasure in the pain and misery of another, is so odd and unnatural a disaffection, that it is strange how it can have place anywhere; and where it seems to have place among men, though too often it really hath so in more monstrously vicious tempers, yet, with many others, (who herein are sufficiently blameable also,) the matter may, perhaps, be somewhat mistaken; as that pleasure may possibly not be taken in the afflicted person's mere suffering, for itself, but only as it is an argument or evidence of the other's superiority, wherein he prides himself, especially if he before misdoubted his own power, and that there hath been a dispute about it, which is now only thus decided: for then a secret joy may arise unto the prevailing party, upon his being delivered from an afflicting fear of being so used himself: and whereas he took it for a disparagement that the other did so far lessen and diminish him in his own thoughts, as to suppose or hope he should prove the stronger; a pleasure is now taken in letting him feel and have so sensible a demonstration of his error.

VII. But that wherewith we must suppose the blessed God to be pleased, in the matter of punishing, is the congruity of the thing itself, that the sacred rights of his government over the world be vindicated; and that it be understood how ill his nature can comport with anything that is impure; and what is in itself so highly congruous, cannot but be the matter of his delectation. He takes eternal pleasure in the reasonableness and fitness of his own determinations and actions, and "rejoices in the works of his own hand," as agreeing with the apt, eternal schemes and models which he hath conceived in his most wise and all-comprehending mind: so that though he "desireth not the death of sinners," and hath no delight in the sufferings of his afflicted creatures, which his immense

goodness rather inclines him to behold with compassion, yet the true ends of punishment are so much a greater good than their ease and exemption from the suffering they had deserved, that they must rather be chosen, and cannot be eligible for any reason, but for which also they are to be delighted in; i. e. a real goodness, and conducibleness to a valuable end, inherent in them. Upon which account, the just execution of the divine pleasure in the punishment of insolent offenders is sometimes spoken of under the notion of a solemn festival, a season of joy, yea even of a sacrifice, as having a fragrancy or delectable savour in it. But whereas some of the above-mentioned expressions do seem to intimate a delight in satisfying a furious, vindictive appetite; we are to consider, that what is spoken for the warning and terror of stupid, besotted men, was necessarily to be spoken with some accommodation to their dull apprehension of the things which they yet see and feel not. For which purpose the person is put on, sometimes, of an enraged, mighty man; the terror of which representation is more apprehensible to vulgar minds, than the calm deliberate proceedings of magistratical justice; it being many times more requisite, that expressions be rather suited to the person spoken to, though they somewhat less exactly square with the thing itself intended to be spoken.

VIII. Wherefore this being all that we have any reason to understand imported in such texts of Scripture as we before mentioned, viz. a calm and constant will of preserving the divine government from contempt, by a due punishment of such as do offer injurious affronts to it; and that takes pleasure in itself, or is satisfied with the congruity and fitness of its own determination; what can there be in this unworthy of God? What that disagrees with his other perfections? Or that the notion of a Being, every way perfect, doth not exact and claim as necessarily belonging to it? For to cut off this from it, were certainly a very great maim to the notion of such a

Being, if we consider it as invested with the right and office of Supreme Rector, or Ruler of the world. For if you frame such an idea of a prince as should exclude a disposition to punish offenders, who would not presently observe in it an intolerable defect? Suppose Xenophon to have given this character of his Cyrus:—That he was a person of so sweet a nature, that he permitted every one to do what was good in his own eyes; if any one put indignities upon him, he took no offence at it; he dispensed favours alike to all; even they that despised his authority, invaded his rights, attempted the subversion of his government, with the disturbance and confusion of all that lived under it, had equal countenance and kindness from him, as they that were most observant of his laws, and faithful to his interest; and it were as safe for any one to be his sworn enemy, as his most loyal and devoted subject:—who would take this for a commendation, or think such a one fit to have swayed a sceptre? Can there be no such thing as goodness, without the exclusion and banishment of wisdom, righteousness, and truth? Yea, it is plain they not only consist with it, but that it is a manifest inconsistency it should be without them. The several virtues of a well-instructed mind, as they all concur to make up one entire frame, so they do each of them cast a mutual lustre upon one another; much more is it so with the several excellencies of the Divine Being. But how much too low are our highest and most raised thoughts of the Supreme Majesty! How do we falter when we most earnestly strive to speak and think most worthily of God, and suitably to his excellent greatness!

CHAPTER XIII

The notion of justice in the divine government, and in a human, not altogether the same. A thing said to be just, in a negative, and a positive sense. The question discussed, Whether God's will to punish sin were, antecedently to his legal constitution to that purpose, just, not only in the former sense, but in the latter also? *Volenti non fit injuria*—as to man, needs limitation. Holy Scripture speaks of God's punishing sin, not merely as a concomitant of justice, but an effect. His will to punish it must proceed from justice. Not primarily, according to the common notion of justice, as it respects the rights of another; therefore another notion of it (as to him) to be sought. God's rights so unalienable, that he cannot quit them to his own wrong, as man can. Secondarily, according to the other notion. His right to punish depends not on his legal constitution, but that on it. That he cannot altogether quit it, no detraction from him. Justice, in a larger notion, doth further oblige to insist upon recompence; viz. universal justice, as especially it comprehends his holiness. His wisdom. The fitness of God's methods herein not to be contemplated by men, but angels. In what sense punishments to be reckoned debts. This matter summed up.

I. WE must also acknowledge a very vast difference between God's government over his intelligent creatures, and that of a secular prince over his subjects; and are thereupon to inquire, whether the notion of justice, as it is applied to the one government and the other, can be the same. A secular ruler is set up and established purposely for the good of the community, as the more principal end of his constitution. The people are not formed for him, but he for them; whence the administration of justice is a public and common right, wherewith he is entrusted by the Supreme Ruler for them, in order to the common good. Well, therefore, may his decrees and edicts go in this form, and have this for their chief scope and end: *Ne quid detrimenti respublica capiat*. And hence the neglect duly and

seasonably to animadvert upon offenders, is a violation of the public justice committed to his management, for which he is accountable to him that entrusted him: it is a wrong done to the community, of whose rights he is the appointed guardian. And whereas such offences as more directly strike at his crown and dignity, as treason or rebellion, seem more principally levelled against himself and his own rights, so is the legal punishment of them to be more at his arbitrement, whether to inflict or not inflict it; because it may seem in any one's power to dispense with, or recede from, his own rights. Yet indeed if the matter be more narrowly scanned, the relaxation of these should be, in reason, less in his power than of any other; because they more directly affront that Supreme Ruler whom he represents, and threaten the dissolution of the government, which is the principal civil good of the whole community, and the benefits whereof are their highest right. If violence be done to a private subject, the impunity of the offender would be a public wrong; because it remotely tends, by the badness of the example, to the hurt of the whole community. But in this case, without any such circulation, all the rights of the community are immediately struck at together, in their central knot and juncture; wherefore here, most of all, the prince is debtor to the community. But now, the great Lord and Ruler of the world owes his own creatures nothing: he is, by his goodness, inclined to take care of them, and preserve common order among them; but not owing them anything, (except by his own word he makes himself a debtor,) he cannot be said to wrong the community, by not providing that punishment be inflicted upon delinquents, according to demerit. What he can be understood, originally, to owe herein, he owes only to himself: whence also the notion of justice which we herein attribute to him, seems very different from that which belongs to human governments; which, though it allows not the disposal of another's right, to his prejudice, forbids not the remitting of one's own.

II. Whereas, therefore, a thing may be said to be just, in a twofold sense; either negative, as it is that which justice does not disapprove, or positive, as that whereto also justice doth oblige: it is hereupon a question of great moment, Whether God's will to punish sinners, antecedent to his legal constitution to that purpose, were just in the former sense only, or also in the latter? Can we say, God had been unjust, in not so determining? Whose rights had he violated in willing otherwise? Not man's, to whom he did owe nothing. Will we say, His own? But *volenti non fit injuria*; which maxim doth not set us at liberty absolutely to do whatsoever we will with ourselves, and what is ours, because of others, whose rights are complicated with ours, the chief Ruler and Lord of all especially, who hath principal interest in us, and all that we have; yet it holds even as to us: for though we may injure others, God especially, by an undue disposition of our properties, which he entrusts us with, (not for ourselves only, but for himself chiefly, and for other men, whom therefore, in the second place, we may wrong, by disabling ourselves to do them that good which we ought;) and though we may also prejudice ourselves, yet, ourselves apart, we cannot be said so far to wrong, by our own consent, as to be able to resume our right; because, by that consent, (supposing it imprudent, or any way undue,) we have quitted and even forfeited the right, which, for ourselves, we had. But as to God, who has no superior, nor owes any thing to any one, whom can he be thought to wrong, by departing from any of his own rights?

Inasmuch therefore as justice, in the common and most general notion of it, is ever wont to be reckoned conversant about *ἀλλότριον ἀγαθὸν*—the good of others, even that whereto they have a right; it seems not intelligible, how justice, according to this usual notion of it, could primarily oblige God to inflict deserved punishment upon transgressors, if he had not settled a legal constitution to this

purpose, and declared that should be the measure of his proceedings herein; both because it is so little conceivable how the punishments of the other state (which we are chiefly to consider) can be a good to them who do not suffer them, (as we are sure they can be none to them that do;) and also that it is not to be understood how, if they were, they could otherwise have any right, thereto, than by that constitution by which (as, before, God's dominion was that of an absolute, sovereign Lord) he now undertakes the part of a governor, ruling according to known and established laws.

III. Yet very plain it is, that for the actual infliction of such punishments, holy Scripture speaks of it not merely as a concomitant of justice, or as that which may consist with it, but as an effect; which the ἀνταπόδοσις, mentioned by the apostle, plainly signifies, (2 Thess. 1:6,) when he tells us, it is with God "a righteous thing,"—δίκαιον, (that must be not only what justice doth admit, but exact,) "to recompense"—ἀνταποδοῦναι, "tribulation to the troublers of his people," &c. And when we are told (Rom. 2:6,) that God "will render" (or recompense) ἀποδώσει—"to every one according to his works," even in the day above mentioned, (v. 5,) which is called, ἡμέρα ὀργῆς, καὶ ἀποκαλύψεως δικαιοκρισίας—"the day of wrath, and of the revelation of the righteous judgment of God;" and that it is said, the world was to become ὑπόδικος—"guilty," we read,) "liable to be impleaded" before God, Rom. 3:19. And again (Ch. 12:19.) that ἐκδίκησις—"vengeance" is said to belong to him, and he will repay; with many more passages of like import.

But to carry the matter higher: it being evident it is that which justice doth require, to punish sin, according to such a constitution once made; yet, all this while, how the constitution was any necessary effect of justice, appears not. Nor are we helped by the common notion of justice herein, and are therefore cast upon the inquiry,

Whether any other notion of justice be fitly assignable, according whereto it may be understood to have required the making that constitution itself.

IV. It is here to be considered, whence, or from what fountain, any man, or community of men, come to have right to any thing. It cannot be, but that the Fountain of all being must be the Fountain of all rights. From whence things, absolutely considered, descend, all the relations that result must also descend. There can, therefore, be no pretence of right to any thing, among creatures, but from God; He, as the Sovereign Proprietor and Lord of all, settles such and such rights in creatures, which they hold and retain dependently on him, upon terms and according to rules which he hath prescribed; so as that, by transgression, men may forfeit such rights or by consent and mutual contracts transfer them to one another. Whereupon they have no unalienable rights, none whereof they may not be divested, either by their default or consent; sometimes by both together, as by a faulty consent. And indeed if it be by the former, it must be by the latter; because no man is supposed to commit a fault against his will. But it may be by the latter without the former, as none can doubt but one may innocently divest himself, in many cases, of his own present right; otherwise, there could be no such thing in the world as either gift or sale. And hence it comes to pass, that the justice which is inherent in any man, comes to be conversant about the rights of another, not his own; so far as to oblige him not to entrench upon the rights of another, while yet it forbids him not to dispose of his own, as they are merely his. And there is no such thing as justice towards a man's self, so inhibiting him as (though perhaps such an act ought not to have been done) to make his act in that kind invalid, when he hath done it, only because he hath thereby wronged himself; or which he can, afterwards, allege against his own act or deed. For he hath no other rights in anything, than what are derived, borrowed,

dependent on the Supreme Proprietor, measurable by his rules, by which they are not unalienable; yea, justice obliges, if he swear to his own hurt, not to change, Ps. 15.

V. But now, with the Supreme Proprietor, there cannot but be unalienable rights, inseparably and everlastingly inherent in him: for it cannot be, but that He that is the fountain of all rights, must have them primarily and originally in himself; and can no more so quit them, as to make the creature absolute and independent, than he can make the creature God. Wherefore, though with man there can be no such thing as justice towards one's self, disabling him to forego his own rights, the case cannot but be quite otherwise as to God, and for the same reason for which it cannot agree to man; because man hath none but borrowed and alienable rights, which he can forego to his own prejudice, and God hath none that he can so part with. Hereupon, therefore, God did owe it to himself primarily, as the absolute Sovereign and Lord of all, not to suffer indignities to be offered him without animadverting upon them, and therefore to determine he would do so.

VI. But withal, he having undertaken the part of a legal Governor, and to rule by established laws, that should be the stated measures of sin and duty, of punishments and rewards, hereby common order was to be preserved in the governed community: and having published his constitution, in his word and otherwise, sufficiently to that purpose, he hath hereby, secondarily, made himself Debtor to the community, and by his constitution given men some right to the benefit of that order which was to be maintained among them by these means: which benefit they do here, in this present state, actually partake in some measure; and might in a greater measure, if they were more governable, or would regard and be awed more by the laws (with their sanctions) of their great and rightful Ruler and

Lord. Wherefore, though men have no benefit by the punishments of the future state, they have, or might have, by the feared commination of them, which, neglected, made the actual infliction of them necessary. Nor had they only the probable benefit of present order hereby, but of a future well-being; it being the design of that, as of all the comminations of wise and good rulers, to prevent the desert of the threatened punishment, and consequently the punishment itself. And though men could have no right to any such benefit, before the constitution; yet it is not unconceivable, that by it they might have some; viz. an inferior and secondary right.

VII. Wherefore the blessed God, by making the legal constitution that he will have stand as the measure of his government, hath not added to his own right to govern and punish as there is cause; for it was natural, and needed nothing to support it. The constitution rather limits than causes his right, which depends not on it, but gives rise to it rather. He gives assurance, by it, of his equal dealing, and that he will not lay upon man more than is right, "that he should enter into judgment with God," Job 34:12, 23. And whereas he hath been pleased to publish his constitution, in the form of a covenant, variously attempered to the different states of men, nothing accrues to him by their stipulating with him thereupon. He is their Governor, as he is their Maker; not at their choice, which in propriety the case admits not, there being no competitor that pretends against him, but is only a loyal, dutiful consent, or recognising his former right. They that consent to it, do therefore more deeply oblige themselves to their own duty, and entitle themselves to his covenanted favours; but can entitle him to nothing, for their all was his before: his contract shows his condescension, not defective title. And this his antecedent, original right, that peculiar excellency of his nature, his justice to himself inviolably preserves, as the faithful guardian of all his sacred rights. So that when he undertakes the part of a legal Governor, it

indispensably necessitates his doing whatsoever is requisite for supporting the honour and dignity of his government; and can permit nothing that shall detract from it, or render it less august and awful.

Yet need we not here over scrupulously defend the common notion of justice, in the utmost strictness of it, that makes it conversant only about another's right, and seems therefore to imply that a man can owe nothing to himself. That love to others which comprehends all our duty to them, is to be measured by love to ourselves, which seems equally comprehensive of duty which we are supposed to owe to ourselves. Nor shall we dispute whether in no sense one can be both creditor and debtor; or whether insobriety be not properly unrighteousness, and sobriety, justice, even towards one's self: subordination to God being still preserved, under whom, and for whom, only, we can owe any thing to ourselves or others. Only supposing, among men, such a thing as self-justice, it is with them a weaker and more debile principle, that may betray and lose their rights, which then no justice can reclaim. Whereas, with God, it is, as all other excellencies are, in highest perfection, and hath always the force with him of an eternal and immutable law.

VIII. And if any should imagine this to detract from the absoluteness of God's dominion and sovereignty, and set him in this respect beneath his own creatures, that, whereas they can quit their rights, it should be supposed he cannot forego his; it is answered, It hath not been said, that God can forego none of his own rights; it is plain he doth, when having the right to punish a sinner, he by pardon confers upon him right to impunity: but he cannot do it to the prejudice and dishonour of his glorious excellencies, and the dignity of his government. And, therefore, if some preparation were requisite to his doing it consistently with the due honour and reputation thereof,

justice towards himself required he should insist upon it; which is no more a detraction from his absoluteness, than that he cannot lie, or do any thing unworthy of himself. He is so absolute, that he can do whatever he pleases; but so just, that he cannot be pleased to do an unrighteous thing.

IX. But besides that stricter notion of God's justice, as it is conversant about, and conservative of, his own rights; we may also consider it in a larger and more comprehensive notion, as it includes his several moral attributes and excellencies, and answers to that which among men is called universal justice, and reckoned to contain in it all virtues.* For so taken, it comprehends his holiness, and perfect detestation of all impurity, in respect whereof he cannot but be perpetually inclined to animadvert with severity upon sin; both because of its irreconcilable contrariety to his holy nature, and insolent affront which it therefore directly offers him; and because of the implicit, most injurious misrepresentation of him, which it contains in it, as if he were either kindly or more indifferently affected towards it: upon which accounts, we may well suppose him to esteem it necessary for him, both to constitute a rule for punishing it, and to punish it accordingly; that he may both truly act his own nature, and truly represent it.

X. And again, if we take the notion of his justice in this latitude, it will comprehend his governing wisdom; the part of which attribute it is, to determine and direct the doing whatsoever is fit to be determined and done; as it is the part of his righteousness (taken in the strictest sense) to resolve upon and execute whatever the rules of justice do require and call for. It is the judge of decencies, or what it is meet and becoming him, as the Lord and Ruler of the world, to do or not do. And a very reasonable account might be given of this matter, that we may renew and somewhat further insist on what was

said before, chap. vi. § 5, &c. There are many just laws made by human legislators, to the making whereof, though justice (in the stricter sense) did not rigidly oblige them, so that they had been unjust if they had not made them; yet this other principle, of equal importance to government, and which also doth not altogether refuse the name of justice, might require the making them, and would not be well comported with by omitting to make them.

Hereupon therefore if it should be inquired, Was it, antecedently to the making of this constitution, an indifferent thing with God, whether to determine sin should be punished, or not? I answer, even upon this ground, No; it was not indifferent, but indispensably necessary. Any thing is with him necessary, as he is the Supreme Governor, that is upon a prudential account most fit and conducive to the ends of government. An antecedent necessity we might therefore assert, such as not only arises from his justice, most strictly taken, but his wisdom also; whose part it is to judge of congruities, as it is the part of strict justice to determine matters of right. Nor is it unfit to say, Wisdom is the chief principle exercised in making laws, justice in governing according to laws already made. I say, the chief; for justice hath that part in legislation too, which hath been assigned it, as wisdom hath also its part in the consequent administration. And what can be more necessary to the great God, than to do ever what is most becoming and worthy of himself? And what could have been so becoming of him, as to let it appear to the world how sacred the rights of his empire over it are? How horrid a thing the defection of a reasonable creature is, from the great Author and Lord of its life and being! how costly an expiation it did require! how solemn rites were to be performed! how great and awful transactions, that sin might become pardonable! What could so tend to exalt majesty, to magnify the reputation of his government, to possess his reasonable creatures with awful apprehensions, and make them dread to offend?

In a prudent government, how great a thing is reason of state! Even where there is the greatest inclination imaginable to be in all things most strictly and unexceptionably just, yet is that the only care with prudent governors, that they may be able to approve the justice of their administrations? There are many things which, without transgressing particular rules of justice, might have been omitted, from which yet, upon mere reason of state, you can no more make them swerve one ace, than you can remove the earth from its centre, or change the ordinances of day and night; and whereas that hath place in all things that tend to the keeping up the reputation and grandeur of government, where can it claim to have place with equal right, as here? Whereupon we may, with greatest assurance, assert, that in things which have this reference, it is equally impossible to the absolute perfection of the divine nature, that God should do an inept or unfit thing, as an unjust: and whereas his righteousness is the directive principle, in respect of equity or iniquity; so is his wisdom, of congruity and incongruity, decency and indecency: and that it is equally necessary to him to do what is most worthy of himself; and most becoming his excellent greatness, as what is most strictly just. Therefore that when his most transcendent greatness is represented in terms as high and great as could come under human conception, (Heb. 2:10,) He, viz. "for whom are all things, and by whom are all things;" (and what could sound higher?) it is considered what was most becoming of him, as such; and determined that it became Him, "for and by whom all things were," since there was one (though so great a one) that had undertaken for sinners, to be the Prince or Prefect* over the great affair of their salvation, especially being to make them, of rebels, sons, and as such, bring them to glory, out of the meanest and most abject state; that he should not be made perfect, (not be duly initiated into his great office, or not be complete master of his design,) otherwise than by his own intervening suffering. Meaner persons might do as became their

meaner condition; but He "for whom are all things, and by whom are all things," must do as best became the most glorious greatness of Him, who is the First and the Last, the Author and the End of all things!

