

# LOGICAL TRACTS,

COMPRISING

*OBSERVATIONS and ESSAYS*

ILLUSTRATIVE OF

Mr. LOCKE's TREATISE

UPON THE

*HUMAN UNDERSTANDING:*

With Occasional Remarks on the Writings of the

TWO SCOTTISH PROFESSORS,

REID AND STEWART,

UPON THE SAME SUBJECT:

AND A PREFACE IN VINDICATION OF

Mr. LOCKE,

AGAINST THE

MISTAKES AND MISREPRESENTATIONS

OF THE LATE.

Mr. MILNER, of HULL,

Dr. HORNE, BISHOP OF NORWICH;

Mr. KETT, FELLOW OF TRINITY COLLEGE, OXFORD;

AND

Dr. NAPLETON, CANON OF HEREFORD.

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*By THOMAS LUDLAM, M. A.*

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## P R E F A C E.

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THE following papers were intended for the improvement in the art of reasoning of such young students in divinity as are *able* to read the writings of Mr. Locke, Bishops Butler, Hurd and Warburton, with those of Dr. Balguy, Powell and Ogden : as for all others, whether the admirers of Messrs. Hutchinson, Jones (of Nayland, commonly called Trinity Jones) Romaine, Milner, Overton, Swedenborg, &c. &c. no man who knows what reasoning is, will think of offering any to such, who reject the very foundation of it, *clear* and *precise* ideas : you might as well think of instructing a man in reading who should refuse to learn his alphabet.

Taught to consider the *attainment of truth* as a matter of the highest concern to intelligent creatures ; and *that* of religious truth as the most important employment in which men can possibly be engaged, I have ever thought my warmest gratitude due to that Being, through whose kind pro-

vidence the care of my education was intrusted to Drs. Powell and Balguy, of St. John's College, Cambridge. Men whose writings have justified the opinion the world entertained of their abilities. Possessed of integrity equal to their abilities, they were much too honest to follow the usual practice of the bigoted partizans of particular opinions : they therefore justly thought it their duty, not to furnish me with their *own* creed, but to teach me to reason, and to use with propriety and fairness, those faculties which God had given me. They had sense enough to see, that if they did their duty in this case, they could neither be responsible for the use I might make of my faculties, or for the folly, or falsity of the opinions I might embrace : and as far as the truth, or the wisdom of these opinions depended upon the quantity of abilities I might possess, they knew performance in this respect would be accepted according to what a man hath, and would not be required according to what a man hath not, because the judge of all the earth will do right. It is surely very strange that there can be more than one opinion upon this matter, and yet I have heard many of those who are called serious Divines, blame the late Norrisian Lecturer, Dr. Hey, for *not* entertaining any *fixed* opinions himself, and for *not* teaching his hearers *any* opinions *at all* ; and I have heard at least an equal number of the same sort of persons blame him for entertaining *false* opinions, or for teaching his hearers *such*. But so it is, though protestants univer-

sally agree to reprobate the infallibility of the Pope they universally act, as if all the different denominations of christians were possessed of it. I was however, taught to pay no regard to human authority in matters of opinion, and to consider *that* truth alone to be worth attention, which was supported by *clear* and uncontrovertible reasoning ; for when the arguments on both sides are in perfect equilibrium, the matter under consideration cannot *possibly* be of any importance. But though I am far from thinking Mr. Locke, or any man to be infallible, yet in vindicating the character of this great writer, from the aspersions thrown upon it so long after his death ; I am but discharging a common duty of humanity, which survivors owe to those who have deserved well of mankind by their literary labours, when they are past the power of appearing in their own defence. It is indeed singular that *all* Mr. Locke's opponents, from Stillingfleet and Edwards, to Kett and Milner, should shew such a decided aversion to the acquisition of *distinct* ideas, and the use of clear reasoning ; and it is surely not a little wonderful that those who have been considered as men of real piety should be *dishonest* enough to bring *general* charges, which no man can refute, because no man can discover the points objected to. Of this sort is that brought by Mr. Joseph Milner, in his reply to Gibbon. In p. 154, he tells us, that Mr. Locke led the fashion of introducing a *pompous parade* of *reasoning* into religion : from that time, says Mr. M.

a rational religion has been the cant term of all who profess to be wiser than others.

With equal truth, honesty, and discernment, Mr. Kett, in his history, the interpreter of prophecy, brings a like general charge against Mr. Locke. In vol. iii. p. 17, 18, edit. i. and vol. ii. p. 131, 132 edit. ii. he says, "that Mr. Locke's writings led to a scepticism, eventually hurtful to religion; and though a loyal subject, his political writings generated doctrines hurtful to monarchical government, and indeed to civil society. The Essay on the Human Understanding, in itself so profound and useful, with a considerable degree of erroneous theory, as might be expected from a man even of the greatest genius, exploring untrodden, intricate, and arduous paths, brought a greater accession to man of knowledge of those powers, by which he is peculiarly distinguished, than any book that had ever been written. It tended also to sharpen, and invigorate the faculties. But the caution with which it examined different species and degrees of evidence; a caution right, as far as it merely prevented error, sometimes refused to admit truth, sought proof of a different kind from that which the nature of the subject required, doubted wherein the plain judgment of common sense, no doubt could exist, and afforded supposed data, from whence ingenious men might form the most visionary theories."

It has often been observed, that children can ask questions, which the wisest men cannot an-

swer; it is no less true, that persons, the most slightly acquainted with any subjects, can bring *general* accusations, which it may be, no man, however well acquainted with the subject can refute. If Mr. Milner, or Mr. Kett had specified particular instances, upon which these very serious accusations were founded; such charges would then have had a claim to be considered as something *more than mere* calumnies. But till Mr. Milner's admirers bring *proof where* Mr. Locke introduces a *pompous parade of reasoning* into religion; and till Mr. K. points out that erroneous theory, which, he affirms is to be found in a *considerable degree*, in the Essay upon the Human Understanding; till he shews *where* Mr. Locke refuses to *admit* truth, or seeks proof of a *different* kind from that which the *nature* of the subject *required*; till he acquaints us where Mr. Locke doubted upon subjects, which in the plain judgment of common *sense*, admitted of *no* doubt, and till he points out the matters which afforded data for the theories of visionary men, and what those writings of Mr. Locke are which *necessarily* led to scepticism, and infidelity; we must beg to consider Mr. Kett as an encourager of the present fashionable political slander. For unless Mr. Locke's writings *necessarily* led to scepticism, and infidelity, Mr. Locke is no more to be blamed than the inventors of printing are, for all the atheistical, profane, obscene, and treasonable books, which have ever issued from the press: by which this noble invention has proved *eventually*

hurtful, not only to religion, but also to civil society. Nevertheless, however warm Mr. Kett's zeal may be, we trust, he will not venture to assert, that Mr. Locke ever wrote any thing hostile to limited monarchy, much less will Mr. Kett venture to declare, that *he* thinks *despotism* preferable to a *free* government.