XI. We are prone to confine our apprehensions of things to our own narrow sphere, that have reference also to another besides, and greater than ours. If God had no creatures but man, capable of government by laws, the case had been much other than it is; for considering that men have all been in one common case of apostacy and condemnation, they who should be restored to favour and a happy state, should have no reason to look strangely upon one another, whatsoever the way and terms were of their restitution, being all dealt with alike. But we are to design a larger field and scene for our thoughts, and to consider, that besides men, that shall be restored from a fallen and lapsed state, there are numberless myriads of pure and loyal spirits, that never fell, and with whom restored men are to make one entire, happy community, for ever. Now we are to consider what aspect the matter would have in their eyes, if not a single person, or two, but so vast a multitude, (and not guilty of some light, transient offence only, but of insolent, malicious enmity and rebellion against the divine government, propagated and transmitted from age to age, through all the successions of time,) should be brought in upon them, to partake in the dignities and blessedness of their state, without any reparation made of so great and continuing an injury! Though their perfect subjection in all things to the good pleasure of God would not allow them to be exceptious, and apt to censure his doings or determinations, yet also his most perfect wisdom and exact judgment, and knowledge of what is in itself most fit, could much less admit he should do anything liable to be censured by his creatures, as less fit. And no doubt so large and capacious intellects may well be supposed to penetrate far

into the reason and wisdom of his dispensations; and so not only to exercise submission, in an implicit acquiescence in the unseen and only believed fitness of them, but also to take an unexpressible complacency and satisfaction in what they manifestly discern thereof, and to be able to resolve their delectation in the ways and works of God into a higher cause and reason than the mere general belief that he doth all things well; viz. their immediate, delightful view of the congruity and fitness of what he does. When they behold the apostacy and revolt of the sons of men expiated by one of themselves, but with whom the Divine Nature, in his own Son, was so intimately united, that the atonement made was both fit, as from them, and adequate, as to him: this they cannot but behold with complacential approbation and admiration; for, no doubt, he made creatures of such a capacity, with a design to gratify the understandings he gave them, by approving and recommending the exactness and accuracy of his methods thereto; otherwise, a far lower measure of intellectual ability, in these creatures, had answered the Creator's purpose as well. They certainly cannot but approve that way he hath taken, for itself; and do doubtless stoop down to look into it, not with less complacency, than wonder; it being, in the congruity of it, as suitable to their bright and clear intellects, being revealed, as for the strange contrivance thereof it had been altogether above them, if it had not been revealed. They cannot, when they behold a full, glorious vindication of the offence and wrong done to their common Lord, and the dignity of his government, by his revolted creatures, antecedent to the reception of any of them into grace and favour, but highly admire the lovely comeliness and congruity of his whole dispensation, and express their pleasant resentments, by bearing a part with the redeemed society in such strains of praise, such admirations and applauses, as these: "Holy and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy judgments, thou King of nations and of saints!"

XII. Upon the whole, there appears sufficient reason to conclude, not only upon the account of justice more strictly taken, but also of congruity and fitness, or according to such a larger notion of justice as imports an inflexible propension to do what is fit and congruous to be done, it was indispensably necessary the holy God should, in order to his return to his temple among men, insist to have a recompence made for the wrong that was done him by the violation of it. Nor let this be understood to detract from, but add to, what hath been above discoursed of justice, taken in a most strict sense, and most appropriate to God, as it is, primarily and in the first place, conservative of his own most sacred rights; which must be, by consequence, vindictive of the violation of them: and this is the original justice, (as his are the original rights, and the fountain of all other,) and must have had place, though he had settled no express constitution of government. And also as, secondarily, it is conservative of the rights of the governed community, which, by the constitution once settled, accrue to it.

Whereupon also it may be understood, in what sense punishments, passively taken, are to be accounted debts. And it is fitter to distinguish, and thereupon to explain, how they are or are not so, than at random to deny they are so at all, when our Lord hath taught us to pray, "Forgive us our debts;" and when it is so plain in itself, that he who by delinquency hath forfeited his life, is most truly said to owe it to justice; yea, and when, though the creditor *pœnæ*, is said not to be so easily assignable, yet no doubt at all is made concerning the debtor; for how absurdly should he be said to be a debtor, that owes no debt? Therefore punishments are not of the nature of those debts that, according to the rules of commutative justice, arise by contract between man and man; and which, as they arise by consent between the two covenanting parties, may as well cease by consent. But nothing hinders, but they may be such debts as are to be

estimated by the distributive justice of rulers, whereof we must either say, that of some, justice doth oblige human and secular rulers to exact the punishment; or else, that magistratical justice would allow the remitting of all, and that no offences of any kind be ever at all punished. But if the justice of any secular rulers oblige them to punish some offenders, then most of all that of the supreme and most absolute Ruler and Lord of all, whose rights are natural, and depend not on our consent, or any contract with us, no more than our consent was previous to our coming into being, or our becoming his creatures; and whose justice must be more concerned to protect and vindicate his rights, than that of any earthly governor can be to preserve the rights of even the most considerable community: no community, nor all taken together, nor even the whole creation, being of any comparable value with the interest of the Supreme and Universal Ruler himself alone; in respect of whom all nations are as the "drop of the bucket," &c. especially if we add, (though that be but of secondary consideration,) that the rights of the greatest, even the universal community of all mankind, are involved with his own, and that their common peace and order are to be preserved by punishments, even eternal ones, not as executed, but as threatened; which, as hath been said, made the execution necessary, where the terms and method of remission are not complied with.

And whereas it is reckoned difficult to assign the creditor *pœnæ*, the reason of that is not difficult to be assigned, if we consider what the true notion of a creditor is. And it is not taken passively, for him who is entrusted with another's rights, at least is not so to be limited; inasmuch as a man may be more properly creditor of what is his own than of what is another's; but actively, for one who trusts another. But the debtor *pœnæ* is not entrusted with any thing, but is only to be punished, when he can be met with, and duly brought thereto; and therefore is not bound to offer himself to punishment, as

another debtor is to pay what he owes; who is to be active in the solution; the delinquent, passive only: whence *dare pœnas* is rightly interpreted to suffer punishment. And that this is all he is obliged to, is plain, if we consider that it is not the precept of the law that in this case obliges him, which only obliges to the doing of duty; but the annexed commination, which can only oblige to undergo punishment.

Creditor indeed is chosen as a fit word to express the correlative unto debtor *pœnæ*; but by it we are to understand no more than only the object of this solution: so, in human governments, the governor is improperly, viz. as he is entrusted with the rights of the community: but in the divine government, God himself; originally and radically, as he is Maker and Lord of all; immediately and formally, as he is the supreme Ruler, and such a one therefore as governs principally, *suo jure*, and for himself, not for others. For he cannot but be his own Supreme End; that he also doth undertake the care of the concernments and good of others, is of mere vouchsafement and condescension, not from any antecedent obligation so to do.

The sum of all therefore is, that whether we take divine justice in the larger sense, as it comprehends all the moral excellencies that relate to the government of God over man, especially his wisdom and his holiness; or whether we take it in the stricter sense, for a principle inclining him to maintain and vindicate the rights and dignity of his government, it did direct as well his making a constitution for the punishing of affronts and offences committed against it, as to proceed according to it, so as not to remit such injuries to the offender without most sufficient recompence.

CHAPTER XIV

The first head being so far insisted on, that a sufficient recompence was necessary; the second succeeds, that no less was sufficient than that made by Immanuel. Dishonourable to have insisted on less. What the divine estimate in this matter was, his own word shows. His love to offenders otherwise under restraint. Proposed consideration: 1. How great things were to be remitted; the sins of all time and ages. Not from insufficiency unapplicable to all sinners. Remission to be granted by a universal law. 2. How great to be vouchsafed. Which follows.

2. I. AND so much being clear, there is less need to insist copiously in showing what comes next to be considered;* That no recompence could be sufficient for expiating the wrong done by the violation of God's temple among men, and the laying its foundations anew, besides that which hath been made by the Son of God, Immanuel, God with us; becoming himself first an original Temple, a Man inhabited with all the fulness of God, and then made also a Sacrifice to the offended majesty and justice of Heaven, for those great and high purposes, the expiating the indignity of violating God's former temple; and the raising, forming, and beautifying it anew, in conformity to its present Pattern and Original; and then possessing, inhabiting, and restoring the Divine Presence in it.

II. For as it hath been shown already that this recompence could not but be full, and apt to answer these purposes; so it is in itself evident, that whatsoever should be tendered in the name of a recompence, ought to be full, and proportionable to the wrong done, and to the favours afterwards to be shown to the transgressors.

For it were manifestly more honourable, and worthy of God, not to have exacted any recompence at all, than to have accepted, in the name of a sacrifice, such as were unproportionable, and beneath the value of what was to be remitted and conferred. What had been lower, must have been infinitely lower; let anything be supposed less than God, and it falls immensely short of him. Such is the distance between created being and uncreated, that the former is as nothing to the latter; and therefore, bring the honour and majesty of the Deity to anything less than an equal value, and you bring it to nothing. And this had been quite to lose the design of insisting upon a recompence; it had been to make the majesty of heaven cheap, and depreciate the dignity of the divine government, instead of rendering it august and great. Therefore the whole constitution of Immanuel, his undertaking, performances, and acquisitions, appear to have been not only apt, suitable, and sufficient to the intended purposes, (which was first proposed to be shown,) but also requisite and necessary thereto.

III. And for the evincing hereof, let us apply our minds to meditate silently and intently awhile on those words of our Lord, (John 10:17,) "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life:" and let us consider them with that reverence which we cannot but conceive due to words we esteem most sacred and divine; i. e. that they could not be rashly or lightly spoken: whereupon, let us bethink ourselves, Have those words a meaning? This, our awful regard to the venerable greatness of him that spoke them, cannot suffer us to doubt. And if they mean anything, it is impossible they should not mean somewhat most profound and great; somewhat that implies a reference to a peculiar θεοπρεπὲς, i. e. a divine decorum, that as an eternal law perpetually conducts all the propensions and determinations of God's most perfect will, that could by no means suffer any violation: what was most becoming of God; namely, what

might best "become him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things;" (Heb. 2:10,) worthy of the great, all-comprehending central, original Being, from whence all things sprang, and wherein all terminate. Here is some gradual refection (if we consider what immediately follows, "In bringing many sons to glory," &c.) of the veiled arcana of the Divine Being: (if we may, on so fit occasion, allude to the inscription in the Egyptian temple, elsewhere mentioned in this discourse—"I am all that was, and is, and shall be, and who is he that shall draw aside my veil?") Here is, in some part, a withdrawing of that sacred veil, by Him to whom by prerogative it belonged, and of whom it is said, "No man hath seen God at any time, but the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him," John 1:18. Here is some disclosure of the mystery of God, of the Father, (Col. 2:2,) in whom the divine nature was primarily, and as in that first fountain; and of Christ, the mystery of the Mediator, of whom Christ was the distinguishing name: the agreement, hitherto unconceivable and most mysterious, of the absolute purity and perfection of the divine nature, with the admirable mercifulness of the constitution of Immanuel, of God and man united in one, in order to the reconciliation of the holy, blessed God, with unholy, miserable man. How was it to be brought about, in a way becoming "Him for whom and by whom all things were"—so great, so august a Majesty! that He should admit that so despicable and rebellious a race should not only be saved, but be made sons? This could never be, though his immense and boundless love most strongly inclined him to it, but by their having one of highest dignity, his own Son, set as a Prince or Prefect over the whole affair of their salvation; nor by him, but upon his own intervening suffering! This was according to fixed rule indispensably necessary; i. e. by the inviolable maxims of the divine government. But because, through the inconceivable riches of his own goodness, this was a thing he was most propense unto, and intent upon; yet because the death of his

own Son in their stead could neither be meritorious nor just, without his own free consent, therefore, says our Lord, "doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life." What conceivable reason can there be of this connexion, (He therefore loves me, because I lay down my life,) without the concurrence of these two things to be considered conjunctly?

A most intense, vehement love to a perishing world.

An inflexible regard to the eternal, immutable measures of right and wrong, fit and unfit, decent and indecent, that had their fixed, everlasting seat in the mind of God.

IV. The former made the end necessary, the preventing the total, eternal ruin of a lost world; the latter made the Son of God's death, and his own consent thereto, the necessary means to this end. The former, viz. the end, was not otherwise necessary than upon supposition; it was not so absolutely necessary, that by any means, right or wrong, fit or unfit, such a ruin (even most deserved) must be prevented. But it was so far necessary, as that if, by any rightful and decorous means, this ruin could be prevented as to many, and a contrary blessed state of perpetual life be attained by them, this must be effected and brought about for them, Not, it is true, for all offenders, but as many as the like eternal, indispensable means and measures of equal and unequal, fit and unfit, capable and incapable, should not exclude.

All this we have in that most admirable text of Scripture, (John 3:16,) "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." SO loved! The matter is signified in such a way as to leave all men amazed! and by their astonishment to supply their most defective conception of so stupendous a love. The world is an

indefinite term, that contains the special and the afterwards specified object of this love; not a single person, but a whole race of intelligent creatures, a world inhabited by such, that were not to be left, and finally all swallowed up together in one common ruin; that upon this account he gave his only begotten Son to death, as the event and known design showed. And how unconceivable must his love be to "his only begotten Son!" "The Brightness of his glory, the express Image of his person!" "Always his Delight!" Yet rather than all this world should be lost for ever, He is thus given up! "That whosoever believe on him, should not perish," &c. which expresses the certain, specified, declared object of this love: leaving them certainly excluded, who, after sufficient proposal, refuse their homage to the throne of Immanuel; choose rather their forlorn souls should be for ever forsaken of the divine presence, than unite with him, and surrender themselves to him, by whom alone they might be refitted, animated again, and inhabited as his living temples. Their exclusion is necessary, by such measures as those by which such means were necessary to the salvation and blessedness of the others. But who can doubt hereupon, but that this course was indispensably necessary to this end? Especially if (reviewing that first-mentioned text) we consider, that our Lord represents his laying down his life as an unexpressible additional endearment of him to the Father: q. d. "O thou Son of my delights, thou hast now set my love to lost souls at liberty, that hath been ever pregnant with great and godlike designs towards them, and that must otherwise have been under perpetual restraint:" which is most evidently implied.

V. But it may be said, Could the love of God be under restraint? And I say No, it could not; therefore to the all-comprehending Mind, where ends and means lie connected together under one permanent, eternal view, this course presented itself, as peculiarly accommodate to this end; and was therefore eternally determined by easy concert

between the Father and the Son, not to remedy, but prevent any such restraint. Yet it may be further urged, Cannot the absoluteness and omnipotency of a God enable him to satisfy his own propensions, if it were to save never so many thousand worlds of offending creatures, without taking such a circuit as this? It was once said to a human mortal king, that had about him but a thin shadow of sovereignty, 'Dost thou now govern Israel, and not make thy will any way take place?' Much more might it here be said, 'Dost thou govern the world?' 'Art thou not God?' Yes! and may freely say, I can the less, for that I am God, do what is not Godlike; i. e. can therefore the less break through established, eternal measures, and counteract myself. I must do as becomes "Him, for whom and by whom are all things." Others may assume to themselves an imagined, unhallowed liberty of pursuing, at the next, their own inclinations; but it is beneath divine greatness to do so.

Yet in this case it may be further said, Why did not love to his Son preponderate? Which our Lord himself in great part obviates by what is subjoined—"Because I lay down my life;" how? With a power and design to take it again, as v. 18, "I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again;" q. d. this is a matter agreed. I am not to lie under a perpetual death; that could neither be grateful to my Father, nor is in itself possible. But as things are stated, I am prepared to "endure the cross, and despise the shame, for the joy set before me;" which joy will be everlastingly common to him and me, and to the whole redeemed community, according to their measure.

But was all this unnecessary trifling? What serious man's reverence of Deity can let him endure to harbour so profane a thought! Therefore take we now the entire state of this matter, as it lies plainly in view before us, in these texts of Scripture.

1. Here is an unexpressible love of God to undone, lost sinners.
2. Here is a plain intimation that this love must have been under a suspension and restraint, if God's own Son had not laid down his life for them.
3. It is as plainly signified, that the Son of God's laying down his life for them, was, in divine estimate, a sufficient expedient to prevent this restraint upon his love to sinners.
4. That this expedient was reckoned by the blessed God more eligible, than that his love to sinners should be under perpetual, everlasting restraint.
5. That it was only reckoned more eligible, as there was a conjunct consideration had of his laying it down, with a power and design of resuming and taking it again.
6. That therefore, as the eternal God had a most constant, unquestionable love to his only-begotten Son, his love to him hath a peculiar and most complacential exercise, on the account of his concurring with him upon this expedient; choosing rather to endure all the dolours of that one "hour, and power of darkness," that was to come upon him, than that a whole world of reasonable creatures, his own offspring, and bearing his own image, should all perish together everlastingly.

But who now sees not that this was the determinate judgment of the great God, viz. that his gracious designs towards guilty creatures were not otherwise to be effected, than in this way? And yet, for the further clearing of this matter, taking Heb. 10:4, that the "blood of the Lord Christ," and of "bulls and goats," are put in direct opposition to each other; and hereupon, that it is said of the latter,

"It is not possible it should take away sin;" what can that imply less, than that the former was necessary to the taking it away? Let us but appeal to ourselves, what else can it mean? Will we say, though sin could not be taken away by the blood of bulls and goats, it might by some nobler sacrifice of an intermediate value? But is not this manifestly precluded, and barred by the immediateness of the opposition? These two only are in competition, and it is said, not this, but that. Other sacrifices God would not; Ps. 40:6, 7. Then, saith our Lord, "Lo! I come." These are rejected, this is chosen; "he taketh away the first, that he may establish the second," Heb. 10:9. When it is said, Mic. 6:6, 7, not "thousands of rams, or ten thousand rivers of oil;" if one should say, Yea, but eleven thousand might serve; were not this trifling, not reasoning? Is it not plain all other were refusable, for the same reason?

I shall now somewhat enlarge (as was formerly designed) upon the two things already intimated under the foregoing head of Immanuel's sufficiency, &c. as having acquired the two-fold power of forgiving sin, and giving the Spirit. And shall now show, further, the necessity of his engaging in this affair (the restoring of God's temple) with reference to both these things, requisite thereto.

And to this purpose, let it be considered—What was to be remitted, and what was to be conferred, by his procurement.

First, What was to be remitted. It was not the single trespass of one or a few delinquent persons, but the revolt and rebellion of a vast community; a universal hostility and enmity, continued and propagated through many successive ages, that was now, once for all, to be atoned for. It is hereupon to be considered,

How great the offence was that must be remitted.

The way and manner in which the grant was to be made of this remission.

1. How great was the offence to be remitted! A whole race and order of creatures had been in a conspiracy against their rightful Lord, to deface his temple, tear down his image, invade his rights, withhold and incapacitate themselves for his worship, substitute, instead of that, highest contempt, banish his presence, and, as much as in them lay, raze out his memorial, that he might be no more known, feared, or served upon earth! How horrid a prospect had the Lord from heaven, when, from the throne of his glory there, he beheld the state of things below! (Ps. 14:2, 3.) "The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if any did understand, and seek after God; they are all gone back, none that does good, no not one." All were become such mischievous, wicked fools, as to say, with one consent, in their hearts,—"No God!" And though, it is true, this wickedness was not in event to be actually remitted to all, the case was to be so stated, that remission might be universally offered; and that it be left to lie upon men's own score if it were not accepted; and therefore, that a sacrifice must be offered up, of no less value than if every single transgressor was to have his actual, sealed pardon.

VI. For let it be considered what sort of transgressors are excluded the benefit of remission, on the account of that great Sacrifice that once for all was offered up; and we find it not difficult to apprehend other most important reasons why they are excluded; but no colour of a reason that it should be for want of sufficient value in this Sacrifice.

As for the angels that fell, though their case comes not directly under our present consideration, yet occasionally, and as (*à fortiori*) we may argue from it, some thoughts may be usefully employed about it.