But let us do Mr. Kett justice : all his charges we believe are not imaginary ; whether he will have better luck with his *founded*, than with his *unfounded* charges, will soon appear. Mr. Kett says, that Mr. Locke affirms that we have no *certain* evidence for the existence of any objects, but ourselves individually, and the Deity.—Mr. Kett cannot mean that Mr. Locke denies the evidence of sense.

This charge then I suppose Mr. Kett grounds upon the first, and second sections of the eleventh chapter of the fourth book of Mr. Locke's Essay. The knowledge of our (own) being, says Mr. Locke, we have by intuition. The existence of God, reason (arguing from the information of our several senses, Rom. i. 20.) clearly makes known to us. The knowledge of the existence of all other things we receive only by *actual* sensation. Had Mr. Kett attended more closely to Mr. Locke's meaning, or had he more clearly understood his own, he would never have brought this objection.

The knowledge men are in *general*, and *usually* possessed of, arises from the exertion of our powers, either of perception, or sensation. By our powers

of perception I understand those internal faculties of the mind, through whose action we are conscious of our own existence ; and by whose action we become acquainted with the relations between our ideas ; whether such relations are discoverable, *immediately* and *intuitively*, or *mediately*, that is, by the interposition of other ideas. By the powers of sensation, I understand those corporeal faculties by which we become acquainted with the works of nature, that is, with the different objects of the material world, and the respective effects of these objects upon each other, and also upon ourselves. Now the action of these powers of sense is confined to our own personal presence ; we can receive no information from them respecting any objects existing, or respecting the effects produced by such objects, in places from which we are absent ; and therefore all the proof we can have of the existence and reality of the material world, is confined to the *small* reach of our bodily senses (I consider not now the trifling assistance they can receive from art.) Nothing so certain as that it is utterly impossible that we can have the testimony of our senses, for the existence of such objects, as are removed by *distance* out of the sphere of their operation. This testimony of sense can continue no longer, than while the senses continue to act. Their testimony does, and must *cease* with their action. What therefore we are not *sure* of by the *present*, i. e. the existing testimony of our senses,

*may* possibly be false, but what *may* possibly be false, cannot *necessarily* be true, that is, cannot be *certain*. And therefore, whatever becomes of the plain judgment of *common sense*, we must doubt of the existence of all such parts of the material world as are not the present objects of our senses. For, with respect to knowledge, there are only two states of mind, certainty and doubt; and of course where the former does not obtain, the latter must. But the works of creation, or the effects of these works upon each other furnish all the objects of that sort of knowledge which we receive through the senses; and therefore this knowledge is a standing and continual proof of the existence of God; which does and must attend the (constant) action of our senses.

Mr. Kett instances, in Berkely and Hume, as some of those visionary writers whose fanciful systems rose from pursuing Locke's principles. It would have been much more to his purpose had he shewn *what* these principles were, and *how* they led to such systems. With the same attention to *precise* proof he quotes Warburton's works *at large*; surely in such a voluminous writer he should not only have quoted the *particular* words, but also have referred to the particular place where they are to be found. Or is it that he thought with his fellow academic, Dr. Knox, to establish truth by the argument of *authority*, just as another of his fellow academics thought to establish it by the argument of *etymology*.

Mr. Kett tells us, that Mr. Locke contributed more than any other writer to the knowledge of those powers of the human mind, by which mankind are peculiarly distinguished. What then is this new faculty which Mr. Kett introduces to us under the title of *common sense*; a faculty which it seems prevents, or removes doubts, that cannot be dispelled by all those wonderful faculties with which Mr. Locke brings us acquainted? What is the object of its action, or the mode of its operation? And wherein does it differ from those other powers of the mind which Mr. Locke so clearly explains? Till Mr. Kett is pleased to give us some more precise account of it, than he has yet done, we must beg to be excused from considering it as worthy of attention. Or is Mr. Kett giving us a sample of it, when at p. 14. Vol. iii. of his first edit. or p. 129. Vol. ii. of his second edit. he accuses certain protestant writers of quitting the *strong holds* of Scripture doctrine, and arguing upon what *they* called, the *principles* of natural religion. It should seem however, as if neither these protestant writers, nor their corrector, knew much of either the one, or the other. An attention to what is meant by the strong holds of Scripture doctrine, and what by natural religion, would have shewn him that the charge was absurd, because the crime was impossible. For what do we mean by natural religion, but the knowledge of *such* truths respecting God, as can be collected by human reason, from a consideration of his works? And is it possible

that such truths should at all clash with those truths, which he is pleased to *declare*, that is with the doctrines of revelation? And what were these principles of natural religion for which Mr. Kett's protestant writers so injudiciously forsook the strong holds of Scripture doctrine? Why the admission "that faith depends not upon the will, but upon the understanding," that "when the evidence for the truth of a proposition is *full* and *clear*, this evidence *constrains* assent, but that no blame is imputable for rejecting a proposition for which the mind cannot see evidence; and that we are *not* called upon to *believe*, what we *cannot* comprehend." Who these protestant writers were, who could not see the difference between the principles of logic, and those of natural religion I know not; but to whatever species of knowledge these principles may belong, they certainly belong no more to natural religion, than they do to natural philosophy. If by *faith* you mean the *mere simple* act of the understanding, expressed by the word belief; (abstracted from all consideration of the influence, which the subject matter of such belief *ought* to have upon the conduct,) the *naked* assent of the mind to the truth of a proposition, not admitting demonstration, or sensible proof: if by the *full* and *clear* evidence for the truth of a proposition, you mean demonstration, and if you further mean that men are not blameable for withholding their assent to propositions, of which no *sufficient* proof is given: and of *this* sufficiency they *themselves* must

judge at their *own* peril (for it is *this* circumstance which constitutes a state of trial) nothing certainly can be more true, than these assertions. And had Mr. Kett's views of *revealed* religion been a whit clearer than those which he seems to have of *natural*, or had his knowledge of the powers of the human mind, and their respective operations, been as distinct, as those persons ought to have, who take upon them to criticise Mr. Locke, he would have better understood the nature of what he calls the strong holds of Scripture doctrine, and what the difference of the ideas is which respect the very *distinct* operations of the mind from which knowledge and belief arise. But we will not follow the example of Mr. Kett, in bringing *general* and *unsupported* charges.

One great purpose of revelation is, to bring men acquainted with *such* truths, as they are *unable* to discover by the *customary* use of their *natural* faculties, or with *such* facts as their *customary* experience might incline them to disbelieve. Not as Mr. Kett affirms to give them information which they cannot understand; yet such must be the case if men can be called upon, i. e. be under *moral* obligations to *believe* what they *cannot comprehend*. The whole knowledge of revelation is a knowledge of *facts*, or of the consequences of *these* facts. *This* knowledge is *now* conveyed to mankind only through the medium of human language. Can we then believe the truth of these facts, or the reality of these effects without comprehending the mean-

ing of the words by which these truths are conveyed to us? If you say we *can*, then all translations of the Scriptures are *needless*: for wherefore are they translated, but because men do not understand the original tongues, that is, because otherwise, men would not be able to comprehend what they are called upon to believe.

Human knowledge is received by several different ways, and this knowledge is called by different names, according to the different ways by which it is received; but in whatever way it is received, unless the ideas of which it is composed are clear and distinct, it ceases to be knowledge, we can learn nothing from such imperfect information. It is just the same as if the faculties of the mind were *unable* to perceive, or those of the body were incapable of transmitting the impressions of external objects; or as if we were *ignorant* of the ideas usually annexed to the words which we hear or see.---  
But further—

The only circumstance in which these various sorts of knowledge differ from each other, is in the degree of probability naturally attendant upon each sort. That knowledge therefore which arises from our *own* perceptions, and that which we receive from the information of other beings vary only in their probability, which may approach nearer to absolute certainty than by any assigned difference. And the *degree* of probability, attached to each sort of knowledge, depends, not upon the clearness or obscurity of the ideas composing such knowledge,

but upon the manner by which it is received. A lie is not less a lie for being more or less clearly understood. Now certain knowledge arises from our perceptions *only*, whether *internal* or *external*; it wholly depends upon the *accuracy* of our *natural* powers; but probable knowledge (which arises chiefly from the information of others, and is the peculiar subject of faith, built upon mere human testimony) depends not upon the strength of our original powers, i. e. of those powers which our Creator has given us, so much as upon our acquired dexterity in the use of them: and judgment is that operation of the mind by which we estimate the *value* of probability. For judgment is not a faculty of the mind, but, like attention and consideration, an act of the understanding. The perceptive faculties then, i. e. our original powers, enable us to *discern* the various circumstances upon which the probability of events depends, and by the judgment we are enabled to estimate the value of this probability. But we can no more estimate the value of probability, than we can discern the circumstances upon which it depends, unless the ideas relating to both these matters, are *clear* and distinct, that is, unless we comprehend them. It is impossible therefore to exercise any act of faith about matters of which we are intirely ignorant: *some* knowledge we must have; but though this knowledge may be more, or less particular, yet it must be clear, and we cannot believe any farther than it is so; that is, we can *no more* believe, than *we can* know what we do *not*



comprehend. An instance will explain this matter. All persons, who are convinced of the truth of the Scriptures; must believe that Jesus is the Son of God; yet no person believes that Jesus is the Son of God in the *same way* that he believes, every man-child born into the world, is the son of his father. This *no* person believes, because *every* person *knows* it to be impossible, in the literal sense of the words, according to all human acceptance. But we believe not what we *cannot* comprehend, but what we perfectly can: that as children derive their existence, not from any act of their own, but from their parents, so Christ derived his existence from God, John v. 26. Thus faith is *ἰλεγχος πραγμάτων ἢ ἐλερομένων*---the proof of *matters* which are *not* objects of sense to us, and which therefore admit of no other proof than testimony. But testimony which we can not understand, that is, information which we cannot comprehend, is no information at all. I Cor. xiv. 11.

Such however is the force of prejudice, aided by confused and imperfect knowledge, that many good persons are persuaded, that both themselves, and others *believe*, what they *cannot* comprehend. Yet is there just as much difference between believing the truth, i. e. the reality of a matter of fact, and believing the *way* by which such matter of fact has been brought to pass, as there is between experiencing our *own belief* of a matter of fact, and experiencing the *fact* itself. When therefore our belief of the creation is urged as an instance of our believ-

ing what we do not comprehend, because we do not comprehend *how*, or by *what particular* means, God made the world, the argument has no force. Because though all persons believe that God made the world, no persons believe *how*, or by what particular means, he made it. But it is *that* matter *only* which we do not comprehend. We know the world exists by the testimony of our senses; and we know from reason that things cannot create themselves, that being to act, *before* they had the power of acting. He therefore who built all things is God.

Just in the same way as these good people cannot see the difference between believing the existence of a matter of fact, and believing the way *by which* this existence is produced; so neither can they see the difference between the information communicated by positive, or by (what are called) negative ideas. (See Hey's Norrisonian Lectures, Vol. III. Book IV. Introduction to Part II. Sect. vii. p. 124.) Yet from this latter sort of information we do not learn what a thing *is*, but what *it is not*. A very scanty species of knowledge indeed! But upon the ground of this imaginary knowledge it has been said, "you believe that God is a spirit, that is, you believe what you cannot comprehend. To be sure no person comprehends what a spirit is, the term spirit conveys only a negative idea. A spirit hath *not* flesh and bones. But though you do not comprehend what a spirit

is, neither do you *believe* what a spirit is : you only believe what it is *not* ; it is not any such matter as you are acquainted with ; and this you *fully* comprehend. You believe God does not consist of any such matter as you are acquainted with. Can any thing be more intelligible ?

But it is not merely a want of *clear* ideas, and *precise* knowledge, a common, but utterly groundless prejudice, respecting the nature of mysteries, has contributed not a little to establish this notion of the possibility of believing what we cannot comprehend ; i. e. what is unintelligible. It has been imagined that mysteries, *as* mysteries, made a *necessary* part of revealed religion ; as if it was *requisite*, that revelation should never be *without* some parts unintelligible, and incomprehensible to the human understanding. But though it is reasonable to expect that we should be left ignorant of many things both in the works, and the word of God ; and though many important ends may be answered, by things being kept secret for *some time*, yet what benefit can possibly arise from secrets which are *never* to be revealed ? It cannot therefore be of the essence of a mystery that it should *never* be disclosed : for that is to make it essential to a mystery that it should be *useless*. And we may observe, that *this* word is most usually applied in Scripture to matters which *once* were secrets, but which for certain important reasons are *now* revealed, Matt. xiii. 11. Rom. xi. 25. xvi. 25. Eph. iii. 4.\*

\* A fondness for the delusive moon-shine of imagination, and an aversion to the *clear* and *strong* light of reason, so conspicuous in many

A want of ability to perceive the difference, between *original* and *transmitted* revelation, and the metaphorical expression, the *word* of God, affectedly applied to the Scriptures,\* has occasioned many persons to ascribe the same authority to the writings of inspired men, as is due to the *immediate*, and if I may so say, *personal* declarations of God himself ; and it has been asked respecting the *present* assurance of faith, “ what then, does not the evidence of God carry *certainty* along with it ? Undoubtedly it does. God has unquestionably given information to particular persons, at sundry times, and in divers manners ; in dreams, and visions, and by an audible voice, as well as by the

pious persons, leads them equally aside from the truth in contrary directions. Thus while some are so eager to make mysteries a necessary part of revelation, others write as if they meant to discard every thing of that kind from *it* ; and so the author of the *Horæ Solitariae* deduces almost all the peculiarities of Christianity from the verbal expressions of the *Jewish* Scriptures ; infomuch that the antient Jews (if they understood their own mother tongue as well as this author) must have been very little behind the Apostles (even after the descent of the Holy Ghost) in their knowledge of Christian salvation. And though Paul profited in the knowledge of the Mosaic economy above many of his own countrymen, and though he received his knowledge of the Christian dispensation from the author of it, Gal. i. 12. yet must he have been strangely mistaken when he asserts that what he spoke was the *hidden* wisdom of God, which in other ages was *not* made *known* to (any of) the sons of men ; if it be true (as this author asserts) that our present very imperfect knowledge of the Hebrew tongue is sufficient to prove the very contrary.