The divine pleasure herein is indeed intimated, in the Son of God's not taking their nature, but ours; and his known measure of showing mercy, is that "he will show mercy, because he will show mercy." Yet, whereas we find that the most sovereign act of grace, the predestinating of some to the adoption of children, is ascribed to the "good pleasure," (Eph. 1:5,) the same act is ascribed also to the "counsel of his will," v. 11. And when we see the apostle in that holy transport, (Rom. 11:33,) crying out, in contemplation of distinguishing mercy, ὦ βάθος—O the depth! he doth not say of the sovereign power, but of the wisdom and knowledge of God; and admires the unsearchableness, not of his arbitrary determinations, but of his judgments and ways, or judicial proceedings towards them that believed, or believed not: (Ps. 30, 31, 32;) implying, he had reasons to himself, though past our finding out, of his different proceedings towards some, and others. And as for the angels that fell, and whom he thought fit not to spare, (2 Pet. 2:4, 5; Jude 6,) he threw them into chains of darkness, resolving to deal with them, not upon terms of absolute sovereignty, but of justice, therefore "reserving them to the judgment of the great day;" not in the meantime affording them a second trial, in order to their recovery, as he hath to us, even of mere mercy; for no justice could oblige him to offer us new terms. Yet their case and ours so differed, that there are reasons obvious to view, and which must lie open to all, in the public, final judgment, why he might judge it fitter to design the objects of mercy among men, than the apostate angels. As,

(1.) That we must suppose them (viz. the angels) created, each of them, in perfect maturity, unto which we (our first parents excepted) grow up gradually and by slow degrees. They had their intellectual ability lit for present exercise, when they first existed, and did all then at once co-exist, (as we generally reckon, having nothing to

induce us to think otherwise;) we come into being successively, and exist here but in a succession.

(2.) Whereas they therefore must be understood to have been originally under a sort of covenant of works, (as we were,) or were some way or other made to understand what, by the law of their creation, was their duty towards the Author of their being, and what their expectations might be from him; we have no reason therefore to apprehend that they were treated with in one common head of their own order, in whom they should stand or fall, as we were; our case not admitting it to be otherwise, because we were not co-existent with him: but we must conceive them to have been, every individual of them, personal covenanters, each one in his own person receiving the signification of their Maker's will; and if there were reason or need of solemn restipulation, each one, in his own person, as it were plighting his faith, and vowing his allegiance to the celestial crown and throne. They, therefore, from a self-contracted malignity, rebelled with open eyes; and though an obligation by a common head were binding; theirs, by their own act and deed must be more strongly binding; and their revolt more deeply and more heinously criminal.

(3.) The posterity of our apostate first parents have but a limited time, in this state of probation, wherein to understand the present altered state of things between them and their offended Lord: within which time, though he foresaw the malignity of very many would never be overcome by his goodness, in the ordinary methods wherein he reckoned it became him to discover and exercise it towards them, yet, according to the course and law of nature he had now settled for this apostate sinful world, their course would soon be run out, and they would not have opportunity long to continue their rebellion, and obstruct his interest and designs on earth. And also, having all things

ever present to his all-comprehending view, he foreknew and foredetermined that great numbers should become the captives of his grace, and that the love and blood of an Immanuel should not be lost and thrown away upon them. He should make them "willing in the day of his power" to fall in with gracious intendments, and their Redeemer should see his seed, and the travail of his soul, and be satisfied therein: whereas he beheld the apostate spirits, of that higher order, fixed in enmity, not vincible by any ordinary methods. Nor was it to be expected he should exert (in this case) his absolute power, and act ad ultimum—as a natural agent doth to its very uttermost; (had he thought that fit, he could as well have prevented their revolt;) or that he should have appointed a Redeemer for their recovery, who were irrecoverable: their case at first being (probably) very parallel to theirs among men, who sin "that sin against the Holy Ghost." And as things lay in divine prospect, their malicious opposition to God's designs in this world was not bounded within the narrow limits of a short human life; but their natures not being subject to a law of mortality, as it is with every sinner among men, they were beheld as continually filling this world with mischiefs, with wickednesses and miseries, and counterworking all God's glorious and merciful designs in it; even every one of them, from his first apostacy, as long as the world shall last.

(4.) Man sinned at first, being seduced, tempted, and deceived by the devil; the devils, as being their own tempters; sin had in and from them its original and first rise in the creation of God. In all agency, whether of good or evil, much is wont to be attributed to this, Who was first in it? In point of good, the blessed God hath no competitor; he is the undoubted first Fountain of all good, and is therefore acknowledged the supreme Good. In point of evil, (viz. moral,) there is none prior to the devil, who is therefore eminently called "the evil, or wicked one." And as the devils were first in sin, so they led us into

it, by deceiving us; the malignity of it was therefore the greater on their parts, and proportionably the less on ours. The more knowing are the more deeply guilty, the deceiver than the deceived, and deserve the more stripes. It is true that none can deserve mercy, for then it were justice and not mercy; but though none can deserve to have mercy shown them, they may deserve not to have it. The more a ruler is above us, and the less he needs us, the less possible it is for us to oblige him, and the more possible to disoblige and offend him, and the more heinous will the offence be: therefore, though none can claim mercy, they may forfeit it; and will, by the deeper guilt, incur such a forfeiture, by how much the more and clearer the light and knowledge is against which they offend. And this we find to have been a measure with the blessed God, in the exercise of his mercy, even in some of the highest instances hereof that we meet with in holy Scripture; "I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly, in unbelief," 1 Tim. 1. Not that this could specify a more deserving object of mercy; for where there can be no desert at all, there can be no more, or less.

VII. But it represents the occasion and season of showing mercy more fitly, in the estimate of the divine wisdom; which conducts the acts of sovereignty, and judges of congruities, as justice doth of right and wrong. Where indeed, among the objects of mercy, there is an absolute parity, there (as to them) mere sovereignty determines; as, it may be, ordinarily, in God's electing among men the objects of his free favour. When there is no objective reason of eligibility in one more than another, especially if there be such as would rather persuade the contrary way, wisdom hath no proper exercise. But occasions are of greater latitude, and comprehend all considerable circumstances and consequences; and many things lie open to the divine eye, that are hid to ours.

But now, whereas we cannot doubt, that besides such considerations as occur to us, the blessed God saw superabundant ground of not making such provision for the recovery of fallen angels, as of lost men; we can have none, whereupon to imagine the former partake not of the benefit with the latter, for want of value in the sacrifice of Immanuel. For when the blood of his cross is intimated to extend to all things both in heaven and earth, (Col. 1:20;) to diffuse an influence through the universe; to be the cement of the creation, in what part and for what time it shall continue, subordinately to the Creator's pleasure and purposes; and that by Him who shed it, even as such, all things are said to consist: and that besides his natural right, he hath acquired, by the superabundant value of this sacrifice, (the odours whereof are spread through all worlds,) a universal dominion; and particularly, to be "Head of all principalities and powers," to establish the faithful and loyal; to judge and punish the disloyal, over whom he so gloriously triumphed on the cross, (Col. 2:15;) to have "every knee bow to him," &c, (Phil. 2:6–11:) it cannot be, doubtless, but the value of the same sacrifice had sufficed to obtain a power, as well as to govern and judge all, to establish and reward the good, to punish the bad; so to have obtained that, upon terms, pardon and mercy might have reached down into the infernal regions, if they that inhabit them could upon other accounts have been thought a pardonable or tractable sort of delinquents. And if we cannot apprehend this great Sacrifice to want value even to make atonement for devils, we can as little think it should want value to save

VIII. The impenitent and unbelieving among men, under the gospel; and that it must therefore, also, be for some other reason that such perish. As,

If there be anything of reason in what hath been discoursed concerning the state of the lapsed angels, their continuance in wilful impenitency and infidelity partly supposes, partly makes, the state of things with them the same.

Partly supposes it so. For it implies they have been applied to, and treated with, personally, upon the terms of the second covenant; i. e. the covenant of God in Christ, as the apostate angels were upon the first. And if the guilt of the former apostates were so horridly great upon this account, the guilt of the latter must be proportionably so on the same account.

Partly makes it the same. For hereby, as they were violators first and immediately, in their own persons, of the first covenant, so are these of the second. For, generally, they that live under the gospel are professed covenanters; and if they were not, they could not but have become obliged to have been so, by the very proposal and tender thereof unto them; or, as soon as the mind of Him who made them, concerning this matter, was known. They were not obliged by their own consent, but they were obliged to it, and by an incomparably greater and deeper obligation; not by their own act and deed, but by His who gave them breath. What is their authority over themselves, compared with that of the Supreme Lawgiver? A mere borrowed subordinate thing, without and apart from him, without whom their being itself were mere nothing! An argument *ad hominem*, is convictive, in disputation, between one man and another; but how much more overpowering means of conviction will there be in the judgment of the great day! And the parity of cases between the angels that fell, and insolent sinners under the gospel, is intimated as monitory to the latter, in those texts of Scripture that speak of God's most just and terrible severity to the former; viz. the sin of both was apostacy, according to the different covenants or laws under which

they stood; for as the one sort were apostates from God, so the others were from Christ, "denying the Lord that bought them," 2 Pet. 2:1. And again, "turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ," Jude 4. Whereupon, this example of God's vengeance upon the angels that fell is subjoined in both places.

Besides what was common to them with the apostate angels, there were some things peculiar to these wilful refusers of the grace of the gospel, and violators of the gospel-covenant. As,

That the guilt of wilful sinners under the gospel admits of this aggravation above that of the rebelling angels, that they offend against the grace of the remedy, never offered to the other; "treading under foot the Son of God, profaning the blood of the covenant, wherewith they were sanctified, as an unholy thing, and doing despite unto the Spirit of grace," Heb. 10:29. And,

That the offer itself, made to them, carried in it a manifest signification of their (remote) claimable right to the benefits of the gospel-covenant, on supposition of their compliance with the terms of it, (unto which the fallen angels could have no pretence,) barred only by their non-acceptance or refusal, which appears in the general tenor of the gospel-covenant itself: "Ho, every one that thirsts"—"Whosoever will, let him come, and take of the waters of life freely"—"God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish." And it is here to be noted, that a secret intention gives not a claimable right, but some overt act or deed; and it must be claimable, before it ought to be claimed or accepted. This is the case then with the wilfully impenitent and rebellious under the gospel, that it may be truly said to them, "You might have had pardon and eternal life, if you had not

rejected the kindest offers." It is not therefore want of value in this sacrifice, but their rejection, whence it is unavailable to them.

As for them that could never have the gospel, or infants incapable of receiving it, we must consider the holy Scriptures were written for those that could use them, not for those that could not; therefore to have inserted into them an account of God's methods of dispensation towards such, had only served to gratify the curious and unconcerned, not to instruct, or benefit such as were concerned. And it well became, hereupon, the accurate wisdom of God, not herein to indulge the vanity and folly of man.

IX. 2. Now let it hereupon be considered, in what way was this to be done; not otherwise than by enacting and publishing a universal law, that whosoever should comply with such and such terms, expressed in that law, (as, for instance, "repentance towards God, and faith in Jesus Christ,") should be actually and finally pardoned and saved. And this being now the plain state of the case, let any sober, unprejudiced mind make a judgment of it, what this matter would come to, if there had not been a compensation made, as a foundation to this law, and the publication of it. They that exalt one divine perfection, to the diminution of several others; that, for instance, so plead for the absoluteness and sovereignty of God's mercy, as not to adjust therewith the determinations of his wisdom, purity, righteousness, forget that they hereby make any satisfaction by a Redeemer unnecessary, (and by consequence make Christ, whom they cannot deny to have suffered and died, being innocent, to have died in vain,) nor do allow in their own thoughts its just weight to this state of the case,—that the method in which God was to exercise his pardoning mercy, was by publishing an edict for that purpose, that was to extend all the world over, and through all the successions of time. They know this is the course the wisdom of God hath pitched

upon, and yet, taking the case as it is, would have this large, universal tenor of the gospel to proceed upon no foregoing compensation. The great God requires it should be proclaimed to all the world, "Ho, every one that thirsts, come to the waters"—"Whosoever believes shall not perish, but have life everlasting"—"If the wicked turn from all the sins he hath committed, he shall not die: all his transgressions shall not be mentioned"—"Repent, so your iniquities shall not be your ruin"—"Come to me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest"—"Go, preach the gospel to every creature; whosoever believes shall be saved." This is the known tenor of the gospel, directed without limitation to all the ends of the earth; "Look to me, and be saved"—"all sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven to men." That gospel which determines that "whosoever believes shall be saved," is directed to be preached "to all nations." He did first, by his angels from heaven, indefinitely proclaim, "Peace on earth, and good-will towards men:" and pursuant hereto was the commission given by our ascending Lord to his apostles and ministers that should succeed to the end of the world. Now suppose that without reference to, or mention anywhere made of, this compensation to the justice of God, there must be an offer made of such mercy, not to present delinquents only, but to all, in all future times and ages!

X. With what methods of government would such a course as this agree? I the rather insist upon this, both as apprehending it to have its own great weight, and that perhaps it hath escaped the consideration of the most, in treating of this important subject; yet, what is more obvious? It is one thing for a prince, by a private act of grace, to pardon a particular person that hath offended him, without insisting upon any recompence; another thing to do it to a multitude, not only that had now transgressed, but that should do so in any future time. Lighter minds may perhaps at first sight reckon this would only so much the more magnify the mercy of God above that

of man, "whose ways are not as our ways, nor his thoughts as our thoughts." And so indeed doth the way he hath taken for the pardoning of sin infinitely exceed all human thought, Isa. 55:6–8. But we must take heed of being so inconsiderately officious, as to prescribe him ways of exalting one attribute, to the depressing of another; and so to set him above men, in one respect, as to throw him in another below himself, yea and below men too: i. e. not more to set him above them in point of mercy, than beneath them in point of governing wisdom and righteousness. And if any would be so insolent to prescribe to him, they might have thought the inconvenience of such a universal edict might have been avoided, by his sending an angel, or affording some particular revelation to every man he would have turn to him, and repent. But were it dutiful so to correct his way of dispensation? And consider how this way he hath chosen would square with the ordinary measures of government, without the foundation laid which we are asserting. That prince would certainly never be so much magnified for his clemency and mercy, as he would be despised by all the world for most remarkable defects of government, that should not only pardon whomsoever of his subjects had offended him, upon their being sorry for it; but go about to provide a law that should obtain in his dominions, through all after-time, that whosoever should offend against the government, with whatsoever insolency, malignity, and frequency, if they repented, they should never be punished, but be taken forthwith into highest favour. Admit that it had been congruous to the wisdom and righteousness of God, as well as his goodness, to have pardoned a particular sinner, upon repentance, without satisfaction; yet nothing could have been more apparently unbecoming him, than to settle a universal law, for all future time, to that purpose; that let as many as would in any age, to the world's end, affront him never so highly, invade his rights, trample his authority, tear the constitution of his

government, they should, upon their repentance, be forgiven, and not only not be punished, but be most highly advanced and dignified.

XI. And though he hath, upon the recompence made him by his Son for all this injury, declared he will do all this; they accepting their Redeemer and Saviour for their Ruler and Lord, and returning to their state of subjection and duty to himself, in him; yet it were enough to make the world tremble and fall astonished at his footstool, to have peace and reconciliation offered them only upon such terms; and to behold God's own Son made a sacrifice to his justice, and a public spectacle to angels and men, for the expiation of the wrong done; and enough to make all men despair of ever finding such another sacrifice, if they should reject the terms upon which only the value and meritoriousness of this can be available for them. They can never, after this, have pretence to think it a light matter to offend God, or to think that he looks with indifferency upon sin, or counts it a small matter. And suppose it possible a single delinquent might have been pardoned, without such atonement made for his offence; the design of God's unbounded mercy not being so narrow, but so vastly comprehensive as to require the settling of a stated course for the reducing and saving of lost souls, in all times and ages; since a Redeemer of so high dignity was to be constituted for this purpose: it had been an inexpressible injury to him, a detraction from the kindness of his undertaking and the authority of his office, that anything of mercy should be shown in this kind, but in him and by him alone.

But that it may be further understood how requisite it was such atonement should be made, such a sacrifice offered, for the sins of men, in order to God's settling his temple and presence with them; we were to consider, not only what was to be remitted, which we have done, but also what was to be communicated, viz. his blessed

Spirit, in pursuance of the same gracious purpose; which remains to be done in what follows.

CHAPTER XV

Concerning the gift or communication of the Spirit. The gospel the means of it. The inseparable connexion hereof with the former, the imparting of righteousness for removing the guilt of sin. In what sense the Holy Spirit of God is said to be given or communicated. What personal union signifies. How personal presence, vital union, communicated influences, concern the inquiry. In what respect the necessity asserted of this communication. Since such fulness of Spirit in Immanuel, purposely for communication, how comes it to pass he thereby raises no more such temples? The necessity of this communication for this purpose represented two ways; by showing, 1. That the holy Scripture teaches that God doth give his Spirit, though under distinct notions, only through Christ. 2. That it was most reasonable, and therefore necessary it should be so. The doctrine of Scripture herein proposed under six heads.

I. WHEREAS there could be no restoration of this temple of God with men (as hath been shown) without the concurrence of these two things—remission of sin, and emission of the Holy Spirit: and that it was undertaken to show, that these were so great things, as that the wisdom of God judged it not meet to vouchsafe them in another way, than by constituting the Immanuel, invested with a full power, by his own acquisition, in an unexceptionable, legal way, to dispense and effect both of them; whereupon, as we have seen, this constitution was abundantly sufficient, so it now also must appear necessary, for this purpose. Having endeavoured to evince this necessity concerning the former of these, remission of sin, upon consideration of the vast amplitude and the peculiar way of this remission; we are

now to show it concerning the latter, viz. the emission or communication of the Holy Spirit.

The rich sufficiency of Immanuel, so constituted as to be furnished with this power of giving the Spirit, hath already been seen, and that in a two-fold respect; viz. both in respect of the end of its communication, that the indisposed, unwilling heart of man might be prepared and made willing again to receive the Divine Presence; and in respect of the way wherein it was to be communicated; viz. in a way suitable to man's intelligent nature, by representation of the glorious object by which his soul was to be impressed; Immanuel himself, represented as the original, exemplary Temple; and also represented as made a Sacrifice: as was discoursed ch. 5 Whereby the two purposes are answered, mentioned ch. 6 sec. 1. For which it was requisite this constitution of Immanuel should be, and should be declared and made known to us: that the blessed God might, upon terms not injurious to himself, give his own consent; and might, in a way not unsuitable to us, gain ours. Both which he is graciously pleased to assume to himself, for his part, in his transactions with us about this matter; leaving it for our part, being so assisted, to consider what is represented to us: and thereupon, actually to give our own consent.

Whereupon we are not to look upon the gospel of the Son of God as a useless or unnecessary thing. It is "the ministration of spirit and life," (2 Cor. 3:6) and "the power of God to salvation to every one that believes," (Rom. 1:16,) an apt instrument of such impressions upon the spirits of men as are necessary to their being formed into living temples; "the sword of the Spirit." Not that any good work is wrought by the inanimate gospel: "the letter kills; but it is the Spirit that gives life," 2 Cor. 3. An instrument comes under the general notion of means, which signify somewhat middle between the efficient and the

effect, and suppose an agent able effectually to use them. A sword is a fit instrument for its proper use, supposing a hand able to wield it.

The communication therefore of the Spirit is what we are principally now to consider. And as the constitution of Immanuel was sufficient, in its own kind, and for its own proper purpose, in this restoration; so we are to show the necessity of it, for this same purpose.

There ought to be a concurrence of these two, in the Cause, the Restorer, of this temple; viz. a fulness of righteousness, to be so imparted as that it may be a ground upon which sin may be forgiven; and a fulness of Spirit, from whence vital influence may be communicated and transfused.

Inasmuch as it is most evident there cannot but be a connexion of what is correspondent thereto in the effect, viz. the temple itself restored, it must be full of life, 1 Pet. 2:4, 5. For can it be thought the righteousness of the Son of God should ever be the clothing of a carcass? Without union to Christ, no man can have either: neither his righteousness nor his indwelling Spirit. Nor can they be separable, with reference to the designed end. It is an unsupposable thing, that one should be God's temple, enlivened and animated by his own Spirit, and yet be under remaining guilt, and liable every moment to his consuming wrath; or that he could be any whit the better, to have all his former guilt taken off, and be still "dead in trespasses and sins!" Wherefore this latter is of equal necessity. Hither therefore we have reserved the larger discourse we intended of the gift or communication of the Spirit, as the most proper place for it. And by way of preparation hereto, two things are not unfit to be briefly opened.

1. How, or in what sense, the Spirit is said to be given at all, or communicated.

2. In what respect we assert a necessity in reference to this communication.

II. 1. It will not be inconvenient to say somewhat of the true import of the phrase giving the Spirit. It is evident, that whereas giving imports some sort of communication, there is yet a sense wherein that blessed Spirit is, to any creature, simply incommunicable. There is a *περιχώρησις*, or mutual in-being, of the sacred persons in the Godhead, which is most peculiar to themselves, not communicable to creatures with them; and which is natural and necessary, not gratuitous, and whereto therefore the notion of gift no way agrees. We cannot yet be ignorant, that because the Holy Spirit is sometimes called the Spirit of God, sometimes the Spirit of Christ, some bold, assuming enthusiasts, upon pretence of being possessed of this Spirit, have taken the liberty of uttering "great swelling words of vanity," and to talk of being godded with God, and christed with Christ. Yet, because the expressions of giving the Spirit, of receiving, of having the Spirit, of our being in the Spirit, and of his being and dwelling, or abiding in us, are phrases of known and frequent use in Scripture; whether in relation to extraordinary purposes and operations, peculiar to some, or to ordinary, common to all that are sincere in the Christian church: such expressions are therefore by no means to be rejected or disused; but cautiously used, and understood in a sound and sober sense.