\* All that any man (says Dr. Hey, *Norrifian Lectures*, B. I. Chap. i. Sect. 6. & Chap. xii. Sect. 14. parag. 2. in vol. I. pages 4, & 111. & B. IV. Introduction to Part 2d. Sect. 14. p. 131) should really be understood to mean, when he speaks of the word of God, is human interpretations of it.

incomprehensible mode of secret inspiration. But in all these cases, they who received such information, received, we may be sure, unquestionable *marks* of the divinity of it, though we are, and must be ignorant of the nature of *these* marks. For had not this been the case, every idle fancy of folly, and every extravagant freak of enthusiasm might have passed for divine revelation. At present however we know of no other mark by which we can be assured that we receive truth upon the *immediate* evidence of God, but that it has been miraculously conveyed to us. We may indeed reasonably presume that words spoken to us by God himself, must be free from all uncertainty, because God not only clearly knows what Himself means; He also knows *as* clearly, whether his communication is *perfectly* understood; but this cannot be the case with knowledge communicated by any other being, since God *alone* knoweth the thoughts. But when original revelation is transmitted to us by uninspired men (and in these days we have no other) by the *usual* mode of human communication, i. e. by human language, such information must (without a miracle) partake of all the imperfections, and uncertainty, of this imperfect, and uncertain mode of communication.

Mr. Kett thinks himself justified, if *not* in the *truth* at least in the *propriety* of bringing these charges against Mr. Locke, by the authority of Warburton and Mackintosh, who Mr. Kett affirms, (p. 17. Vol. iii. edit. i. or p. 131. Vol. ii. edit. ii.) justly

observe, "that we cannot exceed the bounds prescribed for human knowledge, without involving ourselves in contradiction and absurdity: that nothing has produced more pernicious mischief to society, than the pursuit of principles in themselves good, far beyond the bounds, in which they are good." Now what are we to understand in this place by principles? Not principles of *mere* knowledge surely! These may be *true*, or *false*; but whoever thought of intuitive truths, which is what we usually mean by principles being *good* or *bad*? Not principles of morality! For these, if good, must for *ever* continue to be good. There are no bounds, or limits to what is fit, right, proper; commendable, praise-worthy in *itself*, after which it becomes unfit, wrong, improper, wicked, detestable, abominable. When we describe moral principles as *right* in *themselves*, we mean that they are *eternally* right, that they do not admit of any change. That truth, justice, humanity, honesty, cannot become falsehood, fraud, cruelty, knavery, how far soever carried. Or are we to suppose that these authors meant, what *alone can* be meant, principles of *expediency* or *utility*; all this may be very true, but is very trifling. Because who sees not that the general benefit of mankind must depend upon a great variety of circumstances, for which no *fixed* rule can possibly be given?

But what are *these bounds* prescribed for human knowledge? and who has prescribed them? The

powers of the human mind are certainly not unlimited, but who can say what these limits are? Ideas suggested by external objects, and these ideas variously modified by the different faculties of the understanding, are the materials of all our knowledge; and where ideas are either absolutely wanting, or are much confused, and very obscure, we shall either have no knowledge at all, or it will be exceedingly imperfect; which of these two is the case with Messrs. Milner and Kett, the public must determine; and those who can find out Mr. Locke's faults by the light such writers afford, must have good eyes indeed.

Mr. Kett has also recourse to testimony for the proof of the mischiefs generated by Mr. Locke's mistakes; and when he *produces* this testimony, or those mistakes upon which this testimony is founded, it will be time enough to consider of a reply to such vague, *confused* and unmeaning, accusations.

Dr. Napleton, in his advice to students in divinity, follows not a little the practice of Messrs. Milner and Kett; and at p. 34, warns those who read Mr. Locke's Theological writings, "to be cautious how they follow his opinions in such passages of Scripture as relate to the divinity of our Lord, or the assistance of the Holy Spirit." He would have done more credit to the *fairness* of his advice, if he had pointed out the exceptionable passages, and to the *value* of it, if he had pointed

out his reasons for thinking these passages exceptionable.

Bishop Horne also has thought proper to controvert Mr. Locke's notions of civil government; but he has done it, as all honest inquirers after truth ought to do, by endeavouring to shew the falsity of Mr. Locke's reasoning; with what success the readers of this defence of Mr. Locke, must determine.

The Bishop begins his Discourse upon the Origin of civil government, with observing, "that it is a natural, and a laudable curiosity to inquire into the origin of civil government, and to know at *what* time, and under *whose* direction, an institution was devised capable of contributing so much to the production, furtherance, and establishment of human happiness." It would be a curiosity equally natural, and equally laudable, to inquire into, and ascertain, at *what* time, and under whose direction, the various arts of life, which contribute so much to the comfort and well being of mankind were *invented*, and by *whom* they were brought to their present state of perfection. And is not each of these inquiries equally practicable? And does not the nature and constitution of this world plainly shew, that both are alike impossible? Not only the *constitution* of that *nature*, which God has unalterably appointed, is a progressive one; that state of happiness also, which mankind are enabled to attain, by the exertion of those faculties which God has given them, is likewise a progressive state.

The productions of nature can no more reach that degree of perfection they are capable of at *once*, or of a sudden, than the habits and dispositions of the moral, the wisdom of the intellectual, or the dexterity and address of the active world. Time and labour, and cultivation, must mature the first; attention, diligence, and repeated efforts must complete the last. Whatever the state of our first parents, of the animal, vegetable, and material world might be, it was, and must be totally different, from that of each individual thing, which was to succeed. The *origin* of a state of nature, and the *continuance* of *that* state, have nothing in common. The first was a miracle, not to be repeated; the second, though no less wonderful, loses the name of miracle, from its continual repetition. We know no more how the natural and moral world were set agoing, than we know how the planets were projected in their orbits, and you might just as well ask when an acorn became an oak, a child a man, or when London became a city, as to ask at *what* time, and under whose direction civil government was established? The British government is universally and deservedly admired; but who can say *when*, and under whose direction it was, or whether it is even *yet* established? It has received gradual improvements and amendments, through a long course of year's, and will probably continue to do so pro re nata. Its various excellencies were attained by slow degrees, and are no more the worse for being the

fruit of strife and contention, than the religion of Christ is, Philip. i. 15. and provided the happiness of mankind is but promoted, we have unquestionable cause to rejoice, and as lovers of our country may say with the Apostle, "yea and we will rejoice." To take an instance in our own memory. During the long administration of Sir Robert Walpole, whenever the minister was teased with a troublesome pamphlet, he used to send his myrmidons with a *general* warrant to search the printing-offices for treasonable papers; not indeed with the hopes, or even the expectations of finding any, but merely to plague the *opposition* printers, by overturning their *cases* and making *pye* of their *letter*; because he had nothing upon which he could ground a legal process. But these *general* warrants have since been declared *illegal*, and now no minister dares to issue them, and we may venture to predict never will. The Bishop indeed speaks of civil society as if it was the invention of an hour, or the work of a day. For, who that thought otherwise, would expect to ascertain "at *what* time, and under whose direction, a machine was constructed capable, by a variety of well adjusted springs and movements, of controlling the irregularities of depraved nature, &c. and securing to us the numerous benefits of government."

Aristocratic and democratic forms of government, the Bishop tells us are *illegitimate* forms of government.—No law surely but that of God can

ordain a form of government for *all* mankind. These friends of the good Bishop then, who thought his Sermon worth republishing in that wise compilation, called the Scholar Armed, would be kind to his memory and his reputation, if they would tell us in what part of the Bible these forms are declared to be illegitimate ; and also in what part of it a description of that legitimate form is to be found, which the Bishop and his friends seem so anxious to establish. Whether his, and their anxiety arose from a desire to derive every thing from a religious original, just as certain other pious persons were anxious to derive all arts and sciences, from the Bible, I know not ; but considering how very careful good persons often are of their own interest, it would not be strange, if having heard of that celebrated maxim, “no bishop, no king,” they might be apprehensive, the converse should be no less true. However when these friends of his Lordship can shew where directions for this legitimate form of government are to be found in the word of God, I will undertake to answer those questions which the Bishop asks with such an air of triumph, viz. *Where* the universal assembly was convened ? and who had authority to convene it ? and how the proceedings of this assembly were regulated, &c. &c. ?\*

\* Had the Bishop's understanding been as good as his dispositions he would have seen, that when writers on *moral* subjects (meaning by moral subjects, such subjects as respect the conduct of mankind) describe the manner in which such conduct may be attained : they do not mean to describe the conduct which *actually*, and in fact prevails, but such as would prevail, were men governed by their reason,

To fathers in their private families, says the Bishop, after Mr. Hooker (whom by the by with the usual honesty of polemical writers, he can either quote, or pass over in silence, as best suits his purpose) nature has given supreme power.

judging, from the nature, and faculties their Creator has given them, and the situation and circumstances in which he has placed them. Just as mathematicians, when they demonstrate the various properties of different figures, mean only to shew the *relations* between certain *ideas*. For these relations no longer obtain when you pass from *abstract* ideas to *real* existence. Not a single proposition in Euclid is true of a triangle drawn upon paper, or cut out of any material whatsoever ; that is, when from ideas in the mind they become objects of our corporeal senses. It is unquestionably true that the three angles of a triangle are *exactly* equal to two right ones. But draw the figure, and the proposition, as referred to *that* figure, or to any triangular figure, in which matter is concerned, is no longer true. Thus again we are told, that “by the first law of motion, a body when acted upon by a single impulse, will continue to move uniformly *for ever*, and will *for ever* persevere in its *original* direction. Yet when this law is applied to matter *actually* existing, it *ceases* to be true. Nobody ever saw *such* motion. So again, when Sir Isaac Newton discovered that the moon's motion was of the *like* kind, that it would be, if the *law* of gravitation, observable upon the *surface* of the *earth*, reached to that planet ; he did not mean to assert, that gravitation was the *cause* of the moon's motion ; because for aught any one can tell, an angel may carry it about, but he meant to shew that such a force would produce the *same* effect. And when writers assert certain matters relative to civil government, or church authority, they do not mean to assert, that civil government, or church authority, *actually* arose from such circumstances, but that these circumstances would certainly produce *such* civil government and such church authority, as in the want of either, would answer the ends *proposed* by *such* institutions.

Proofs that matters *can* arise from certain circumstances may be derived from abstract reasoning, proofs, that matters *actually* did arise from certain circumstances, can only be derived from our *own* experience, or from *that* of others, made known to us by their testimony. Those therefore who assert that the writers upon civil society have contributed to the madness of French philosophy, misunderstand the nature of the reasoning employed by these writers.

Nature ! The God of nature surely ! The term nature is a *mere* word, and when we talk of the gifts of nature, we mean those gifts of God, those powers, faculties, qualifications, qualities, which he bestows *indiscriminately*, though perhaps not equally upon all the various species of beings respectively : and from considering these various natural powers, faculties, &c. we collect the purposes they were intended to answer, and of course the end for which they were given : and this is the *great* and *general* argument of final causes from which most of our knowledge is derived. What then, I ask, are the purposes for which this supreme power is given ? and why is it given by *nature* to fathers *only*, and not to mothers ? and how does it appear that this power is given to *one* parent *only* ? and what are we to understand by *supreme power* ? If I have any ideas to the words supreme power, it means the highest possible degree of power, which can be exercised over whatever is the object of it. Now the highest degree of power which human creatures can exercise over living beings is, the power of life and death. What then are those circumstances of mankind, from which we are to conclude, that *nature* gives *this* *supreme* power, i. e. the power of *life* and *death* over their offspring to fathers in their private families ? what is the use of such a power, and why is it given to the father *only*, and not to the mother ? of whom the Bishop says nothing !

Or is it meant only to shew that *some* sort of

power does, and must exist amongst mankind ? But whatever power may exist amongst men, natural reason, and divine revelation equally shew that it cannot be the *right* (for that is what we mean in the present case by the word power) of life and death, except in the case of self-defence. In civil society indeed men may agree to establish any punishment for offences against the *State* (such are all crimes in the proper sense of the word) which they may think proper. Because all punishments for *crimes* are upon the ground of *self-defence*, nor can such an agreement be unjust. *Public* punishments when not inflicted upon the innocent, may be *harsh*, or *cruel*, but they cannot be *unjust*. But what is all this to the establishment of civil power ? a power instituted for very different purposes, than those of fathers in their private families. Political and paternal power differ so *much* in the *ends* to be answered by them, that no inference can be made, nor any conclusion drawn from one to the other. A father may bring up his children in what religion he pleases ; and he has this power (right) if he has it any way by *nature*. But may a king provide such religion for his subjects as he thinks proper, and *compel* them to receive it ? Indeed nothing but the utmost ignorance of human nature, and the strongest prejudice could make any person entertain a notion that civil government, can have any *other end* than the temporal benefit of mankind ; or any other foundation, than the *actual* or *tacit* consent, (whatever

the motives to such consent may be) of those, who for their *general* interest, submit to it.