We find no difficulty in apprehending how God is said to give anything diverse or distinct from himself; as houses, lands, riches, &c.: when, in the meantime, we will confess it not so easy to conceive of his giving what is within the verge of Deity, or that is of and belonging to himself. Some have thought that by the Spirit given, we are to understand the operations and effects of the Spirit, extraordinary, as of prophecy, working miracles, &c. and ordinary,

(which concern our present purpose,) the graces, habits, acts, and influences of the Spirit. Others, finding it so expressly said of the Spirit himself, spoken of as a person, that "he shall be given, he shall abide with," and "shall or doth dwell with or in you;" (John 14, 15, 16, Rom. 8 in divers verses of those chapters;) have thought it too diminishing, and beneath the sense of those places, to understand them of anything less than the very person of the Spirit. And some, reckoning the particle in to import union, have therefore incogitantly spoken of a personal union between the Holy Spirit and believers: others, more cautiously, of his indwelling, personal presence in them, as a greater thing, and more answerable to the letter of such texts, than their only having in them his graces, or gracious influences.

III. If any one may adventure to give a censure and judgment upon all this, I conceive, 1. That if any will make use of metaphysical terms, they should take them in the sense wherein metaphysicians use them; which they do not, who speak of a personal union between Christ, or the Spirit of Christ, and believers. For by personal union is never wont to be meant a union of one person with another, but a union of the singular nature with this peculiar manner of subsistence, whereby is constituted one person; i. e. that by personal union is meant, not the subjects of union, as if it only signified that several persons remaining distinct were yet some way or other united with one another; which, so taken, were a very lax expression, and which, according to the various capacities persons may admit of, would be of vast extent, and may reach to domestical, political, and I know not how many more unions; which cannot but be much beneath what such men must be understood to intend: but that expression, personal union, means the result of union, whereby the mentioned two become one person. And therefore they that speak in this stricter and more proper sense of personal union of the Spirit

and believers, do most unwarily assert a nearer union between the Spirit and believers than that of the sacred persons in the Godhead with each other. For they who acknowledge them one in Godhead, do yet as commonly deny them to be one person, and assert them to be ever three distinct persons: and this must be as much above what such men will avow and stand by. Therefore that expression can, in this case, admit no tolerable sense at all, distinctly expressive of anything that can be truly meant by it.

2. That of a personal indwelling presence can by no means be denied. The plain import of many texts of Scripture is so full to this purpose, that to take them otherwise, exclusively of this, is not to interpret Scripture, but deny it.

3. Yet this expression of a personal indwelling presence, taken alone, doth not signify any peculiar distinguishing privilege of believers from others; but what is common to all men and creatures. For can we acknowledge God to be omnipresent, and deny it of any person of the Godhead? Therefore, the Spirit's personal presence alone doth not distinguish believers from others, even though we suppose that presence to be never so intimate: "God is all, and in all," more inward or intimate to us than we are to ourselves; an assertion carrying its own evidence so fully in itself, as easily to be transferred from the Pagan academy to the Christian church, so as generally to obtain in it.

4. That therefore such as speak of the Spirit's being present, by his gracious influences, operations, and effects, suppose his personal presence, from which they can no more be severed, than the beams from the body of the sun. The way of divine operation being also by an immediateness both virtutis et suppositi, of both power and person, as it is commonly, and fitly enough, wont to be spoken.

If any therefore should speak of the Spirit's personal presence, as secluding gracious effects wrought thereby, they do not herein say a greater thing than the others, but much less. For though there cannot be any gracious effects without the present person of the Spirit, yet we all know he may be personally present where he produces no such effects: it is therefore his being so present, as to be the productive cause of such blessed effects, that is any one's peculiar advantage. It is very possible to have the personal presence of some great and munificent personage, and be nothing the better for it, if his favour be shut up towards me. It is only his communicative presence that I can be the better for, which depends upon free good-will.

5. It is therefore only the free, gracious presence of the Spirit, that can be the matter of gift and of promise—(not that which is necessary, or impossible not to be)—which is peculiar and distinguishing. Mere personal presence, as the divine essence itself, is everywhere, by necessity of nature, not by vouchsafement of grace; and therefore no way comports with the notion of giving, or of promise.

6. Therefore giving the Spirit imports, in the full sense of it, two things:

[1.] Somewhat real, when he vouchsafes to be in us, as the spring and fountain of gracious communications, influences, and effects, which are most distinct from himself. For the cause is uncreated: the effect is the new creature, with whatsoever was requisite to produce, sustain, improve, and perfect it; though so like its cause, in nature, as to bear its name. "That which is born of the Spirit, is spirit," John 3:6. And because he is said to be in Christians, who are truly such, and they in him, which are words very expressive of union, that union is most properly vital, as whereof holy life is the immediate

result: "I live, yet not I, but Christ" (i. e. by his Spirit) "liveth in me." Nor, otherwise, could such be living temples, animated from Immanuel.

[2.] Somewhat relative, the collation of a right to such a presence, for such purposes; which hath no difficulty. We easily conceive how the meanest persons may, by vouchsafement, have relation to, and interest in, the greatest; so God gives Himself, his Son, his Spirit, to them that covenant with him, as we also take the Father, Son, and Spirit, to be our God; as the baptismal form signifies. And when we so covenant, then hath this giving its full and complete sense.

And now, having thus far seen in what sense the blessed Spirit of God may be said to be given or communicated, we come next briefly to show, as the other intended premise,

IV. 2. In what respect we are here, pursuantly to the drift and design of the present discourse, to affirm a necessity, in reference to this communication. It may admit a twofold reference: backward, to the constitution of Immanuel, on which it depends;—forward, to the restoration of God's temple, which depends on it. There was a consequent, moral necessity of this communication, upon what the Immanuel was, did, suffered, and acquired. There was an antecedent, natural necessity of it, in order to what was to be effected and done by it. In the former respect, it was necessary in point of right, as it stood related to its meriting cause. In the latter respect, it was necessary in fact, as it stood related to its proper designed effect, which could only be brought about by it. In short; the communication of the Spirit was necessary to the restoring of this temple. The constitution of Immanuel was necessary to the communication of the Spirit.

This former necessity hath, in great part, been evinced already, in representing the ruinous state of God's temple among men, when Immanuel undertook the reparation of it; and in treating of his abundant rich sufficiency for this undertaking: yet, there will be further occasion to say more of it in the progress of the following discourse. The other will more directly come under our consideration in what follows: wherein, however, we must have reference to both promiscuously, pursuantly to what hath been said.

For as we have shown that the immense fulness of both righteousness and Spirit, treasured up in Immanuel, could not but be abundantly sufficient for the purpose of restoring God's temple; and have also shown, that his fulness of righteousness was, in order to the remission of sin, as well necessary, as sufficient, to the same purpose; so it remains further to be shown, that his fulness of Spirit, as it was sufficient, so is the emission or immission of it also necessary, for that part it was to have in this restoration: and that the whole course of divine dispensation, in restoring of this temple, imports a steady comportment with this necessity, in both the mentioned kinds of it. Therefore, the Immanuel being the procurer of this restoration, as this may fitly be styled the temple of Christ, or of God in him; so the Spirit, being the immediate actor herein, is it also styled the "temple of the Holy Ghost," as we find in many texts of Scripture, Eph. 2:20, 21; 1 Cor. 3:16, and 6:19; 2 Cor. 6:16; 1 Peter 2:4, 5, which the reader may consult at leisure. And they all show, how important and necessary a part the blessed Spirit hath in this merciful and glorious work. As withal, it being considered what relation the Spirit bears to Christ, as he is Immanuel and Mediator between God and Man, it evidently shows the necessity of his being constituted and made such, in order to the Spirit's part herein.

V. God's own judgment is the surest measure to direct ours of what was necessary, in this case. And so far as the ground of his judgment is, by himself, made visible to us, we are neither to put out our own eyes, nor turn them away from beholding it. We are to reckon it always safe and modest to follow him, by an obsequious, ductile judgment of things apparent, and which he offers to our view, or appeals to us about them. To go before him by a preventive judgment of the secret things that belong to him, or pretend to give reasons, or an account of his matters, where he gives none himself, argues rashness, arrogance, and self-confidence, whereof we can give no account. But our judgment may be truly said to follow his, when he having in his word declared his choice of such a course, which he steadily pursues in his consequent dispensations; we thereupon conclude that course to be most fit, and that what he judged most fit, was to him, (as formerly we have insisted) necessary. Therefore may we with just confidence undertake to show,

That his declared, chosen, constant course of giving the Spirit, for restoring his temple with men, is to do it in and by Christ, or Immanuel, the constituted Mediator between God and man; and that it was apparently reasonable and becoming of himself so to do.

Whereby the necessity will appear, both of his giving the Spirit, for the restoring of his temple; and of his settling the constitution of Immanuel, or such a Mediator, in order to the giving his Spirit.

Only, before we proceed more distinctly to discourse these things, it seems requisite to consider and discuss a difficulty, which may give great amusement to the minds of many; viz.

That since, by the drift and tendency of this discourse, it would appear, that the Son of God, Immanuel, God with us, hath by his own dear purchase, a fulness of Spirit in him for this blessed work, and

now hath it in his power to raise temples everywhere at his pleasure; that yet so great a part of the world is still desolate, full of idols' temples; yea, the visible temple of God full of idols, destitute of the divine Spirit, under the poisonous influence of "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that works in the hearts of the children of disobedience," Eph. 2:2, and* by an efficacious energy, as the word there used emphatically signifies. For what! hath that accursed spirit more power to destroy, than the Son of God, manifested to dissolve and destroy the works of the devil, and his blessed Spirit, have to save?

Some considerations tending to disamuse men's minds about this matter, may make way for our clearer and less interrupted progress in the following discourse. Therefore consider,

VI. 1. That the raising up of temples to God in the souls of men, with the dispossessing of that wicked one, must by no means be understood to be the work of mere power; as if no other excellency of the divine Being were concerned in it. Nor is it fit to say (as elsewhere is insisted) that God can do everything that almighty power can do. Almighty power gives us not an adequate notion of God. He is every other excellency as well as power; and can do nothing but what agrees with every other perfection of his nature, wisdom, justice, holiness, truth, &c. as well as his power.

2. The Son of God, Immanuel, having obtained an infinite fulness of power to reside in himself, cannot be expected to exert it to the utmost, as natural, unintelligent agents do; but so far as is suitable to the proper ends of his undertaking, and the office which he bears.

3. It ought to be deeply considered, as a truth both of clearest evidence and great importance, (though perhaps it may have escaped the thoughts of many,) that the principal end of our Lord's

undertaking and office, was not the salvation of men, but the glory of God. This is that whereupon his design did ultimately terminate. The other he could only intend secondarily, and as a means to this; otherwise, he should make the creature his chief end, and place upon it a most appropriate divine prerogative, to be the last, as he is the first, to all things: which is said of the great God, in reference to this very case, the saving of some, and rejecting of others. In contemplation whereof, the apostle, crying out, "O the depth!" asserts God's absolute liberty, as debtor to no man, (Rom. 11:33–35,) and subjoins the true reason hereof, "That of him, and by him, and to him, are all things, that to him might be glory," &c. This is the avowed design of our Lord Christ's office, in both his lowest humiliation, and highest exaltation. The desire of being saved from the (approaching) hour and power of darkness vanishes, and gives place to this,— "Father, glorify thy name," John 12:27, 28. When, for his obedience to death, that of the cross, he is highly exalted—all are to confess him Lord, to the praise and glory of God. Phil. 2:8, 11. He who is the most competent and most rightful Judge, determines when it will be more for the glory of God, to dispossess the strong man armed, being himself the stronger, and erect that house into a temple: and when it will most serve this his great end, to leave the strong man armed still in his possession, and finally to doom the possessor and the possessed to take their lot together. In the former case, there are "vessels unto honour," framed by his own hand, "to the praise of the glory of grace," Eph. 1:6. In the latter, "vessels unto dishonour," to glorify his power, by "making known his wrath" and just resentments. For that honourable purpose, none are of themselves fit; but he makes them meet (Col. 1:12,) for that glorious state, before he makes them partakers of it: but none serve the dishonourable use, but who are, of themselves, "vessels of wrath fitted for destruction," Rom. 9:22. Our Lord was faithful as a Son; and was therefore content to die upon a cross, that he might, in a way

against which the strictest justice should not reclaim, obtain to himself a power of giving an apostate world a time of trial; and as men should acquit themselves, by complying or not complying with his methods, glorify the Father, whose glory he sought, as being sent by him, and vindicate the rights of the divine government, both in them that are "saved, and in them that perish."

VII. 4. But it may gain us further advantage, to consider the great God doth not pursue ends, as we are wont to do, who commonly apprehend ourselves to stand in need of the things we pursue as our ends. But he acts agreeably to his self-sufficient fulness, who "dwells not in temples made with hands," nor in any human temple, "as if he needed any thing, seeing he gives to all life and breath, and all things," (Acts 17:25;) and expects, hereupon, men should seek after him:—as nothing is more fit, than that indigency and necessity should crave and supplicate unto rich and abounding fulness. Princes glory in their acquisitions, and the increased multitude of their subjects, from whom they have an increase of power, and the ampler revenues. They glory in receiving; He in giving, in making his diffusive goodness flow among his creatures. Now hath he any cause to be anxious about the event, or how his communications are received; beholding always, with infinitely higher complacency, the perfect rectitude of his own dispensations, than their felicity, though he take a secondary pleasure in that too, when it is the result of the former. He glories, as he requires us to do, (Jer. 9:24,) that he "exerciseth loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth, because in those he delighteth."

5. Though the goodness and loving-kindness of God be immense, and without limit; yet, the exercise of it is within certain limits, which annexed judgment, or the most exquisite wisdom, prescribes to it. He waits to be gracious—and because he is the God of judgment, they

are blessed that wait for him, Isa. 30:18. There is a critical season and nick of time, which men are concerned to wait for; and "because to every purpose there is time and judgment, therefore is the misery of men great," Eccl. 8:6. For man also knows not his time, Ch. 9:12. The most perfect wisdom hath drawn out a certain verge, within which the most special goodness confines, ordinarily, its communications: otherwise, what means that,—"if thou continue in his goodness?" Rom. 11:22, with that of Jude 21, "Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." While we converse with the ever Blessed One, within the region of his own love and goodness, imbibing and taking in his free and gracious communications, and still craving and expecting more, we keep within the sacred vital circle and enclosure, without which, is darkness and the shadow of death. We breathe in the element of life, by grateful aspirations, and respirations, that cannot be unpleasant to ourselves, but must be infinitely more pleasant to him, who reckons it "a more blessed thing to give than to receive." We are always to remember, that our state is that of expectants: that we "keep ourselves in the love of God," looking, waiting, always onward, till we attain eternal life. Our waiting hath the annexed promise of blessedness, as above, Isa. 30:18, and Prov. 8:34, and is most becomingly required, as a just homage unto sovereign goodness.

6. That admirable goodness of God, which shows itself in raising up temples in this vile world by the Spirit of Immanuel, claims our subordinate co-operation as under-builders in this structure; we are to work, because he works "of his good pleasure," Phil. 2:12, 13, which signifies both his liberty and delight in working. It is said, 1 Cor. 3:9, "Ye are God's building:" yet, it is also said, v. 14, "If any man's work abide, which he hath built," &c.

One of great note in the ancient Christian church, discoursing of this passage, says,*—The building is not the artist's, or workman's, but the Lord's that owns it; and who is to be, as a little after he speaks,† the inhabitant of it. And inasmuch as we are to be living, intelligent temples, we are also to be ourselves labourers and workmen (as well as they who are to be so by special office) in this building. But if our work be pulling own, stifling convictions, suppressing desires, fear, &c. "do we provoke the Lord to jealousy," by keeping up the service of the idol's temple, and profaning his own, 1 Cor. 10:22? or have we forgot who hath said, "Vengeance is mine," even for treading under foot his Son Immanuel, and despiting his Spirit of grace, Heb. 10:29, 30? The high pleasure the blessed God takes in his own gracious communications, gratefully received, and his just resentment and displeasure for the contemptuous refusal of them, may be understood some way to measure one another. Both may be conjectured from this text of Scripture, after such sort, as the great things of God can be conceived of, by such mean mortals. The Spirit of grace! of all kindness! love! goodness! benignity! sweetness! O the ineffable delight that blessed Spirit must take in its own effusions, tending to the recovery, the healing and saving of a lost soul, when there is an agreeable comportment therewith! But the despiting of such a Spirit! Who can conceive or apprehend, deeply enough, the horror of this crime! the thwarting the design of so compassionate goodness! or of severity, or soreness of punishment, it shall be thought worthy of!

The whole work of faith, i. e. that entire work necessary to be wrought upon the soul of a man, in order to his future felicity, and that by God's own power, is called the fulfilling or satisfying "the good pleasure of his goodness," 2 Thess. 1:11. O the plenitude of satisfaction which our blessed Lord takes in the fulfilling the good pleasure of his goodness, when the methods are complied with,

according whereto he puts forth his power for effecting such a work! But if we can apprehend what it is to cross a man of power in his pleasures: what is it to withstand the great God in his pleasures! even the pleasures of his goodness! His most connatural, delightful pleasures! Some estimate we can make, by supposing a wealthy, potent, wise, and good man, intent upon reclaiming a poor, wretched, undone, perverse neighbour; if his supplies and counsels be gratefully received, how pleasant is it to his benefactor! if often repeated, they are scornfully rejected, how vexing is the disappointment!

7. We must know, there are vincible operations of that Spirit, leading on to those that are victorious, being complied with; otherwise, to the most terrible vengeance. When it was charged upon the Jews, Acts 7:51, that "they did always resist the Holy Ghost, as their fathers did:" it is implied, he was always striving, though more rarely to victory. But when it is said, Prov. 1:23, "Turn at my reproof," could any essay to turn without some influence of the Spirit? But that complied with, tends to pouring forth a copious effusion, not to be withstood. The less sensible adminicula, the gentler aids and insinuations of grace, lead to what shall overcome.

8. Without such an overpowering effusion, man's impotency will be acknowledged, by those that understand either the Scriptures or themselves. But how perverse is the inference, that therefore they are to sit still. No; therefore to pray, cry, strive, wait, "more than they that wait for the morning," till he be gracious, and show mercy.

9. Therefore, for men to be destitute of the Spirit is criminal; as much not to "be filled with the Spirit," as to be "drunk with wine:" the same authority that forbids the one, enjoins the other, Eph. 5:18.

10. But though it be God's ordinary method, to proceed gradually in raising temples to himself in this world, he never so binds his own hands, as not to do extraordinary acts of grace and favour, when he thinks fit; and without any danger of forcing men's wills, or offering violence to human nature: than which imagination nothing is more absurd; both because,

[1] The forcing of a man's will, implies a contradiction in the terms; for we have no other notion of force, than the making one do a thing against his will. But it is impossible a man should will, or be willing, against his will. He that hath made a man's soul and all its powers, well enough knows how to govern him without violence, and by (though never so sudden) an immission of his light and grace, effectually to change a man's will without forcing it. And also because,

[2] No man that hath the present use of his own faculties, will think they can be injured by divine light and grace; or that they hurt the nature of man, which they manifestly tend to restore, improve, and perfect.

Yet no man is to expect, that because the blessed God vouchsafes to make some rarer instances of dealing by way of sudden surprise with the spirits of men, that this should be his ordinary method; but, more usually, to awaken them into some consideration of that forlorn state, while they are destitute of the Divine Presence, and their souls the haunts and residence of devils, instead of temples of the Holy Ghost. And to make them know, that he counts the gift of his Son, and Spirit, too great things to be despised, or not earnestly sought, after he hath given hope of their being attained; or that the neglect thereof should not have a very terrible vindication: letting men feel that the "despising the riches of his goodness" which gently "leads to

repentance," is nothing else but "treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath" and the "revelation of his righteous judgment." Inasmuch as he owes it to himself, to let them know that "the high and lofty One that inhabits eternity," needs not seek to them for a house, Isa. 66:1, 2. And as to what in ordinary course he judges necessary (lest men should in all this be thought justly querulous) he appeals to themselves, Isa. 5:4, "What could I have done more?" "Are not my ways equal?" Ezek. 18

Whereupon we now proceed to show the two things before intimated.