What work men made, when the fashion was to determine the *origin* and *form* of civil government, the extent of authority, and the degree of subjection due to it, (not from the reasons of things, the laws of our common nature, the practice of particular nations, the tempers, character, and dispositions of mankind in different ages and countries but) from precepts, and precedents, supposed to be contained in the Bible, will, one should think, never be forgotten in *this* nation. And what could follow from so injudicious an appeal to, and so absurd an application of holy scripture, than what did follow, confusion and strife, and every evil work? For while *one* party esteemed monarchy the appointment of God, and princes the Lord's anointed, the other concluded from the *same* authority, and therefore with *equal* reason, that kings were given by God in his anger to scourge the folly of the people who desired them. But an impartial reader of the scriptures must have *clearly* perceived, how little ground there is in them for such decisions: because we no where find any thing more than *general* exhortations to submit to government, to honour magistrates, to be obedient to laws: all these matters are the duties of subjects---not a word of the duties of governors; and have they therefore no duties? Nor is the least hint given in the word of God, that any particular form is either more *preferable* to others, or more

*acceptable* to him. We no where find any descriptions of the several orders of magistrates; any notices of the particular powers with which they should be invested; any declarations by whose consent or authority the laws should be established, or annulled, altered, or executed. And what is of no less importance, (though very seldom attended to) viz. that had the form of civil government been thus *expressly* appointed of God, it must either have admitted of *no defects*, or *no remedies* for them. The constitution of the English government is deservedly esteemed the most excellent in the world; but could this judicious Bishop, or can his equally judicious admirers find a limited monarchy in the Bible? This constitution has arrived at this high degree of excellence by *numerous*, *slow*, and *repeated alterations*, all which, were monarchy, the appointment of God, would, *without* the *same* appointment, have been utterly sinful.—So much for the political abilities of those zealous persons who thought fit to countenance this courtly publication of the Scholar Armed: their republication of Mr. Willat's Sermon against the Religion of Nature, is an equal proof of their knowledge, and discernment.



## OBSERVATIONS, &c.



IT is one thing to enquire into the nature of the *effects* produced by our mental powers, or into the consequences of the operations of our intellectual faculties, and quite another matter to enquire, *how* these powers act, or by *what means* these effects are produced. Mr. Locke, therefore, with a sagacity similar to that of another great genius, Sir Isaac Newton, “wisely declined, B. I. Chap. i. Sect. 2. meddling with the physical consideration of the mind, or troubling himself to examine wherein its *essence* consists, or by what *motions* of the *spirits*, or *alterations* of our *bodies*, we come to have any sensation by our organs, or any ideas in our understandings, and whether those ideas do, in their formation, any, or all of them, depend on matter, &c.” Yet he says, B. II. Chap. viii. Sect. 4. “that were he *inclined* to enquire into the *natural causes*, and *manner of perception*, he should endeavour to shew how sensation, that is, ideas may be produced in us by external objects; viz. by *different degrees* and *modes of motion* in our *animal spirits*, variously agitated by these external objects.” This motion he supposes, Sect. 12. must be continued from these objects to the brain, *there* to produce in our minds the different ideas of such objects. And he goes on, Ibid. “but since bodies of an *observable bigness* can be perceived (by the senses) at a distance,” (that is, since bodies that can be perceived—*can* be perceived) “and

since *no* such bodies are ever perceived to pass from these objects to the brain; therefore," says Mr. Locke, it is *evident* that these bodies, which come from external objects to the brain, are—*imperceptible*:" and so it seems we have the evidence of *sense* for what is imperceptible—that is for what such evidence cannot possibly be had. But in Chap. xiv. Sect. 13. of this second Book he says, "that *not* knowing how the ideas of our minds are *framed*, of what *materials* they are *made*, whence they have their *light*, and *how* they come to make their appearance, he can give *no other* reason for these phænomena than that in *fact* they are so, see B. IV. Ch. iii. s. 11, 12, 13, 14. also Chap. vi. & x. s. 19. and this seems to be about as far as the human understanding can penetrate into this subject.

Whether Dr. Reid of Glasgow was disgusted with this unintelligible philosophy (as it is sometimes called) I know not, but he professes to make his inquiry into the human mind upon the principles of *common sense*; yet what he understands by common sense, or what he wishes his readers to understand by this word he does not inform us. He tells us indeed, Ch. i. s. 1. and with great truth, "that there is but *one* way to the knowledge of nature's works, the way of *observation* and *experiment*; and this great discovery, owing to the sagacity of a most *uncommon* genius, is one of Dr. Reid's maxims of *common sense*: yet at the beginning of his second section he assures us, "that to attend accurately to the operations of our own minds, and to make them an object of thought, is *no easy* matter to the *contemplative*; and to the *bulk* of *mankind* is next to impossible." And so it seems *this common sense* is very uncommon.

Common sense indeed can only consist of the *common* observations of *common* men, that is, of the bulk of mankind; collected it may be *without much*, perhaps

without *any* consideration and reflexion: and by philosophical knowledge can only be meant such knowledge (however lightly the Doctor may deem of it) as is alone attained by much attention, consideration, and reflexion. For consideration and reflexion can obtain only in consequence of habits of thinking; and a want of common sense does not imply lunacy, as the Doctor seems to think, but a *weakness* of the *perceptive* and *discriminating* powers.

Those then who know the advantages of clear notions and distinct knowledge; and those who know how much attention, consideration, and reflexion contribute to clear notions, and distinct knowledge, will also know how to appreciate the respective values of philosophical and common sense.

Had the Doctor proposed to make his inquiry into the (nature and powers of the) human mind upon the principles of *common sensation*, (or as Mr. Locke speaks, B. I. Chap. i. s. 2. by considering the discerning faculties of a man, as they are *employed* about the objects they have to do with) comprehending under this expression of common sensation, the *whole* of our perceptions, both *internal* and *external*, he would certainly have been nearer the mark, but then he would not have appeared to have been any wiser than Mr. Locke, a matter he seems not a little desirous of.

Mr. Professor Dugald Stewart in his *Outlines of Moral Philosophy* says nothing of the principles upon which he makes his inquiry, into the nature and powers of the human mind, but he begins very judiciously with considering *that faculty* by which we receive information of the operations of its several *powers*, from the exercise of *which we can* alone collect its nature. This information we can receive *only* through our own consciousness, and can communicate to other men *only* by the use of *language*. Now this *internal* experience of

what passes in our own mind, differs intirely from that experience which we receive through our *senses* of what passes in the world about us; namely, from the experience suggested to us by the action, or as it is sometimes called, by the impression of external objects upon our corporeal senses. For the *reality* of our experience which relates to the effects of external objects upon our bodily senses, can be ascertained to *other* men by subjecting these *same* objects to *their* senses. But we have *no way* of ascertaining the reality of our own consciousness, that is, the reality of our own internal perceptions, by which we can prove, that what we allege is not *mere imagination*. Thus, the apostles and prophets were *conscious* of the truth conveyed to their minds by divine inspiration, and they were conscious that the truth *so* conveyed to them, was conveyed by God Himself: but when it was necessary to ascertain to *other* men this inspiration, that is, the *reality* of this *alleged* consciousness, they were empowered to work miracles in attestation of their allegation.

Consciousness is an inseparable concomitant of all operations of every mental faculty as Mr. Stewart observes, at the *time* of such *operation*; but what Mr. S. does not observe, this consciousness is often continued to the individual through life. Yet is consciousness as different from memory, as memory is different from imagination, although Doctor Reid confounds them together, see Chap. i. §. 2. and affirms that they are the *same*. We find a similar confusion of ideas in Mr. Stewart's Philosophy of the human mind, in page 133. 8vo. Chap. iii. who in the same manner confounds memory, and what he calls conception together. He there tells us "that by conception he means *that* power of the mind which enables us to form a notion of an *absent* object of perception, or of sensation. I do not contend he says that this is *exclusively* the proper mean-

ing of the word, but I think the faculty which I have now defined (described he should have said, had he known the difference between a *definition* and a *description*) deserves to be distinguished by an appropriated name." To be sure if we mean to discourse intelligibly upon the powers of the human mind, every distinct faculty must have an *appropriated* name. Mr. S. goes on "conception is often confounded with other powers. When a painter makes a picture of a friend who is absent or dead, he is *commonly* said to paint from *memory*, and the expression is sufficiently correct for *common conversation*." Every body I believe but this Professor would think it sufficiently correct for *philosophical accuracy*. "But says Mr. S. in the analysis of the mind there is ground for distinction. Certainly there is and therefore I distinguish between memory and conception, as well as between memory and consciousness." The power of conception enables the painter," Mr. S. tells us, "to make the features of his friend an object of thought, so as to copy the resemblance," and he adds the power of *memory* recognises the features as a former object of perception," the power of memory both in the painter and in all who knew the countenance of the person portrayed. Mr. S. goes on "every act of memory includes an idea of the past. Conception implies *no* idea of time," no more does the exercise of many other faculties of the human mind. Now comes the conclusion "Thus the word (the *act* the professor means of) conception corresponds to what the schoolmen call, *simple apprehension*. Strange that a learned professor should thus bewilder himself. A little close attention and clear reflexion would have shewn him that the mind has a power of recalling such ideas as have *once* been the object of its thoughts; and as no idea is ever presented to the mind *single* and *alone*, it can separate *these collections* of ideas, which have thus been presented by external objects

together, or, in company with each other, and can consider *any one*, without attending to any other: thus it can consider the idea of whiteness, whether it be presented to the sight from a swan, from snow, from milk, or from any other object. And as the mind can separate the various ideas received in *company*, it can also make *arbitrary combinations* of these ideas at pleasure, according to the Poet

Humano capiti cervicem pictor equinam  
Jungere si velit, et varias inducere plumas.  
Undique collatis membris, ut turpiter atrum  
Desinat in piscem, mulier formosa superne.

And wherefore is this picture introduced? not to shew the absurdity of memory, which *cannot* be absurd, but to shew the absurdity of conception, that is, of imagination which *can*. Again, conceive, says a mathematician, a curve line,—conceive that it returns into itself—conceive a point to be taken within the curve, and conceive this point to be placed at an equal distance from every part of the curve. By this arbitrary combination of ideas, he forms a curve of a particular sort, that is, having particular relations, from which arise properties peculiar to this curve; all which he can deduce from this arbitrary combination of ideas.

In like manner had Dr. Reid attended to the two faculties of memory and consciousness, he must, one should think, have seen the difference; because we are *conscious* of the *present* acts of our own minds, but we *can* only remember what is *past*. Common sense, of which he is so fond, might have informed him, that we *cannot* remember what is *present*.

The confusion of ideas indeed, which prevails in both these Scottish Professors, is truly wonderful. In Chap. ii. s. 4. & 5, Dr. Reid confounds belief, know-

ledge, and judgment together. At page 30 he tells us, that sensation and remembrance are natural principles of belief: at p. 34, 35, 37 he considers belief and knowledge as the *same* act of the mind. Yet no two acts of the mind can be more *different*, or more *distinct* from each other. Whatever truth admits of *intuitive*, or *demonstrative*, or *sensible* evidence, is *knowledge*; such truth is *certain*: whatever truth does *not* admit of one, or the other, of *these sorts* of proof, is a matter of belief. Whatever is only believed, upon mere human testimony, *may* be false, whatever is *known* *must* be *true*. Knowledge produces *certainty*; belief only produces probability. The *assent* of the mind to knowledge is *unlimited* and *unalterable*. The assent of the mind to matters of belief is neither unlimited, nor unalterable. There may arise *reasons* for *retracting* our assent to the latter; it is impossible that any reasons can arise for retracting our assent to the former. In the case of knowledge we *actually* perceive by the *use* of our *own* faculties, the relations between our ideas, in the case of belief, we rely upon the perceptions of other men, or rather upon the account they are pleased to give us, of their perceptions.

With a like confusion in his ideas, Mr. Stewart talks of the *belief* with which *consciousness* is attended. See Outlines, S. 1. Art. 9. He would not have talked in this manner if he had attended to the difference between knowledge and belief. The information received from *all* experience, whether it be the experience we have of the *state* of our own minds arising from internal consciousness; or the experience we have of the *state* of external objects arising from *their* effect upon our corporeal senses, is attended with certainty: for if we cannot rely upon this information, the attainment of certain knowledge is impossible: but belief is not attended with certainty. Belief therefore, and

knowledge cannot, as Mr. S. asserts, *Outlines*, S. 1. Art. 9, rest upon the *same* foundation.—By judgment we mean the power of *estimating* the probability of any matters proposed to our belief. It has nothing to do with knowledge or certainty.

In page 212 of the *Philosophy of the Human Mind*, edit. 8vo, 1802, Mr. S. speaks of the *instinctive* principle, *directed* in its operation by the *experience* of the individual. If I understand the sense of the word *instinct*, it means that *disposition* in the animal world, which leads the different sorts of living creatures, not only to *pursue* and *attain constantly*, and *regularly certain ends*, but to *accomplish* this attainment, by a *specific*, and *uniform* mode of doing it.

In Chap. ii. sect. 5. of Dr. Reid's *Inquiry into the Human Mind*, the Doctor seems to apprehend that much mischief may arise from any endeavours to ascertain the meaning of the words we use. It is not a little wonderful that a man who appears to have thought *so much*, should have considered *so little*, the only useful purpose of thinking; viz. that of attaining and communicating clear notions, and precise knowledge: and that he should not have been able to see, that it must be absolutely impossible to make any, the least advances in science, unless we affix clear and distinct ideas to the words we use. Yet he tells us, in the section before us, that it is happy no man pretends to define sensation and consciousness; for that those who have defined, and explained belief, have contributed to the production of the most incredible paradoxes.

At page 11. the Doctor tells us that Des Cartes inferred *his own* existence from the possession of his power of thinking; and the Doctor inquires from *what* that philosopher inferred his possession of the power of thinking? Was it the Doctor asks from consciousness? and he further asks how a man can *know*, that his con-

sciousness does not deceive him? and I ask how a man can *know* that his corporeal senses does not deceive him? because unless we can rely upon our *internal* perceptions, and our *external* sensations, for the *certainty* of their information, all knowledge is impossible.

At page 26, the Doctor talks of that sense, whose objects are *least* in danger of being mistaken for *other things*. What are we to understand by these words "other things?" Is there any sense whose objects are *least* in danger of being mistaken for the objects of other senses? The objects of every sense are as distinct from each other, as the senses themselves. A sound is no more likely to be mistaken for bitterness than the power of hearing for that of tasting: nor is there any more *simplicity* in the sense of smelling, or tasting, or hearing, than in that of sight. But perhaps the Doctor means, that the perceptions conveyed are more various in some senses than others. Odours are only perceived by the sense of smelling, sounds only by that of hearing. But the touch suppose conveys the perception of heat, and cold, roughness and smoothness, hardness and softness, of straightness and curvature, of extension and solidity, and perhaps of figure, certainly of some circumstances attending it, and it may be of swiftness or slowness of motion; and without doubt the most various perceptions are those we receive through the sight. Different objects however affect different senses, and we are equally ignorant of the circumstances which render the different senses *fitted* to be *affected* by these different objects.