1. That the Holy Spirit is not otherwise given, than in or by Immanuel, or for Christ's sake. 2. How necessary, or (which comes fully to the same) how highly reasonable it was in itself, and may appear to us, that so mighty a gift, and of this peculiar nature and kind, should not be vouchsafed unto men, upon other terms, or in any other way, than this.*

VIII. 1. For the former of these: That the Spirit of God is actually given, upon this account only, his own word sufficiently assures us; and who can so truly inform us, upon what considerations he doth this, or that, as he himself? Let us then, with equal, unbiassed minds, consider the tenor and import of what we find spoken in the holy Scripture about this matter, which I conceive may be truly summed up thus, viz.

[1.] That the Holy Spirit is given to this purpose of restoring the temple of God with men, with the worship and fruitions thereof, under a twofold notion,—as a Builder, and an Inhabitant.

[2.] That it is given under both notions, or for both these purposes, for Christ's sake, and in consideration of his death and sufferings;

though they have not influence to the obtaining of this gift, for both these purposes, in the same way, but with some difference, to be afterwards explained in what follows.

[3.] That it was not the immediate effect of his suffering, that this blessed Spirit should be forthwith given to this or that particular person; but that all the fulness of it be given into Christ's power, and the right of dispensing it annexed to his office, as he is the Redeemer of sinners, and Mediator between God and them, for the accomplishing the end of his office, the ceasing of controversies, enmities, and disaffections on our part, Godward.

[4.] That hereupon, its actual communication for both the mentioned purposes, is immediately from Christ, or by and through him.

[5.] That it is given by Christ, under the former notion, or for the former purpose of rebuilding God's temple, as a sovereign, or an absolute plenipotentiary in the affairs of lost souls, in a more arbitrary way, so as not to be claimable, upon any foregoing right.

[6.] That he gives it, under the latter notion, and in order to a continued abode and inhabitation, as an œconomus, or the steward of the household of God; proceeding herein by fixed rule, published in the gospel, according whereto the subjects of this following communication, being qualified for it by the former, may, with certainty, expect it upon the prescribed terms and claim it as a right; he having, by the merit of his blood, obtained that they might do so.

CHAPTER XVI

The first of the mentioned six heads insisted on. That the Spirit is given both as a Builder, and as an Inhabitant of this temple. Scripture testimony concerning the former of those, and the latter. And for the sake of his death and sufferings. Anciently the blessing of Abraham, and his seed from age to age, upon this account. More copiously, and to other nations, when the fulness of time was come. Christ's death hath influence for these two purposes, with much difference, to be afterwards explained. Colossians 1:19–21, largely opened. A digression relating thereto. The principal import of that text, to show the dependence Christ's whole work of reconciliation, both of God to us, and of us to God, had upon his sacrifice on the cross. The latter whereof is effected by his Spirit, obtained by that sacrifice. Other texts to the same purpose. Further noted, that the Spirit is expressly said to be given by Christ, or in his name, &c. Given for building, or preparing a temple, by a less certain, known rule.

I. Now let us see, as to each of these, whether this be not the plain doctrine of the Scriptures in this matter.

1. For the first of these, it hath been sufficiently shown already, and the common experience of all the world shows, that till this blessed Spirit be given, the temple of God is everywhere all in ruin: that, therefore, he cannot dwell till he build, and that he builds that he may dwell, (the case and his known design being considered,) are things, hereupon, plain in themselves, and are plainly enough spoken in Scripture. When the apostle had told the Christians of Corinth, (1 Cor. 3:9,) "Ye are God's building," he shortly after adds, (in the same chapter, v 16,) "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" This temple, being a living thing, (as 1 Pet. 2:5, represents it,) the very building and formation of it is, in the more peculiar sense, generating; and because it is to be again

raised up out of a former ruinous state, wherein it lay dead, and buried in its own ruins, this new production is regeneration. And do we need to be put in mind whose work that is? that "it is the Spirit that quickeneth?" (John 6) or of what is so industriously inculcated by our Lord, (Ch. 3. v. 3, 5, 6, &c.) and testified under the seal of his fourfold amen, that this new birth must be "by the Spirit?" and we have both notions again conjoined, Eph. 2 For having been told, (v. 18,) that both Jews and Gentiles have by one Spirit access to the Father, so as to be no longer strangers and at a distance, but made nigh to God; (v. 19, compared with v. 13,) it is said, (v. 20,) We "are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief Corner-stone;" and again added, (v. 21,) "In whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth (as a living thing) unto an holy temple in the Lord." After all which, the end and use of this building (implied in the name of a temple) is more expressly subjoined, (v. 22,) "In whom also ye are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." It is therefore sufficiently evident, that the Spirit is given under these distinct notions, and for these several purposes, the one subordinated to the other, viz. both as a builder and a dweller.

II. 2. That it is given for Christ's sake, whether for the one purpose or the other, is as expressly signified as any thing in the whole gospel. For what means it, that it is said to be given in his name? John 14:26, and 15:26, that the work he does, being given, is said to be done in his name? 1 Cor. 6:11, "Ye are sanctified in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the Spirit of our God;" yea, and that it is given in consideration of his sufferings and death, is not less plainly spoken: for not only are the immediate and most peculiar operations of this Spirit ascribed to his death, (1 Pet. 2:24) "He himself bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness;" but the imparting of the Spirit itself, is represented

as the design and end of those sufferings, Gal. 3:13, 14; "He was made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree; that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit," &c.

III. It was the same way, and on the same terms, upon the largeness and certainty of the divine prospect and foresight touching Christ's future sufferings, that this was the blessing of Abraham and his posterity, long before he suffered: that God gave them, of old, his Spirit to instruct them; (Neh. 9:20,) which is not obscurely implied, when, looking back upon the days of old, they are said to have "rebelled, and vexed his Spirit;" (Isa. 63:9, 10;) and when Stephen tells them, (Acts 7:51,) "Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost; as your fathers did, so do ye," it is implied that even from age to age that blessed Spirit was striving with them (children and fathers), for there could be no resistance, where there was no striving. And that, in those former ages, that Holy Spirit was active among them upon Christ's account, and by the procurement of his future sacrifice, (presignified by their many sacrifices,) is also sufficiently intimated, in that, when it is said, That under Moses, they did eat and drink spiritual meat and drink, they are said to have drunk of the rock that followed them; and, it is added, "that rock was Christ." And by what provocations could they be supposed more to resist and "vex the Holy Spirit," than by those wherewith, in the day of provocation and temptation, they are said to have lusted in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert? (Ps. 106:14, Ps. 78 Ps. 95 Heb. 3;) by which they are expressly said to have tempted Christ, 1 Cor. 10:9. And certainly the privilege was inestimably great, (though they too generally little esteemed it, and made little advantage of it,) that when the most of the world besides was nothing else but waste, neglected wilderness, they should be an enclosed vineyard, under the long continued droppings and dews of heavenly influence; for it was

not but upon high and long provocation, that at last God commands his clouds to rain no more rain upon it, Isa. 5:6. How singular a favour was it to be the appropriate plantation, vineyard, and garden of God, taken in from so vast and wild a desert! and that the God of Abraham would so long continue the relation, and be their God, to bless them with the choice of his blessings, those whereof his own Spirit was the peculiar source and spring!

IV. But when "the fulness of time," and the season for the actual immolation of that Sacrifice, (once for all to be offered up,) was now come; that the immense fulness of its value and virtue might be duly demonstrated and glorified; down goes the enclosure, which the amplitude and extensiveness of God's kind design could no longer endure: and as some time the great prophetic oracle given to Abraham must take effect, "In thy seed" (and it is said, not of seeds, as of many, but of seed, as of one, viz. Christ, Gal. 3:16,) "shall all the nations of the earth be blessed;" this is the time. Now must "the blessing of Abraham come upon the Gentiles." Nor could any time have been more fitly chosen, that the copiousness and vast diffusion of the effect, might demonstrate and magnify the power and fulness of the cause, and even lead the eyes of all unto it. The drawing, so generally, of all men, was that which must dignify the cross, and incite all eyes to behold and adore the "Son of man lifted up," John 12:32, and in the midst of death, even with his dying breath, sending forth so copious, and far-spreading a diffusion of Spirit and life! And now had it only been said loosely and at large, that this was brought about by his dying, that might admit a great latitude of sense, and give some room for sinister interpretation. The intendment of the expression might be thought sufficiently answered, if, any way, his dying did occasion good impressions upon the minds of men. But when the effect is expressly ascribed to his dying so, as the cause, i. e. to his being lift up,—to his being made a curse in dying, by hanging

on a tree,—and a curse for us, to redeem us thereby from the legal curse which lay upon us before,—the curse of the law, the doom which the violated law laid upon us, of having (as is apparently meant) the Spirit withheld from us, that thereupon the great and rich blessing might come upon us, of having that Holy Spirit freely, and without further restraint, communicated to us;—this puts the matter out of all dispute, that it was in consideration of his dying that God now gives his Spirit, and leaves no place for contending against it unto any, who have not more mind to object, than they can have pretence for it.

It is then the plain doctrine of the Scriptures, that the Spirit is given for the restoring of God's temple with men, for the sake of Christ's death and suffering, who was Immanuel, and, in his own person, the original Temple, out of which each single temple was to arise and spring up, as well as he was the exemplary Temple, unto which they were all to be conformed.

V. But whereas his sufferings and death have their influence differently, to the Spirit's building of any such particular secondary temple, and to his replenishing and inhabiting it; that difference we shall find is not inexplicable, or very difficult to be represented, according to the tenor of the Scriptures also. In order whereto it will be of use to add,

3. That, as the immediate effect of his sufferings and death, the Spirit in all the fulness thereof, is first given into his power, and the right of communicating it annexed to his office, as he is the Immanuel, the Redeemer of sinners, and Mediator between God and them; that it might implant what was necessary, and root out what should be finally repugnant, either to their duty towards him, or their felicity in him.

That this was the end of his office, the very notion of a mediator between God and men doth plainly intimate; (1 Peter 3:18,) "For Jesus Christ himself suffered once, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God;" which must signify not only that he was to render God accessible, expiating by his blood our guilt; but also, to make us willing to come to him, vanquishing by his Spirit our enmity, (procured also by his suffering, the just for the unjust;) without both we could not be brought to God, which was, we see, the end of his suffering.

That all fulness did, upon his suffering, reside in him for this purpose, is as plainly signified by that remarkable connexion, "For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell, and having made peace by the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things to himself." The Father is not in the original text, (the verb being left impersonal,) but is fitly and necessarily understood; for whose pleasure can this be supposed to be, but the Father's? And so the current of discourse doth thus run smooth: "The Father was pleased that all fulness should dwell in him, having made peace by the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things to himself; even by him:" for that is inculcated a second time. It was judged necessary to this reconciling design, that all fulness should dwell in him. But who did thus judge? The Father was pleased it should be so; but upon what consideration? "having made peace by the blood of his cross." The same He, that was pleased all fulness should dwell in him, was so pleased, as having made peace by the blood of his cross; for the syntax cannot admit that εἰρηνοποιήσας should be spoken of the Son: but the Father (as agent, agreeably to that 2 Cor. 5:18, "All things are of God who hath reconciled us to himself, by Jesus Christ,") having made peace, or pitched upon this method, and laid this foundation of making peace (for it is usual to speak of a thing as done, when it is put into a sure way of being so) by the blood of his

Son's cross, was now content that all fulness should dwell in him, to be diffused by him through the world, in order to his having temples prepared, inhabited, replenished with divine glory every where; not in heaven only, which was already full of them, or where it was easy to suppose he might find such temples ready prepared in all quarters; but even on earth also, where all was waste and desolate, nothing to be seen but forlorn ruins.

VI. And, by the way, (that we may make some, not unuseful, digression,) it is very ordinary in Scripture, to join things in the same period, as if they were of equal concernment, when, though they are mentioned together, their concernment is very different, and the main stress is intended to be laid but on the one of them; the other being placed there, either as an opposite, the more to illustrate and set off that with which it is joined; or as an introduction, a thing supposed, and which had place already, unto which the other is more principally necessary to be added; and then is the form of speech manifestly elliptical, but so as that, to considering readers, it is easy to apprehend what is to be supplied. As when the apostle speaks thus, (Rom. 6:17,) "God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you;" doth the apostle intend to thank God for their having been the servants of sin? No man can think so. But that, whereas, or notwithstanding, they had been so, (which was the thing to be supplied,) they did now obey, &c. So that (John 3:5,) "Except a man be born of water, and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." It was certainly none of our Saviour's design to assert the absolute, universal, necessity of washing with water, equally with being born of the Spirit; but whereas it was the known manner among the Jews to admit proselytes to their religion by baptism, (which was then reckoned as a new birth) his design was, without rejecting that as useless, (which he intended to continue in the

Christian church,) to represent the greater, and most indispensable necessity, of being born of the Spirit, added to the other, and that without this, the other alone would avail nothing. When again it is said, (James 1:9, 10,) "Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted; but the rich, in that he is made low;" it cannot be thought, that both these were equally intended to be enjoined; but the former is supposed, as a thing that would be naturally, and of course; Let him, q. d. Admit he do, or he may, or it is taken for granted that he will rejoice, who, being of low degree, is exalted. But the principal design is to show, what it is less obvious to apprehend or imagine, that the rich hath a truer cause and greater reason to rejoice when he is made low; because he was, otherwise, apt to please himself, or be mocked with a shadow. Many more such instances might be given of two things thus joined together in the same assertion, or sometimes in the same precept, where the intendment is to make use of the one, either by way of opposition, or comparison, the more to magnify, or to lay the greater weight on the other.

The matter may well be so understood in the place under our present consideration; "by him to reconcile all things to himself," (things being put for persons, as elsewhere in holy Scripture, Luke 19:10, 1 John 5:4, and commonly in other writers,) "whether things on earth, or things in heaven;" i. e. even as well men on earth, where the difficulty was greater, and where enmity against God did rage, where he was set at greatest distance and highest defiance; as those in heaven, where all was pacate already, and therefore a word was chosen more suitable to the state of their case, who were principally intended, viz. of reconciling; meaning that, by reconciliation, he would make the state of things on earth, now so filled with enmity against God, suitable to their state above, among whom there was none: and yet a word not wholly incongruous to the heavenly state also; for ἀποκαταλλάττειν doth not always suppose a foregoing

enmity, as καταλλάττειν (used 2 Cor. 5:19, 20,) doth not always; nor doth the decompound here more limit the sense; but doth sometimes signify to conciliate, or draw into society, and may, in reference to that state above, have reference to the continuation of amity and accord there; that no more any such rupture, as once there was, should have place in those bright regions for ever. And it seems designed for the Redeemer's more consummate glory, that the perpetual stability of the heavenly state, should be owing to him, and to the most inestimable value of his oblation on the cross; that it should be put upon his account, and be ascribed to the high merit of his pacificatory sacrifice, that they continue in obedience and favour for ever! For why, else, is the mention of the "blood of his cross," so carefully inserted, and that, rather than be omitted, it is even thrust into a parenthesis: "It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; and (having made peace by the blood of his cross) to reconcile all things to himself—on earth—in heaven!" This is the more remarkably designed; though yet, the principal import of the word reconciled, (as any word that is to be applied to divers matters, is differently to be understood, according to the diversity of the matter,) is accommodate to their case, who were principally intended viz. those on earth, who were in enmity with God. And the following words show these to have been here principally intended: "And you, who were sometime alienated, and enemies in your minds by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled," &c. (v. 21,) q. d. He hath not only conciliated to himself, or made sure of the everlasting amity of those who were always dutiful in heaven; but he hath also recovered the good-will and loyal affection of such on earth as were at enmity, in an apostacy, alienated, and enemies in their minds; and all by the same means, the virtue and fragrancy of a sacrifice, sufficient to fill heaven and earth with its grateful odour, and whose efficacy can never decrease to all eternity. Nor, therefore, is it consequent that the direct intention of this his sacrifice should bear reference to the

concernments of angels, whose nature he took not, but from the redundancy of its merit, this inestimable advantage, viz. the permanent stability of their state, may well be supposed to accrue to them; and for the greater honour of the Redeemer, they made debtors to him for it.

And why should it seem incongruous, that those most constantly pure and holy creatures above, who are, in this same context, (v. 16,) made to owe whatever excellencies they have, within the sphere of nature, to the Son of God, should owe to him also, whatsoever they have within the sphere of grace? Yea, how aptly do things correspond, that, whereas it had been said above, (v. 16,) "By him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are on earth," &c. it should also be after said, "by him are all things reconciled," either recovered into, or continued in, everlasting amity with him; i. e. That whosoever partake of special divine favour, whether they be of the things on the earth, or the things in heaven, shall for the future be debtors to him for it. And whereas it is expressly said in Scripture, that "when God raised him from the dead, he set him far above all principality and power," &c. Eph. 1:20, 21, (which words ἐκάθισεν ὑπεράνω, set him above, not only signify constitution, a thing diverse from natural priority, but also, being conjunct with his raising him from the dead, import a reference to his dying, and conquest over death, as the reason of it,) and that "being gone into heaven—angels, and authorities, and powers, are made subject to him," (1 Peter 3:22;) and that he being said to be "the head over all principalities and powers," he might, by themselves, be understood not to be a useless or unbeneficial Head to them. Though it also is not to be forgotten, that at the time when the apostle wrote these words, a considerable part of that holy blessed society, then in heaven, were sometime on earth, in a state of enmity against God, and so needed reconciliation in the strict and proper sense; as they did who were

still on earth, and to whom he now more particularly directs his speech, (v. 21,) "And you also, who were sometimes alienated—yet now hath he reconciled," &c.

VII. But, though I could not think it an impertinency, to use some endeavour for clearing the whole of this (somewhat obscure) context, it coming, as it did, in my way; yet the principal thing, with reference to my present scope and purpose, which I consider in it, is that it was upon the account of the blood of our Redeemer, shed on the cross, that the Father was pleased all fulness should dwell in him, as an original Temple, to serve the purposes of that great reconciling work undertaken by him, the raising up of multitudes of temples, all sprung from this one, in this world of ours; that "God might dwell with men on earth!" that amazing thing! 2 Chr. 6:18; and that ascending (in order whereto he was first, dying, to descend) that he might fill all things, give gifts, that of his Spirit especially; and that to such as were "enemies in their minds, by wicked works, even the rebellious also, that the Lord God might" have his temple, and "dwell with them," Ps. 68:18. And whereas that work must comprehend the working out of enmity from the hearts of men against God (and not only the propitiating of God to them, which the word εἰρηνοποιήσας seems more principally to intend), and that a great communication of influence from the divine Spirit was necessary for the overcoming that enmity; that therefore this fulness must include (among other things, being πᾶν πλήρωμα, all fulness) an immense treasure and abundance of Spirit, (which is elsewhere said to be given him, not by measure, John 3:34,) and that therefore his sufferings did obtain this plenitude of Spirit to be first seated in him, as the receptacle and fountain whence it must be derived, and that the power and right of dispensing it should belong to his office, as he was the great Reconciler and Mediator between God and man. Which also many other texts of Scripture do evidently imply, as when he is represented

as a universal Plenipotentiary, able to quicken whom he will, John 5:21:—and "all power is said to be given him, both in heaven and earth," (Mat. 28:18;) and that "the Father had given all things into his hands," (John 13:3,) which must comprehend the power of giving the Spirit, and which the end of giving him that plenitude of power plainly requires:—"Thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he might give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him," (John 17:2,) the Spirit given being the root of that life, (Gal. 6:8,) "they that sow to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting:"—and that he is "exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance," (which equally implies the gift of the Spirit,) as well as "remission of sins," Acts 5:31. Nor is the consideration of his sufferings and death less plainly signified to be the ground upon which this fulness of power is given him, when it is said, "Christ both died, and revived, and rose again, that he might be Lord of the living and the dead," Rom. 14:9,—and when, after mention of his being obedient to death, &c. it is said, "Wherefore God hath highly exalted him," &c. that all "should confess Christ is Lord," &c. Phil. 2:5–11.

We further note,

VIII. 4. That hereupon, the Spirit (whether it be for the one or the other, of the mentioned purposes) is actually and immediately given by Christ, or by the authority of that office which he bears; than which nothing can be plainer, in that he is called "the Spirit of Christ," Rom. 8:9; and when our Lord himself uses the expressions about this matter, with such indifferency, and as equivalent; either "I will send him," (John 16:7,) or, "I will send him from my Father," (John 15:26,) or, "My Father will send him in my name," John 14:26, which what can it signify less than that, as the Father was the first Fountain of this communication, so the established way and method of it, was in and by Christ, from which there was to be no departure?

as is also signified in that of the apostle, Eph. 1:3, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places (or things) in Christ."

And when we consider how exact care is taken in well-ordered secular governments, not only that things be done which the affairs of the government required; but that they be done regularly, and in the way which is prescribed and set; so as that every one knows, and attends the business of his own place and station, and that no one may expect that from the treasurer which is to be done by the chancellor, or that from him, which belongs to the secretary of state. If there be any beauty and comeliness in order, where should we more expect to find it, than in the divine government, and in the conduct and management of the affairs of the supreme and celestial kingdom; wherein only the remoteness of those things from our sense makes every thing seem little and inconsiderable? But did we allow ourselves to retire more frequently out of this world of shadows, and ascend into those glorious regions above, there to contemplate the bright orders of holy, loyal spirits, all employed in the services of the celestial throne, and to behold Jesus the Head of all principalities and powers, the Restorer of what was sunk and decayed, and the Upholder of the whole sliding universe, even of the noblest parts of it, that were liable to the same lapse and decay ("by whom all things consist;") we should not think it strange that such deference and honour should belong to his office; that it should be rendered every way so august and great, that he should be so gloriously enthroned "at the right hand of the Majesty on high;" and that, when his administrations are manageable with so much ease and pleasure, to one of so immense wisdom, power and goodness, all acts of grace and favour, should more especially pass through his hands. And if we understand any thing of the distinction of persons in the ever blessed Deity, (whereof if we understand nothing, how do

we adventure to affirm any thing?) it is not more difficult to apprehend distinct employments, wherein, yet, all can never fail to have their most complacential consent. And when that kind of office was so freely undertaken by the Son, the susception and management whereof, hath, no doubt, filled the supreme court, at first, and from age to age, with his highest celebrations and praises; and, for the execution whereof, when he made his first descent into this world of ours, and was to appear an incarnate God on earth, a proclamation was published in heaven, Now "let all the angels of God worship him;" and in his execution whereof, they had, from time to time afterwards, spontaneously stooped down to behold, with pleased wonder, his surprisingly strange and prosperous methods and performances; who can think it unsuitable to the dignity and authority of so great, and so highly magnified an office, unto which all the power of heaven and earth was annexed, that it should by consent belong to it, to employ the whole agency of the Holy Ghost, in pursuance of its high and great ends?

But now he having, by his blood, obtained that this immense plenitude of Spirit should reside in him, not for himself, personally considered, (for so he had it by natural, eternal necessity, without capitulation or procurement,) but as he was invested with such an office, and in order to its being, by the power of that office, communicated to others; it is easy to be conceived, and may be collected from the tenor of holy Scripture, in what different methods it was to be communicated, for the (already mentioned) different ends of that communication, viz. the rebuilding of God's temple on earth, and the constant inhabiting and replenishing it afterwards. Therefore,

IX. 5. For the former of these purposes, it is given more arbitrarily, and of more absolute sovereignty, not limited by any certain,

published, or known rule; or other than what lay concealed in secret purpose. Here the first principle is given of that life which springs out, and exerts itself in the generating, and forming of a living temple; which grows up into everlasting life, and makes it an eternally living thing. Now whereas he hath so vast a power given him by the Father over all flesh, (which giving, we again note, must signify this not to be the power he had by natural inherence, but by later constitution,) we do know to whom, or to what sort of persons, this eternal life, in the consummate state of it, is to be given, for that is sufficiently declared in Scripture; but we are not told to whom it shall be given in the very initial state, or in the first and seminal principle of it; that is reserved among the arcana imperii, the secret resolves, or placita of the divine government. And so, taking the whole of it together, (as here we must,) we are only told, "He will give it to as many as the Father hath given him," John 17:2. We do find a connexion, (Rom. 8:30,) of predestination, calling, justification, and glorification: but not of a sinner, as such, with any of these. So observable was that of a noted ancient,* "He that hath promised pardon to a penitent, hath not (except with very great latitude) promised repentance to a sinner." To speak here more distinctly,—

X. Ever since the apostacy, even upon the first declared constitution of a Redeemer, and in the shining forth of that first cheering ray of gospel light and grace, "the seed of the woman shall break the serpent's head;" a promise was implied of the communication of the Spirit; that curse, which made the nature of man, as the accursed ground, unproductive of anything but briers and thorns; and whereby all holy, vital, influences were shut up from men, as in an enclosed, sealed fountain, being now so far reversed, for the Redeemer's sake, as that all communication of the Spirit should no longer remain impossible. And hereupon, some communication of it, in such a degree as might infer some previous dispositions and

tendencies to holy life, seems to have been general (and is therefore fitly enough wont to be called common grace); but then, in that lower degree, it is not only resistible, but too generally resisted with mortal efficacy; so that it builds no living temples; but retiring, leaves men under the most uncomfortable and hopeless (but chosen) shades of death.

When it was said concerning the old world before the flood, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man," it is implied, it had been constantly and generally striving, until then; but that it was now time, by the holy, wise, and righteous judgment of Heaven, to surcease, and give them over to the destruction which ensued. Which text, it is true, some interpret otherwise; but if we will allow that of the 1 Pet. 3:18–20, to mean that while Noah, that preacher of righteousness, did it externally, Christ was, by his Spirit, inwardly preaching to that generation, who were, now since, in the infernal prison; not while they were so, (which the text says not,) but in their former days of disobedience on earth; this place will then much agree with the sense, wherein we (with the generality of our interpreters) take the other.

Nor are we therefore to think there is no stated rule at all, in reference to this case of God's more general (but less efficacious) striving with men, by his Spirit. For we here see, that before God took any people to be peculiar to him from the rest of men, the reason which he gives why his Spirit should not always strive with man, in common, (after an intimation of his contemptible meanness, and his own indulgence towards him notwithstanding, and instance given of his abounding wickedness in those days) was, because all "the imaginations of the thoughts of his heart were only evil continually;" (Gen. 6:3–5,) i. e. that in opposition to the dictates of the blessed Spirit, he gave himself up to the power and government

of sensual inclination, his mind, or thinking, considering power and faculty, falling in with the imaginations of sense, and taking part therewith, against the Spirit of God; which imported nothing less than a continually rebelling against that Holy Spirit. Now if we consider this as the declared reason why God's Spirit should not always strive, and compare therewith other passages of Scripture; we may collect, and perceive there is some rule of God's proceeding in this matter, not only settled in heaven, but sufficiently notified on earth also: i. e. concerning the extent, not concerning the limitation of this gift; how far God would certainly go in affording it, not how far he would not go:—as far as it is sought, complied with and improved; not how far he would not, in some instances, proceed, beyond that. He hath bound us to pray, strive, endeavour, but not tied his own hands from doing surprising acts of favour, above and beyond his promise.

It is plain, man had, by his apostacy, cut off all intercourse between God and him; not only was become regardless of it, but disentitled. It was his inclination not to converse with God; it was his doom that he should not. We have but short and dark hints of God's first transactions with men, but what was written and done afterwards, much enlightens and explains them. There was, no doubt, a much more comprehensive and substantial law, or rule of duty given to Adam, than that positive statute, "Of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat," that was fundamental to it, and transgressed in the violation of it, and therefore some way implied in it; and if all that more were only given by internal, mental impression. or was only to be collected from the thorough consideration of God's nature and his own, and of the state of things between God and him; that must have been as intelligible to his yet undepraved mind, as written tables or volumes. There must also, accordingly, be much more implied in the subjoined enforcing

sanction, or rule of punishment, "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt die the death," than the vulgar apprehension of dying comes to; for these were the words of the commination of curse upon man, if he should transgress. And are we not plainly told, (Gal. 3:13, 14,) "Christ hath redeemed us from that curse—that this blessing might come upon us, that we might receive—the Spirit?" Therefore, this curse did shut up the Spirit from us; and this death must signify a suspension of all vital, holy influence, a continual languishment under the stupifying power of a carnal mind, which (Rom. 8:6,) we are expressly told is death. And when that first evangelical promise was collaterally and implicitly given, wrapped up in the threatening to the serpent, That the woman's seed should break his head; it could mean no less, than that he that should afterwards, in the fulness of time, become her seed, and be born of a woman, should "redeem us from under that curse," and turn it, in all the consequent horrors of it, upon himself. It was therefore further plain also, that no breath of holy divine influence was ever more to touch the Spirit of man, had it not been for the Redeemer's interposition, and undertaking.

But he having interposed, undertaken, and performed, as he hath; what is the effect of it? What! that the Spirit should now go forth with irresistible almighty power to convert all the world? That, the event too plainly shows was not the design. Or that it should immediately supply men with sufficient grace and power to convert themselves? That, no scripture speaks, and it were strange, if such sufficient grace were actually given to all, it should prove effectual with so very few. But the manifest effect is, that the Spirit may now go forth (the justice, and malediction of the law not reclaiming against it) and make gentle trials upon the spirits of men, inject some beams of light, and some good thoughts, with which if they comply, they have no cause to despair of more; and so, that which is wont to be called common grace, may gradually lead and tend to that of a

higher kind, which is special, and finally saving. That light, and those motions, which have only this tendency, must be ascribed to the Spirit of God, co-operating with men's natural faculties; and not to their own unassisted, natural power alone; for "we are not sufficient of ourselves," to think one right thought. And now if they rebel against such light and motions, violently opposing their sensual imaginations and desires to their light, and the secret promptings of God's Holy Spirit; they hereby "vex his Spirit," provoke it to leave them, and do forfeit even those assistances they have had, and might further have expected, upon the Redeemer's account. All which seems to be summed up, as a stated rule, in that of our Saviour—"To him that hath, shall be given; but from him that hath not (where having manifestly includes use and improvement) "shall be taken away that which he had." Which latter words must be taken not for a prediction, expressive of the certain event, or what shall be; but a commination, expressing what is deserved, or most justly may be: the true meaning or design of a commination being, that it may never be executed. And to the same sense is that of Prov. 1:23, 24, &c. "Turn at my reproof—I will pour out my Spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you: but I called, and they refused; I stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; therefore they shall eat the fruit of their own way," &c. v. 31.

XI. So far then we are not without a stated rule, as to those previous and superable operations of the Spirit of God; according whereto we may expect them to be continued and increased, or fear they shall be withheld. But now, because all do more or less resist, and thereby deserve they should cease, or commit a forfeiture of them; and sometimes this forfeiture is taken, sometimes it is not, but the grieved Spirit returns, and re-enforces his holy motions, even unto victory; where, or when he shall do so, we have no certain published rule, whereby to conclude this way, or that. The Son of God (by

consent with the Father) here acts as a Plenipotentiary, and Sovereign, "quickenning whom he will." The Spirit (by consent with him) breathes, in order to the vital production of temples, as the wind—"where it listeth" or for regeneration, which is the thing there discoursed of in all that context, and even in the next following words, which apply that similitude; "so is every one that is born of the Spirit," John 3:8. And we are therefore, elsewhere, warned to "work out our salvation with fear and trembling," (Phil. 2:12, 13) "because God worketh in us, to will, and do, of his own good pleasure;" being under no tie, not quite to desist, and forsake us, at the next opposition he meets with. At least, they that are not within the compass of his covenant (once sincerely entered) can lay no claim, in such a case, to his continuance, or return.

CHAPTER XVII

The sixth head, proposed before, now insisted on. That for the purpose of inhabiting this temple, already formed, the Spirit is given by the Immanuel, as a Trustee. The Œconomus, or chief Steward, of God's household. And by a certain, known rule. Giving them that are to partake therein, the ground of a rightful claim unto this great and most comprehensive gift. Whereupon to be considered—The dueness and amplitude or comprehensiveness thereof. 1. The dueness of it. (1.) By promise. (2.) By this promise, its having the form of a covenant, restipulated on their part. (3.) From their state of sonship, as regenerate. Adopted. (4.) From their being to receive it by faith. 2. Its ample extent. Measured by the covenant, considered partly in actu signato. In actu exercito. Infers reconciliation, Relation. The summary of the covenant refers to it. The conclusion.

I. FOR the other purpose of inhabiting this temple, when by regeneration it is thus built and prepared, the Redeemer gives the Spirit upon other terms, viz. according to the tenor of a certain rule, declared and published to the world: and whereby a right thereto accrues unto these regenerate ones. The unregenerate world, especially such as by frequent resistances had often forfeited all gracious communications of that blessed Spirit, have nothing to assure them he will ever regenerate them. But, being now regenerate, and thereby formed into living temples, they may, upon known and certain terms, expect him to inhabit them as such, and to be stately their Immanuel, and that as "God, even their own God," (Ps. 67) he will bless them, and abide with them, and in them, for that gracious purpose. Why else hath he conquered all their reluctancy, and made them his temples? It was against their (former) will, but according to his own. He at first, herein, by rough hewings might displease them, but he pleased himself, and fulfilled, hereby, "the good pleasure of his own goodness," 2 Thess. 1:11, nor will now "leave his people, because it pleased him to make them his people," 1 Sam. 12. Neither is he now the less pleased that he is under bonds, for he put himself under them, most freely, and his "gifts and callings are without repentance," Rom. 11. But being under bonds, he now puts on a distinct capacity, and treats these his regenerate ones under a different notion, from that under which he acted towards other men, or themselves, before: not as an absolute, unobliged Sovereign, that might do, or not do for them as he would: but as a trustee, managing a trust committed to him by the Eternal Father; as the $\text{\textcircled{C}}$ conomus, the great Steward of his family; the prime Minister, and Curator of all the affairs of his house and temple, which they are, (1 Cor. 3:17,)* all and every one: for as vast as this temple is, where it is made up of all; and as manifold as it is, when every one is to him a single temple; neither is above the comprehension, nor beneath the condescension of his large and humble mind: neither larger diffusion, nor more

particular distribution, signifying him to be greater or less, in all, in every one.

He so takes care of all, as of every one, and of every one as if he were the only one under his care. Id. He is "the first born among many brethren;" and as that imports dignity, so it doth employment; it being his part as such to provide for the good state of the "family, which is all named from him, both that part in heaven, and that on earth," Eph. 3:15. Yea, and he may in a true sense be styled the Paterfamiliâs, the Father of the family: though to the first in Godhead, he is the Son; to us he is styled the "everlasting Father," Isa. 9:6. Therefore he is under obligation hereto, by, his Father's appointment, and his own undertaking.

And that which he hath obliged himself to, is to give the Holy Spirit, or take continual care that it be communicated from time to time, as particular exigencies and occasions shall require. It was a thing full of wonder, that ever he should be so far concerned in our affairs! But being concerned so deeply as we know he hath been; to be incarnate for us; to be made a sacrifice to God for us, that he might have it in his power to give the Spirit, having become a curse for us, that he might be capable of conferring upon us this blessing; it is now no wonder he should oblige himself to a continual constant care that his own great and kind design should now not be lost or miscarry. After he had engaged himself so deeply in this design for his redeemed, could he decline further obligation?

And his obligation creates their right, entitles them to this mighty gift of his own Spirit! Concerning which we shall consider—The dueness and greatness, or amplitude of this Gift: or show that, as their case is now stated, upon their regeneration they have a pleadable right to this high privilege, the continued communication

of the Spirit. And next show of how large extent this privilege is, and how great things are contained in it. I scruple not to call it a Gift, and yet at the same time to assert their right to it, to whom it is given; not doubting but every one will see, a right accruing by free promise (as we shall show this doth) detracts nothing from the freeness of the gift. When the promise only, with what we shall see is directly consequent, produces or creates this right, it is unconceivable that this creature, by resulting naturally, should injure its own parent or productive cause. We shall therefore say somewhat briefly,

II. 1. Of the dueness of this continued indwelling presence of the blessed Spirit to the regenerate: (intending to speak more largely of the amplitude and extensiveness of it, on the account afterwards to be given:) And,

(1) It is due (as hath been intimated) by promise. It is expressly said to be "the promise of the Spirit," Gal. 3:14. But to whom? To the regenerate, to them who are "born after the Spirit," as may be seen at large, Ch. 4. These (as it after follows) are the children and heirs of the promise, which must principally mean this promise, as it is eminently called, Acts 2:38. "Repent," (which connotes regeneration,) "and ye shall receive the Holy Ghost; for the promise is to you, &c. and to as many as the Lord shall call:" which calling, when effectual, includes regeneration. When (Eph. 1:13) this blessed Spirit is called the "Spirit of promise," what can that mean but the promised Spirit?

(2.) Their right is the more evident, and what is promised the more apparently due, in that the promise hath received the form of a covenant, whereby the covenanters have a more strongly pleadable right and claim; to which the rest of men have no such pretence.

It is true that we must distinguish of the covenant,—as proposed, and entered.

The proposal of it is in very general terms, "Ho, every one that thirsts," Isa. 55:1. "Incline your ear—and I will make an everlasting covenant with you," v. 3. And so it gives a remote, future right to such as shall enter into it. But only they have a present actual right to what it contains, that have entered into it: and their plea is strong, having this to say; "I have not only an indefinite, or less determinate promise to rely upon; but a promise upon terms expressed, which I have agreed to; and there is now a mutual stipulation between God and me: He offered himself, and demanded me; I have accepted him, and given myself. And hereupon I humbly expect, and claim, all further needful communications of his Spirit, as the principal promised blessing of this covenant." Such a one may therefore say, as the Psalmist hath taught him, "Remember thy word to thy servant, in which thou hast caused me to hope," Ps. 119:49. I had never looked for such quickening influences, if thou hadst not caused me, and been the Author to me of such an expectation. Now as thou hast quickened me by thy word, v. 50, so, quickening me according to thy word, "I will put my Spirit within you," is a principal article of this covenant, Ezek. 36:27. And this expression of putting the Spirit within, must signify not a light touch upon the soul of a man, but to settle it as in the innermost centre of the soul, in order to a fixed abode.

And how sacred is the bond of this covenant! it is founded in the blood of the Mediator of it. This is, as he himself speaks, "the new testament" (or covenant) "in my blood," Luke 22:20. Therefore is this, in a varied phrase, said to be the "blood of the covenant:" and therefore is this covenant said to be "everlasting," Heb. 13:20, referring to a known maxim among the Hebrews; Pacts, confirmed

by blood, (sanguine sancita,) can never be abolished. "The God of peace—by the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work;" which must imply a continual communication of the Spirit, for it is also added, "to do always what is well-pleasing in his sight:" which, who can do without such continual aids? Coming to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, we come to the "blood of sprinkling," Heb. 12:24. He could not mediate for us upon other terms; and upon those, obtains for us the better promises, "spiritual blessings in heavenly things," Eph. 1:3.

And further, this covenant is ratified by his oath who formed and made it. "My covenant will I not break,"—"Once have I sworn," Ps. 89:34, 35. "By these two immutable things," (even to our apprehension,) "it is impossible for God to lie;" Heb. 6:17, 18.

Regeneration is the building of this temple; covenanting, on our part, contains the dedication of it; and what then can follow but constant possession and use?

(3.) The regenerate, as such, are sons, both by receiving a new nature, even a divine, 2 Pet. 1:4; in their regeneration; and a new title, in (what is always conjunct) their adoption. Now, hereupon the continual supplies of the Spirit in this house (or temple) of his, are the children's bread, Luke 11:13. "Because they are sons, therefore God sends the Spirit of his Son into their hearts," Gal. 4:6, and he is styled "the Spirit of adoption," Rom. 8:14, 15. Therefore they have a right to the provisions of their Father's house.

(4.) The Spirit is unto these children of God given upon their faith; which must certainly suppose their previous title for the ground of it. They receive "the promise of the Spirit by faith," (Gal. 3:14,) as by faith they are God's children, v. 26. Receiving the Son, who was eminently so, and to whom the sonship did primarily or originally

belong, and believing in his name, they thereupon have power* or right to "become the sons of God," John 1:12, being herein also regenerate, "born not of flesh and blood,"—"but of God." And thus, by faith receiving him, by faith they retain him, or have him abiding in them, as they abide in him: for the union is intimate and mutual, John 15:5. They first receive him upon the gospel offer, which, as was said, gave them a remote right, and now retain him, as having an actual right. "He dwells in the heart by faith," Eph. 3:17. But what he doth, in this respect, his Spirit doth; so he explains himself when, in those valedictory chapters of St. John's gospel, 14, 15, 16, he promises his disconsolate disciples he would come to them, he would see them, he would manifest himself to them, he would abide with them, within a little while they should see him, &c. he intimates to them, that he principally meant all this of a presence to be vouchsafed them by his Spirit, Ch. 14:16–19. And he concerns the Father also with himself in the same sort of commerce; (v. 20,) "At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you;" as also v. 21, and 23. Thus in another place, we find the Spirit promiscuously spoken of as the Spirit of God, and the Spirit of Christ: and the inbeing, or indwelling of Christ and of the Spirit, used as expressions signifying the same thing; when also the operation of God is spoken of by the same indwelling Spirit, Rom. 8:9–11. Which an eminent father observing, takes occasion to speak of the joint presence of the several persons of the Trinity with such with whom any one is present, because each bears itself inseparably towards the other, and is united most intimately therewith,* wheresoever one hypostasis (or person, as by the Latins we are taught to speak) is present, there the whole Trinity is present—Amazing thing! that the glorious Subsistents in the eternal Godhead, should so concentrate in kind design, influence, and operation, towards a despicable, impure worm!

But this conjunction infers no confusion, breaks not the order, wherein each severally acts towards one end: but that, notwithstanding, we may conceive from whom, through whom, and by whom, what was lately a ruinous heap is become an animated temple, inhabited by the Divine Presence, wherein we ought not to forget, how eminent and conspicuous the part is of our Lord Christ, and upon how costly terms he obtained that the blessed Spirit should so statedly, and upon a right claimable by faith, employ his mighty agency in this most gracious and wonderful undertaking! being (as hath been observed) "made a curse for us, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit by faith," Gal. 3:13, 14. Whence also it is said that "after our believing we are sealed with the Spirit of promise," (Eph. 1:13;) i. e. by that seal, by which God knows, or owns, or acknowledges, them that are his, (2 Tim. 2:19,) though they may not always know it themselves. Hereupon also our Lord hath assured us; from them that "believe in him, shall flow" (as out of the belly of a conduit) "rivers of living waters," which, it is said, "he spoke of the Spirit, which they that believed should receive," John 7:38, 39.

Much more might be alleged from many texts of the old and new testament to evince the right which believers, or they who are God's more peculiar people, have to the abiding indwelling presence of his Spirit, as the inhabitant of that temple which they are now become.

III. But that matter being plain, we shall proceed to what was next proposed; to show,

2. The ample extent and comprehensiveness of this privilege; which I shall the rather enlarge upon, that from thence we may have the clearer ground upon which afterwards to argue—how highly reasonable and congruous was it, that so great a thing, and of so manifest importance to God's having a temple and residence among

men, should not be otherwise communicated than in and by Immanuel, the Founder and Restorer of this temple.

And we cannot have a truer, or surer measure of the amplitude and extensiveness of this gift, than the extent and comprehensiveness of the covenant itself, to which it belongs. To which purpose, let it be considered that this covenant of God in Christ, of which we are now speaking, may be looked upon two ways; i. e.

We may view it abstractly, taking the frame and model of it, as it were in actu signato—to be collected and gathered out of the holy Scriptures. Or we may look upon it as in actu exercito, as it is now transacted and entered into by the blessed God, and this or that awakened, considering, predisposed soul. Now here,

1. Take it the former way, and you find this article, concerning the gift or communication of the Holy Ghost, standing there as one great grant contained in the gospel covenant. And it is obvious to observe, as it is placed there, what aspect it hath upon both the parts of the covenant, "I will be your God"—"You shall be my people." Which will be seen, if—

2. You consider this covenant as actually entered into, or as the covenanting parties are treating; the one to draw, the other to enter, this covenant. And so we shall see that our consent, both that "God shall be our God," and that "we will be of his people," with all previous inclinations thereto, and what immediately results from our covenanting, do all depend upon this communication of the Spirit; and otherwise, neither can he do the part of a God to us, nor we, the part that belongs to his people towards him. By all which we shall see the vast extent of the gift. It is the Mediator's part to bring the covenanting parties together. He is therefore said to be "the Mediator of the new covenant," Heb. 12:24. He rendered it possible, by the

merit of his blood, that the offended Majesty of heaven might, without injury to himself, consent; and that the Spirit might be given to procure our consent, which, as Mediator or Immanuel, he gives. When he gives it in so copious an effusion, as to be victorious, to conquer our aversion, and make us cease to be rebellious, then he enters to dwell, Ps. 68:18. Till then, there is no actual covenanting; no plenary consent on our part to what is proposed in the covenant, in either respect: we neither agree that God shall be our God, nor that we will be of his people. This speaks this gift a great thing and of vast extent, looking for the present upon the two parts of the covenant summarily: and afterwards considering what each part more particularly contains in it. But if, in practice, it be so far done as is requisite to a judicious and preponderating determination of will, (which may yet afterwards admit of higher degrees,) how great a thing is now done! Their state is distinguished from theirs who are "strangers to the covenant," who are "without Christ," and "without God in the world." From hence results,

[1.] An express reconciliation between God and thee: for this is a league of friendship, enmity ceasing.

[2.] A fixed special relation; (Ezek. 16:8,) "I entered into covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becamest mine." How great and high a privilege! Relations are said to be of minute entity, but great efficacy; and it is observable what the philosopher (as he was wont to be called) says of them,* that their whole being, viz. of the things related, is related to another. Admirable! all the divine Being related to me a worm!

IV. And that all this may be the plainer, let us but consider more distinctly what the great summary of God's part of this covenant contains; what is the most principal promise of it; the dependance of

our part thereon; upon what terms that which is distinct is promised; how far what is distinctly promised, is coincident with this gift of the indwelling Spirit, both in respect of this present and the future eternal state.

1. The known and usual summary of this covenant, on God's part, is, "I will be their God;" as it is set down in many places of both testaments. Now, what can be meant, more principally, by his being their God, than giving them his indwelling Spirit? Wherein, without it, can he do the part of a God to them? By it he both governs and satisfies them: is both their supreme and sovereign Lord, in the one regard, and their supreme and sovereign good, in the other. Doth being their God intend no more than an empty title? or, what would be their so great advantage, in having only a nominal God? Yea, and he is pleased himself to expound it of his continued gracious presence, (2 Cor. 6:16,) "I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God;" alluding to his continuing his tabernacle among them, as is promised, Lev. 26:11, 12, "I will set my tabernacle among you, and my soul shall not abhor you; and I will walk among you, and I will be your God," &c. And what did that tabernacle signify but this living temple, whereof we speak, as a certain type and shadow of it? Agreeably whereto his covenant is expressed, with evident reference to the days of the gospel, and the time of the Messiah's kingdom, (plainly meant by David's being their king and prince for ever,) Ezek. 37:24–27. "David, my servant, shall be king over them," (spoken many an age after he was dead and gone,) "and their prince for ever."—"Moreover, I will make a covenant of peace with them, it shall be an everlasting covenant with them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them; yea, I will be their God." That Yea, the exegetical note, is observable, "my sanctuary and tabernacle shall be with them," (i. e. "I will dwell in them," as it is expounded before, 2 Cor. 6:16, and

could it be meant of an uninhabited, desolate sanctuary or tabernacle, that should be with them for evermore?) And why is this his constant inhabiting presence to be with them? The emphatical yea, with what follows, informs us, "Yea, I will be their God:" q. d. I have undertaken to be their God, which I cannot make good unto them, if I afford them not my indwelling presence. To be to them a distant God, a God afar off, can neither answer my covenant, nor the exigency of their case. They will but have a God, and no God, if they have not with them, and in them, a divine, vital, inspiriting, inactuating presence, to govern, quicken, support, and satisfy them, and fill them with an all-sufficient fulness. They would soon, otherwise, be an habitation for Ziim and Ochim, or be the temple but of idol gods.

It is therefore evident that this summary of God's part of his covenant, "I will be their God," very principally intends his dwelling in them by his Spirit.

V. And the restipulation, on their part, to "be his people," (which is generally added in all the places, wherein the other part is expressed,) signifies their faith, by which they take hold of his covenant, accept him to be their God, dedicate themselves to be his people, his peculiar, his mansion, his temple, wherein he may dwell. Now this their self-resigning faith, taken in its just latitude, carries with it a twofold reference to Him, as their Sovereign Lord, as their Sovereign Good; whom, above all other, they are to obey and enjoy. But can they obey him, if he do not "put his Spirit into them,"—"to write his law in their hearts," and "cause them to walk in his statutes?" Ezek. 36:27; Jer. 31:33. Or can they enjoy him, if they love him not as their best good? which love is the known fruit of his Spirit. Whereupon, after such self-resignation and dedication, what

remains, but that "the house of the Lord be filled with the glory of the Lord?" as 2 Chron. 7:2.

2. Let us consider what is the express, more peculiar kind of the promises of this covenant, in the Christian, contradistinct to the Mosaical, administration of it. It is evident, in the general, that the promises of the gospel covenant are in their nature and kind, compared with those that belonged to the Mosaical dispensation, more spiritual; therefore called "better promises," Heb. 8:6. They are not promises of secular felicity, of external prosperity, peace, and plenty, as those other most expressly were. It is true indeed that the covenant with Israel, with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and their seed, was not exclusive of spiritual good things; for the communication of the Spirit was (as hath been noted) the blessing of Abraham, (Gal. 3:14,) and that, as he was the father of that people, the head of a community, now to be much more extended, and take in the Gentiles, the time being come, when all nations were to be blessed in him, which is said to be the gospel that was preached to Abraham, Gal. 3:8. But in the meantime, the Spirit was given less generally, and in a much lower measure; wherefore, in that purposed comparison, 2 Cor. 3 between the legal and the evangelical dispensation; though a certain glory did attend the former, yet that glory is said to be "no glory, in respect of the so much excelling glory" of this latter, v. 10. And the thing wherein it so highly excelled, was the much more copious effusion of the Spirit. That whereas, under the former dispensation, Moses was read for many ages, with little efficacy, "a veil being upon the people's hearts," signified by the (mystical) veil wherewith, when he conversed with them, he was wont to cover his face; (that comparative inefficacy proceeding from hence, that little of the light, life, and power of the Spirit accompanied that dispensation;) now, under the gospel dispensation, "the glory of the Lord was to be beheld as in a glass,

with unveiled face," so as that, beholding it, "we might be changed" (so great an efficacy and power went with it) "into the same likeness, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord;" which is the scope of the latter part of that chapter, from v. 10–18.* How great were the splendour and magnificence of Solomon's temple, yet how much more glorious is that which is built of living stones! And as the whole frame of that former economy was always less spiritual, a lower measure of the Spirit always accompanying it; so when it stood in competition, as cor rival to the Christian dispensation, being hereupon quite deserted by the Spirit, it is spoken of as weak, worldly, carnal, and beggarly, Gal. 4:9; Col. 2:20; Heb. 9:2, 10. Therefore the apostle expostulates with the Galatian Christians, verging towards Judaism; "Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish, having begun in the Spirit, are you now made perfect by the flesh?" Gal. 3:2, 3, and Ch. 4 from v. 22–31. Speaking of the two covenants, under allegorical representation, he makes the former, given upon Mount Sinai, to be signified by Agar the bond-woman, and by the terrestrial Jerusalem, which was then in bondage with her children, as productive but of a servile race, born after the flesh only, as Ishmael was, destitute of the Divine Spirit, (which where it is, there is liberty, 2 Cor. 3:17;) the other by Sarah, a free-woman, and by the celestial Jerusalem, which is free, with her children, all born from above, of the Divine Spirit; (John 3:3, 5, as ἄνωθεν there signifies;) which spiritual seed, signified by Isaac, are said at once to be born after the Spirit, and by promise, v. 23, 28, 29. And this can import no less than, that the ancient promise, (given long before the law upon Mount Sinai, namely, four hundred and thirty years, Gal. 3:17, and expressly called the covenant of God, in Christ; most eminently to be made good in the days of the gospel, after the cessation of the Mosaical institution, as it was made before it,) must principally mean "the promise of the Spirit." Which is most plain from that of the apostle Peter to his

convinced, heart-wounded hearers, Acts 2:38, 39. "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost; for the promise is unto you, and your children, and to all that are afar off," (this promise not being to be confined to them and their children, but to reach the Gentiles also, as Gal. 3:14,) "even as many as the Lord our God shall call." And surely that which is, by way of excellency, called the promise, must be the more principal promise of this covenant; which it is also signified to be, in that account given of it by the prophets, Isa. 44:3, and 59:20, 21; Jer. 31:33, quoted Heb. 8:10, (where though the Spirit be not expressly named, yet those effects of it are which manifestly suppose it,) and Ezek. 36:25, 27; Joel 2:28. This new covenant is distinguished from the former, by the more certain, more general, and more efficacious communication of the Spirit promised in it, as is plainly implied, Jer. 31 and (which refers thereto) Heb. 8:9–11.

VI. 3. It will further tend to evidence that the Spirit is given as a settled inhabitant, upon the known terms of this covenant, if we consider upon what terms it is promised, what is distinctly, but however most conjunctly, promised therewith, viz. all the relative graces of justification, pardon of sin, and adoption. These are promised, as is apparent, in the same covenant, and upon faith, which is our taking hold of and entering into the covenant, our accepting God in Christ to be our God, and giving up ourselves to be his people; and is (according to that latitude, wherein faith is commonly taken) inclusive of repentance. For a sinner, one before in a state of apostacy from God, cannot take him to be his God, but, in so doing, he must exercise repentance towards God. His very act of taking him, in Christ, is turning to him through Christ, from the sin by which he had departed and apostatized from him before. Therefore must the indwelling Spirit be given, upon the same certain

and known terms as is also expressed in (the before mentioned) Gal. 3:14, Eph. 1:13, &c. Acts 2:38, 39.

4. Now faith and repentance being first given in forming God's temple, consider, how coincident the gift of the Spirit, as an Inhabitant, is with remission of sin, or with whatsoever relative grace, as such, is distinct from that which is inherent, subjected in the soul itself, and really transmutative of its subject. But we are to consider withal, how manifestly the latter of these is involved in the former. Giving the Spirit (the root and original of subjective grace) implies two things: 1, conferring a right to it; and 2, actual communication. The former belongs to relative grace, the latter to real; (as they commonly distinguish;) but the former is in order to the latter, and the latter most certainly follows upon the former. Both are signified by one name of giving; and do both, in a sort, make one entire legal act, (though there are distinct physical ones,) which the former (usually) begins, and the latter consummates. Divers things are not herein given, but only a title to, and the possession of the same thing: nor by divers donations, but by the concurrence of such things as are requisite to make up one and the same.

VII. And let it now be considered, what there is promised in the gospel-covenant, besides what may be comprehended in the gift of the Spirit. We will first set aside what is manifestly not promised in it besides; and then, more closely inquire about what may seem distinctly promised, and see in how great part that residue will be reducible hither.

1. As to what is manifestly not promised besides; it is plain, there is not promised in it a part and portion in a particular land or country on earth, as there was in the old covenant (contra-distinguished to this new one) to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and their seed, which

land was, we know, called the "land of promise," and unto which the body of that people had so certain a title, upon the condition of their continued obedience, that they were sure never to be removed out of it; or if they had made a general defection, and were thereupon forsaken of God, and given up to invading enemies that should dispossess them, they were as sure, upon their general repentance, to be restored and settled there again, as may be seen in Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the temple, and God's most gracious and particular answer thereto, and in divers places of the Old Testament besides.

If particular persons brake this covenant, by grosser transgressions, they were to be cut off from this good land, and, by Moses' law, "at the mouth of two or three witnesses, to die without mercy;" and so, by such execution of justice, the body of the people was kept safe from divine displeasure; the land was not defiled, so as to spew out its inhabitants.

But if the people did generally revolt, so as that the ordinary methods of punitive justice could have no place, God took the matter into his own hands, and did justice upon them himself, by casting them out. This is the covenant which, it is said, they brake, Jer. 31:32, and Heb. 8. The new gospel covenant is apparently of no such import, or hath no such additament to the spiritual blessings of it.

Nor again doth it promise more indefinitely, temporal blessings of any kind, with certainty, upon any condition whatsoever, even of the highest faith, the most fervent love to God, or the most accurate obedience, and irreprehensible sanctity, attainable on earth; as if the best and holiest men should therefore be any whit the more assured of constant health, ease, opulency, or peace in this world. We know the ordinary course of providence (which cannot justly be

understood to be a misinterpreter of God's covenant) runs much otherwise; and that such things as concern the good estate of our spirits, and inward man, are the only things we can, upon any terms, be sure of, by this covenant; the tenor of it not warranting us to look upon external good things, as otherwise promised, than so far as they may be subservient to these, and to our better serving the interest and honour of God and the Redeemer; of which things he reserves the judgment to himself. And unto Him, by this covenant, we absolutely devote ourselves to serve and glorify him in his own way, and in whatsoever external circumstances his wisdom and good pleasure shall order for us; being ourselves only assured of this in the general, "That all things shall work together for good to us, if we love him," &c. but still esteeming it our highest good (as we cannot but do, if we love him as we ought) to be most serviceable to his glory, and conformable, in our habitual temper, to his will. Spiritual good things then are, by the tenor of this covenant, our only certainties. Other things indeed cannot be the matter of absolute universal promise. Their nature refuses it, and makes them incapable. They are but of a mutable goodness; may be sometimes, in reference to our great end, good for us; and sometimes, or in some circumstances, evil and prejudicial. And being in a possibility to become evil in that relative sense, (as what hinders a greater good, is then an evil,) if they ever be actually so, they are then no longer matter of a promise. The promise would in that case cease to be a promise; for can there be a promise of an evil? It would then necessarily degenerate, and turn into a threatening.

VIII. But it may be said of those good things that are of a higher kind and nature, that respect our souls and our states God-ward, there seem to be some vastly different from this of giving the Spirit. Therefore,

2. We are next to inquire what they are, and how far they may be found to fall into this.

Remission of sin is most obvious, and comes first in view, upon this account. And let us bethink ourselves what it is. We will take it for granted, that it is not a mere concealed will or purpose to pardon, on the one hand, (for no one in common speech takes it so; a purpose to do a thing signifies it not yet to be done;) nor mere not punishing, on the other. If one should be never so long only forborne, and not punished, he may yet be still punishable, and will be always so, if he be yet guilty. It is therefore such an act as doth, in law, take away guilt, viz. the reatum pœnæ, or dissolve the obligation to suffer punishment.

It is therefore to be considered, what punishment a sinner was, by the violated law of works and nature, liable to in this world, or in the world to come; and then what of this, is, by virtue of the Redeemer's sacrifice and covenant, remitted. He was liable to whatsoever miseries in this life God should please to inflict; to temporal death; and to a state of misery hereafter; all comprehended in this threatening, "Thou shalt die the death;" if we will take following scriptures and providences for a commentary upon it.

Now the miseries to which the sinner was liable in this world, were either external or internal. Those of the former sort, the best men still remain liable to. Those of the inner man were certainly the greater, both in themselves, and in their tendency and consequence; especially such as stand in the ill dispositions of men's minds and spirits God-ward, unapprehensiveness of him, alienation from him, willingness to be as without him in the world. For that the spirits of men should be thus disaffected, and in this averse posture towards God, in whom only it could be possible for them to be happy, how

could it but be most pernicious to them, and virtually comprehensive of the worst miseries? And whence came these evils to fall into the reasonable, intelligent mind and spirit of man? Was it by God's infusion? Abhorred be that black thought! Nor could it be, if they were not forsaken of God, and the holy light and influence of his Spirit were not withheld. But is more evil inflicted upon men than either the threatening or the sentence of the law contained? That were to say, he is punished above legal desert and beyond what it duly belonged to him to suffer. Experience shows this to be the common case of men. And did that threatening and sentence concern Adam only, and not his posterity? How then come they to be mortal, and otherwise externally miserable in this world, as well as he? But how plainly is the matter put out of doubt, that the suspension of the Spirit is part (and it cannot but be the most eminent part) of the curse of the law, by that of the apostle, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, that this blessing—might come upon us" (even the Gentiles, as well as Abraham's seed), "that we might receive the promise of the Spirit," Gal. 3:13, 14.

But now what is there of all the misery duly incumbent upon man in this world, by the constitution of that law of works and nature, remitted and taken off by virtue of the covenant or law of grace or faith, from them that have taken hold of it, or entered into it? Who dare say, God doth not keep covenant with them? And we find they die as well as other men; and are as much subject to the many inconveniences and grievances of human life. And it is not worth the while to talk of the mere notion, under which they suffer them. It is evident that God doth them no wrong, in letting them be their lot; and therefore that as they were by the law of nature deserved, so God hath not obliged himself, by the covenant or law of grace, to take or keep them off; for then surely he had kept his word. That he hath

obliged himself to do that which is more, and a greater thing, to bless and sanctify them to their advantage and gain, in higher respects, is plain and out of question; which serves our present purpose, and crosses it not.

For upon the whole, that which remains the actual matter of remission, in this world, is whatsoever of those spiritual evils would be necessarily consequent upon the total restraint, and withholding of the Spirit.

And that this is the remission of sin in this life, which the Scripture intends, is plain from divers express places, Acts 2:37, 38. When the apostle Peter's heart-pierced hearers cry out, in their distress, "What shall we do?" he directs them thus: "Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, for the remission of sins; and ye shall (he adds) receive the Holy Ghost; for the promise is to you, and your children;" q. d. "The great promise of the gospel-covenant, is that of the gift of the Holy Ghost. It doth not promise you worldly wealth, or ease, or riches, or honours; but it promises you that God will be no longer a stranger to you, refuse your converse, withhold his Spirit from you; your souls shall lie no longer waste and desolate. But as he hath mercifully approached your spirits, to make them habitable, and fit to receive so great and so holy an Intimate, and to your reception whereof nothing but unremitted sin could be any obstruction; as, upon your closing with the terms of the gospel-covenant, by a sincere believing intuition towards him whom you have pierced, and resolving to become Christians, whereof your being baptized, and therein taking on Christ's badge and cognizance, will be the fit and enjoined sign and token, and by which federal rite, remission of sin shall be openly confirmed, and solemnly sealed unto you: so by that remission of sin the bar is removed, and nothing can hinder the Holy

Ghost from entering to take possession of your souls as his own temple and dwelling-place."

We are by the way to take notice, that this fulfilling of the terms of the gospel-covenant is aptly enough, in great part, here expressed by the word repentance; most commonly it is by that of faith, It might as fitly be signified by the former in this place, if you consider the tenor of the foregoing discourse, viz. that it remonstrated to them their great wickedness in crucifying Christ as a malefactor and impostor, whom they ought to have believed in as a Saviour; now to repent of this, was to believe, which yet is more fully expressed by that which follows, and "be baptized in (or rather into) the name of the Lord Jesus Christ."

It is in the whole plain, that their reception of the Holy Ghost, as a Dweller, stands in close connexion, as an immediate consequent, with their having their sins actually remitted, and that, with their repenting their former refusing of Christ, as the Messiah, their now becoming Christians, or taking on Christ's name, (whereof their being baptized was to be only the sign, and the solemnization of their entrance into the Christian state, and by consequence, a visible confirmation of remission of sin to them). They are therefore directed to be baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, ἐπι τῷ ὀνόματι, or unto a covenant-surrender of themselves to Christ, whereof their baptism was, it is true, to be the signifying token for the remission of sins; which remission, therefore, must be understood connected, not with the sign, but with the thing which it signified. And it was only a more explicit repentance of their former infidelity, and a more explicit faith, which the apostle now exhorts them to, the inchoation whereof he might already perceive, by their concerned question, "What shall we do?" intimating their willingness to do any thing that they ought; that their hearts were already

overcome and won; and that the Holy Ghost had consequently begun to enter upon them: the manifestation of whose entrance is elsewhere, as to persons adult, found to be an antecedent requisite to baptism, and made the argument why it should not be withheld, as Acts 10:47. "Can any man forbid that these should not be baptized, who have received the Holy Ghost, as well as we?"

Remission of sin, therefore, as it signifies giving a right to future impunity, signifies giving a right to the participation of the Spirit; the withholding whereof was the principal punishment to be taken off. And as it signifies the actual taking off of that punishment, it must connote the actual communication of the Spirit. Therefore, upon that faith which is our entrance into the gospel-covenant, the curse which withheld the Spirit is removed, and so we receive the "promise of the Spirit" (or the promised Spirit) "by faith," as is plain in that before mentioned, Gal. 3:13, 14.

The same reference of giving (or continuing) the Spirit unto forgiveness of sin, we may observe in that of the Psalmist: "Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, and renew a right Spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me," (Psa. 51:9–11;) which, it is plain, was dreaded and deprecated as the worst of evils: but which would be kept off, if iniquity were blotted out. And as to this, there was no more difference in the case, than between one whose state was to be renewed, and one with whom God was first to begin. And that summary of spiritual blessings promised in the new covenant, Jer. 31:31, 32, &c. and Heb. 8 which all suppose the promised gift of the Spirit itself, as the root of them all—"I will put my law in their inward parts, and will write it in their hearts," &c. is all grounded upon this; "For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." When therefore the punishment of sin

is remitted, quoad jus, or a right is granted to impunity, the Spirit is, de jure, given; or a right is conferred unto this sacred gift: when actually (upon that right granted) the punishment is taken off, the Spirit is actually given; the withholding whereof was the principal punishment we were liable to, in this present state.

IX. And as to justification, the case cannot differ, which itself so little differs from pardon, that the same act is pardon, being done by God as a sovereign Ruler acting above law, viz. the law of works; and justification, being done by him as sustaining the person of a judge according to law, viz. the law of grace.

Adoption also imports the privilege conferred of being the sons of God. And what is that privilege? (for it is more than a name)—That such are "led by the Spirit of God;" (Rom. 8:14,) which Spirit is therefore, as the peculiar cognizance of their state, called the "Spirit of adoption," (v. 15,) and forms theirs suitably thereto: for it was not fit the sons of God should have the spirits of slaves; it is not the spirit of bondage that is given them, as there it is expressed, but a free, generous spirit; not of fear, as there, and 2 Tim. 1:7, but "of love and power, and of a sound mind." Most express is that parallel text, Gal. 4:6, "Because they are sons, he hath sent the Spirit of his Son into their hearts," that enables them (as also Rom. 8:16, speaks) to say, "Abba, Father," makes them understand their state, whose sons they are, and who is their Father, and really implants in them all filial dispositions and affections.

Wherefore it is most evident that the relative grace of the covenant only gives a right to the real grace of it; and that the real grace, communicated in this life, is all comprehended in the gift of the Spirit, even that which flows in the external dispensations of Providence not excepted. For as outward good things, or immunity

from outward afflictions, are not promised in this new covenant, further than as they shall be truly and spiritually good for us; but we are, by the tenor of it, left to the suffering of very sharp afflictions, and the loss or want of all worldly comforts, with assurance that will turn to our greater spiritual advantage; so the grace and sanctifying influence, that shall make them do so, is all from the same Fountain, the issue of the same blessed Spirit. We only add, that eternal life in the close of all depends upon it, not only as the many things already mentioned do so, that are necessary to it, but as it is signified to be itself the immediate, perpetual spring thereof. "They that sow to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting," Gal. 6:8. And how plainly hath our blessed Lord signified the vast extent of this gift, when by good things in general, Mat. 7:11, he lets us know he means the Holy Spirit, Luke 11:13.

We therefore see, that this great gift of the Holy Ghost is vouchsafed entirely upon the Redeemer's account, and by the authority of his office, for the building and inhabiting the desolated temple of God with men: for the re-building of it, by that plenipotency, or absolute fulness of power, which, by the sacrifice of himself, he hath obtained should be in him; for the re-inhabiting of it, by virtue and according to the tenor of that covenant, now solemnly entered, and which was established and ratified in the blood of that same Sacrifice. Wherein appears the dueness of it to the regenerate; or that they have a real right to it, who are born of the Spirit; and we have also seen the large amplitude and vast comprehensiveness of this gift. We therefore proceed to what was, in the next place, promised, and wherein, after what hath been said, there will need little enlargement, i. e.

X. (2.) To give an account (as was proposed chap. ix. sect, vii.) How highly reasonable it was the Holy Spirit of God should not be

vouchsafed for these purposes, upon other terms. And this we shall see,

1. By mentioning briefly, what we have been showing all this while,—The vast extent and amplitude of this gift. Let it be remembered that the most considerable part of the penalty and curse incurred by the apostacy, was the withholding of the Spirit; from which curse, in the whole of it, Christ was to redeem us, by being made a curse for us. By the same curse also, our title to many other benefits ceased and was lost, and many other miseries were inferred upon it. But this one of being deprived of the Spirit did so far surmount all the rest, that nothing else was thought worth the naming with it, when the curse of the law, and Christ's redemption of us from it, are so designedly spoken of together. If only lesser penalties were to have been remitted, or favours conferred of an inferior kind, a recompence to the violated law and justice of God, and the affronted majesty of his government had been less necessarily insisted on; but that the greatest thing imaginable should be vouchsafed upon so easy terms, and without a testified resentment of the injury done by ruining his former temple, was never to be expected. Nothing was more becoming or worthy of God, than when man's revolt from him so manifestly implied an insolent conceit of his self-sufficiency, and that he could subsist and be happy alone, he should presently withhold his Spirit, and leave him to sink into that carnality which involved the fulness of death and misery in it. ("To be carnally minded is death.") It belonged to the majesty and grandeur of the Deity, it was a part of godlike state and greatness, to retire and become reserved, to reclude himself, and shut up his holy cheering influences and communications from a haughty miscreant; that it might try and feel what a sort of God it could be to itself:—but to return, the state of the case being unaltered and every way the same as when he withdrew, no reparation being made, no atonement offered, had been, instead

of judging his offending creature, to have judged himself; to rescind his own sentence—as if it had been unjust;—to tear his act and deed, as if it had been the product of a rash and hasty passion, not of mature and wise counsel and judgment; the indecency and unbecomingness whereof had been the greater, and the more conspicuous, by how much the greater and more peculiar favour it was to restore his gracious presence, or (which is all one) the influences of his Holy Spirit. Further consider,

2. That since nothing was more necessary for the restitution of God's temple, it had been strange if, in the constitution of Immanuel for this purpose, this had been omitted; for it is plain that without it things could never have come to any better state and posture between God and man; God must have let him be at the same distance, without giving him his Spirit. Neither could He honourably converse with man; nor man possibly converse with Him. Man had ever borne towards God an implacable heart. And whereas it is acknowledged, on all hands, his repentance at least was necessary both on God's account and his own, that God might be reconciled to him, who without intolerable diminution to himself could never otherwise have shown him favour, he had always carried about him the καρδίαν ἀμεταμέλητον, the heart that could not repent. The "carnal mind," which is "enmity against God, is neither subject to him nor can be," had remained in full power; there had never been any stooping or yielding on man's part. And there had remained, besides, all manner of impurities: fleshly lusts had retained the throne; the soul of man had continued a cage of every noisome and hateful thing, the most unfit in all the world to have been the temple of the holy, blessed God. It had neither stood with his majesty to have favoured an impenitent, nor with his holiness to have favoured so impure a creature. Therefore, without the giving of his Spirit to

mollify and purify the spirits of men, his honour in such a reconciliation had never been salved.

And, take the case as it must stand on man's part, his happiness had remained impossible. He could never have conversed with God, or taken complacency in him, to whom he had continued everlastingly unsuitable and disaffected. No valuable end could have been attained, that it was either fit God should have designed for himself, or was necessary to have been effected for man. In short, there could have been no temple: God could never have dwelt with man; man would never have received him to dwell.

3. But it is evident this was not omitted in the constitution of Immanuel; it being provided and procured, by his dear expense, that he should have in him a fulness of Spirit; not merely as God, for so, in reference to offending creatures, it had been enclosed; but as Immanuel, as a Mediator, a dying Redeemer; for only by such a one, or by him as such, it could be communicated; so was there a sufficiency for this purpose of restoring God's temple. And why was he in this way to become sufficient, if afterwards he might have been waived, neglected, and the same work have been done another way?

4. It could only be done this way, in and by Immanuel. As such, he had both the natural and moral power in conjunction, which were necessary to effect it.

The natural power of Deity which was in him, was only competent for this purpose. Herein had he the advantage infinitely of all human power and greatness. If an offended secular prince had never so great a mind to save and restore a condemned favourite, who (besides that he is of so haughty a pride, and so hardened in his enmity, that he had rather die than supplicate,) hath contracted all other vicious inclinations, is become infamously immoral, debauched, unjust,

dishonest, false, and we will suppose stupid, and bereft of the sprightly wit that graced his former conversation;—his merciful prince would fain preserve and enjoy him as before: but he cannot change his qualities; and cannot but be ashamed to converse familiarly with him, while they remain unchanged. Now the blessed Immanuel, as he is God, can, by giving his Spirit, do all his pleasure in such a case. And he hath as such, too,

The moral power of doing it most righteously and becomingly of God, i. e. upon consideration of that great and noble sacrifice which as such he offered up. He is now enabled to give the Spirit: he might otherwise do anything for man, rather than this: for it imports the greatest intimacy imaginable. All external overtures and expressions of kindness, were nothing in comparison of it. And no previous disposition towards it, nothing of compliance on the sinner's part, no self-purifying, no self-loathing for former impurities, no smiting on the thigh, or saying, "What have I done?" could be supposed antecedent to this communication of the Spirit. The universe can afford no like case, between an offending wretch, and an affronted ruler. If the greatest prince on earth had been never so contumeliously abused by the most abject peasant; the distances are infinitely less, than between the injured glorious Majesty of heaven, and the guilty sinner; the injury done this majesty incomprehensibly greater.

And besides all other differences in the two cases, there is this most important one, as may be collected from what hath been so largely discoursed, that the principal thing in the sentence and curse upon apostate man, was, That God's Spirit should retire and be withheld, so that he should converse with him, by it, no more. The condemning sentence upon a criminal doth in secular governments extend to life and estate; such a one might be pardoned as to both, and held ever at

a distance. If before he were a favourite, he may still remain discouraged. Familiar converse with his prince was ever a thing to which he could lay no legal claim, but was always a thing of free and arbitrary favour. But suppose, in this case of delinquency, the law and his sentence did forbid it for ever; and suppose we that vile insolent peasant, before under obligation to his prince for his daily livelihood and subsistence, now under condemnation for most opprobrious affronts and malicious attempts against him; he relents not, scorns mercy, defies justice; his compassionate prince rushes, notwithstanding, into his embraces, takes him into his cabinet, shuts himself up with him in secret: but all this while, though by what he does he debases himself beyond all expectation or decency, the principal thing is still wanting,—he cannot alter his disposition. If he could give him a truly right mind, it were better than all the riches of the Indies. This greatest instance of condescension he cannot reach, if he never so gladly would. It is not in his power, even when he joins bosoms, to mingle spirits with him; and so must leave him as incapable of his most valuable end as he found him.

In the present case, what was in itself so necessary to the intended end, was only possible to Immanuel, who herein becomes most intimate to us, and in the fullest sense admits to be so called: and was therefore, necessary to be done by him, unless his so rich sufficiency, and his end itself, should be lost together.

XI. Thus far we have been considering the temple of God, individually taken: as each man, once become sincerely good and pious, renewed, united with Immanuel, i. e. with God in Christ, and animated by his Spirit, may be himself a single temple to the most high God.

I might now pass on to treat of the external state of the Christian church, and of the whole community of Christians, who, collectively taken, and "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief Corner-stone, in whom fitly framed and builded together, they grow unto an holy temple in the Lord," are in this compacted state, "a habitation of God through the Spirit." Eph. 2:20. But this larger subject, the outer-court of this temple, is, I find, beset and overspread with scratching briars and thorns. And for the sacred structure itself, though "other foundation none can lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ," 1 Cor. 3:11; &c. yet some are for superstructing one thing, some another; some gold, silver, precious stones; others wood, hay, stubble. I am, for my part, content, that every man's work be made manifest, when the day shall declare it.

Great differences there have long been, and still are, about setting up (the πτερύγια) the pinnacles, and adjoining certain appendices, which some have thought may innocently and becomingly belong to it. And very different sentiments there have been about modifying the services of it. Some, too, are for garnishing and adorning it one way, some another. And too many agitate these little differences, with so contentious heats and angers, as to evaporate the inward spirit and life, and hazard the consumption of the holy fabric itself. Ill-willers look on with pleasure, and do hope the violent convulsions which they behold will tear the whole frame in pieces, and say in their hearts, "Down with it even to the ground." But it is built on a rock, against which the gates of hell can never prevail!

It ought not to be doubted, but that there will yet be a time of so copious an effusion of the Holy Spirit, as will invigorate it afresh, and make it spring up out of its macilent, withered state, into its primitive liveliness and beauty; when it shall, according to the

intended spiritual meaning, resemble the external splendour of its ancient figure, Sion, the perfection of beauty, and arise and shine, the glory of the Lord being risen upon it. But if before that time there be a day that shall burn as an oven, and make the hemisphere as one fiery vault; a day wherein the jealous God shall plead against the Christian church for its lukewarmness and scandalous coldness in the matter of serious substantial religion, and no less scandalous heats and fervours about trivial formalities, with just indignation, and flames of consuming fire; then will the straw and stubble be burnt up; and such as were sincere, though too intent upon such little trifles, be saved, yet so as through fire.

A twofold effusion we may expect, of the wrath, and of the Spirit of God. The former to vindicate himself; the other to reform us. Then will this temple no more be termed forsaken; it will be actually and in fact, what in right it is always, Bethel, "The house of God, and the gate of heaven." Till then, little prosperity is to be hoped for in the Christian church; spiritual, without a large communication of the Spirit, it cannot have; external (without it) it cannot bear. It was a noted Pagan's observation and experiment,* how incapable a weak mind is of a prosperous state. In heaven there will be no need of afflictions: on earth, the distempers of men's minds do both need and cause them. The pride, avarice, envyings, self-conceitedness; abounding each in their own sense; minding every one their own things without regard to those of another; a haughty confidence of being always in the right, with contempt and hard censures of them that differ; spurning at the royal law of doing as one would be done to, of bearing with others, as one would be borne with; evil surmisings; the imperiousness of some, and peevishness of others, to be found among them that bear the Christian name; will not let the church, the house of God, be in peace, and deserve that it should not;

but that he should let them alone to punish themselves and one another.

But the nearer we approach, on earth, to the heavenly state, which only a more copious and general pouring forth of the blessed Spirit will infer, the more capable we shall be of inward and outward prosperity both together. Then will our differences vanish of course. The external pompousness of the church will be less studied, the life and spirit of it much more; and if I may express my own sense, as to this matter, it should be in the words of that worthy ancient, † viz. That supposing an option or choice were left me, I would choose to have lived in a time when the temples were less adorned with all sorts of marbles, the church not being destitute of spiritual graces. In the meantime, until those happier days come wherein Christians shall be of one heart and one way, happy they that can attain so far to bear one another's yet remaining differences; and, since it is impossible for all to worship together within the walls of the same material temple, that choose ordinarily to do it, where they observe the nearest approach to God's own rule and pattern, and where, upon experience, they find most of spiritual advantage and edification; not despising, much less paganizing those that are built with them upon the same foundation, because of circumstantial disagreements; nor making mere circumstances, not prescribed by Christ himself, the measures and boundaries of Christian communion, or any thing else that Christ hath not made so: that abhor to say (exclusively) Christ is here, or there, so as to deny him to be any where else, or to confine his presence to this or that party; or to a temple so or so modified, by no direction from himself. Or if any, through mistake, or the prejudices of education and converse, be of narrower minds, and will refuse our communion, unless we will embrace theirs upon such terms as to abandon the communion of all other Christians, that are upon the same bottom with ourselves and

them; that even as to them we retain a charitable hope, that our blessed Lord will not therefore exclude them, because, through their too intense zeal for the little things whereof they have made their partition-wall, they exclude us. If again, we be not too positive, or too prone to dispute about those minute matters that have been controverted by the most judicious and sincere servants of our Lord, on the one hand and the other, in former days, and with little effect; as if we understood more than any of them; had engrossed all knowledge; and wisdom were to die with us! and that with our bolt too suddenly shot, we could out-shoot all others that ever had gone before us:—if our minds be well furnished with humility, meekness, modesty, sincerity, love to God and his Christ, and our brethren, no otherwise distinguished than by their visible avowed relation to him: this will constitute us such temples, as whereunto the blessed God will never refuse his presence; and do more to keep the Christian church in a tolerable good state, until the *παλιγγενεσία*, the "times of restitution" come, than the most fervent disputations ever can.

And so shall I take leave of this subject, in hope that through the blessing of God it may be of use to some that shall allow themselves to read and consider it: requesting only such as are weary of living as without God in the world, that they defer not to invite and admit the Divine Presence, till they see all agreed about every little thing that belongs to his temple, or that may be thought to belong to it; but resolve upon what is plain and great, and which all that are serious, that have any regard to God or their own everlasting well-being, cannot but agree in, i. e. forthwith to "lift up the everlasting doors, that the King of glory may come in." Do it without delay, or disputation. Let others dispute little punctilios with one another as they please; but do not you dispute this grand point with him. Look to Immanuel; consider Him in the several capacities, and in all the accomplishments, performances, acquisitions, by which He is so

admirably fitted to bring it about, that God may have his temple in your breast. Will you defeat so kind, and so glorious a design? Behold, or listen, doth he not "stand at the door, and knock?" Rev. 3:20.

Consider as exemplary, the temper of the royal Psalmist, how he swore—how he vowed—"I will not come into the tabernacle of my house, nor go up into my bed; I will not give sleep to my eyes, nor slumber to my eye-lids, till I have found out a place for the Lord, a habitation for the mighty God!" Ps. 132. Yours is a business of less inquisition, less expense! His temple is to be within you. Lament, O bitterly lament, the common case, that he may look through a whole world of intelligent creatures, and find every breast, till he open, shut up against him! All agreeing to exclude their most gracious rightful Lord, choosing rather to live desolate without him!

The preparation, or prepared mansion, is a penitent, purged, willing heart! Fall down and adore this most admirable and condescending grace; that the high and lofty One, who inhabits eternity, who having made a world, and surveying the work of his own hands, inquires: Where shall be my house, and the place of my rest? and thus resolves it himself: The humble, broken, contrite heart! there, there, I will dwell!

If you have such a temple for him, dedicate it. Make haste to do so: doubt not its suitableness. It is his own choice, his own workmanship, the regenerate new creature. He himself, as Immanuel, hath procured and prepared it, knowing what would be most grateful, most agreeable to him:—to the most exalted Majesty; the most profound, humble, self-abasement. Upon this consummative act, the dedicating of this temple, I might here fitly enlarge; but having published a discourse already some years ago,

under this title of Self-dedication; (which you may either find annexed to this, or have apart by itself, at your own choice;) thither I refer you. And because this must be a living temple, there is also another extant upon these words: "Yield yourselves to God, as those that are alive from the dead." That also, such as are inclined may, through God's gracious assisting influence, with eyes lift up to heaven, peruse unto some advantage.

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