Natural philosophy, says the Doctor, page 26, informs us, that all animal and vegetable bodies are continually sending forth *effluvia* of vast *subtlety*. These volatile particles, the Doctor *thinks*, do probably repel each other, and so scatter themselves in the air; and thus the smell of plants and other bodies is caused by these volatile

parts, &c. We know, by experiment, that air is the vehicle of sound, but no experiment has yet been made to shew that it is the vehicle of odours. And all this fine argument from what the Doctor calls natural philosophy, seems at best but a groundless conjecture. This subtile effluvia, and these volatile particles fly about in the air it seems, and we *know* they do so, because we smell: and we smell because this subtile effluvia, and these volatile particles fly about in the air. But the theory, to use the Doctor words, that all bodies are smelled by means of effluvia, and volatile particles, which are drawn into the nostrils along with the air, is perhaps like many other theories, rather the product of the imagination, than of just induction; for the Doctor acknowledges, page 28, that the sensation of smelling, of itself could never have led us to think of nerves, and animal spirits, or effluvia, because the organs of smell, do not resemble the sensation of smelling, nor does this sensation resemble the objects from which the smell, that is, the sensation arises, page 29.

The Dr. takes great pains to shew, at p. 28, &c. that although men are possessed of the power, or faculty of smelling; yet that neither the organ of smell, nor the medium (by which *it*, that is, the odour smelled, is conveyed to that organ) nor any motions we can conceive in the *pituitary* membrane, or the *olfactory* nerves, or in the animal spirits, do in the least *resemble* the *sensation* of smelling. How substances or motions can resemble sensations, I must own, I am not able to comprehend: as little can I comprehend the reasons for, or the benefits of, these observations which the Dr. thinks necessary to premise, before he requests his reader to attend to what the mind is *conscious* of, when we smell a rose or a lilly—But what if this consciousness should prove a fallacy, for, to use the Dr. words, p. 12, who is voucher for consciousness, and who can prove that his consciousness does

not deceive him? the Dr. goes on “since our language affords no particular name for *that* perception in the mind, which arises from the smell of a *rose* or a *lilly* (that is, since we have not *particular* names for each *particular* smell, but include agreeable smells under the general name of *odours*, and disagreeable smells, under the general name of *stinks*) we call it a smell or an odour—to be sure we do, for we cannot call it by a name which it has not got—well, and what then? why then the person who perceives this smell cannot perceive any *similitude*, or *agreement*, between the smell and the rose, or indeed between this smell, and any other object whatever. And what are we to conclude from this?—Why “that the man cannot determine from the nature of the *thing* (of the smell I suppose) whether *it* (the smell namely) is caused by body, or spirit—by something near, or something at a distance. It has no similitude to any thing else so as to admit of a comparison, and therefore he can conclude nothing from it, unless perhaps that there must be some unknown cause of it. Figure, colour, extension, or any other quality of bodies cannot be ascribed to it.” To be sure they cannot. Nor can these qualities be ascribed to sound, to the sensation of taste, or to that of the touch, if we in both cases regard the *sensation only*, or in the Dr’s. words, p. 28, “if we carefully exclude from these names every thing but the *sensation itself*, nor can the person who perceives the smell give it a *place*, the Doctor says, p. 29, any more than he can give a *place* to melancholy and joy. Now what are we to understand by giving a place to a smell? Does the Doctor mean by this strange expression that smells are incapable of, or inconsistent with locality? no general ideas are capable of locality; but particular ideas are, and always must be accompanied with the idea of locality. The tuberose, which the Doctor smelled, p. 30, was in a *certain* room, and the perfume it gave was in

*that* room. But the Doctor confounds the power of perceiving odours or stinks, with the odours and stinks themselves. The *power of perception*, whatever be the thing perceived, is, and can only be in the mind that perceives it; or according to the Doctor's expression p. 29, sensation can only be in the *sentient thing*: but a power of exciting such sensation, may be in things which are not sentient. And did not certain powers, regularly and generally accompany certain objects, the whole benefit of experience, by which alone men are fitted to live in this world would be utterly destroyed. And what do we learn from these abstract observations as the Doctor calls them? p. 30. "Why that smelling (that is the power of smelling) is a simple original affection, or feeling of the mind, altogether inexplicable, and unaccountable, p. 31." And may not the same thing be said of all those perceptions, which are introduced into the mind, through the senses, and perhaps of all other perceptions? but surely all these philosophical observations were not wanted to prove what common sense discerns at first sight, viz. that we are utterly ignorant of the manner in which external objects act upon the senses, as well as the manner in which the information received through the senses is conveyed to the mind. And what is the upshot of all the Doctor's laborious argumentation? why that we cannot ascertain by *reasoning*, that knowledge which is *wholly* founded in *experience*. But so it is, because the Doctor's countryman, Mr. Hume has written a great deal of what is either utterly confused, or utterly unintelligible upon these subjects, the Doctor kindly endeavours to father all this nonsense upon Mr. Locke: with what justice all who are capable of understanding Mr. Locke must be able to see. But however much the Doctor may reprobate his countryman, he writes with as little meaning and as much obscurity himself.

If the Doctor seems little acquainted with the nature and the operations of our mental faculties, he seems equally ignorant of the nature and of the operation of our corporeal senses; and so he says when I smell a rose, I am necessarily determined to *believe* (I certainly know he should have said) that the sensation exists: that is, when the Doctor smells a rose he is necessarily determined to believe that he smells it.—Very wonderful this discovery! It is, the Doctor says, common to all sensations that they cannot exist without being perceived: that is, that they cannot be perceived, without being perceived; and, if they are perceived, what then? Why then they are perceived: for a sensation can only be in the *sentient thing*. Another discovery equally wonderful. And he tells us, Chap. ii. sect. 3. that a sensation, a *smell* for instance, may be presented to the mind three different ways.

- I. It may be smelled.
- II. It may be remembered.
- III. It may be imagined, or thought of.

Now what are we to understand by a sensation being *presented*? But this is by no means the only place in which the Doctor's nonsense lurks securely under the covert of an indistinct expression, whenever his readers have not sagacity enough to discover the game, nor dexterity enough to beat the bush sufficiently to force it out of its hiding place. Had the Doctor been provided with understanding to perceive the truth, or honesty to avow it, he would not have used that ambiguous word presented, but have clearly and fairly said, a sensation may be *excited* (for though objects may be presented to the mind, it can scarcely, with propriety, be said that sensation can) three ways: but

then his favourite common sense would have told him, that *no* recollection of a *past* sensation will excite that sensation *afresh*, nor any imagination of it, or any thought about it bring back a *past*, and cause it to become a *present* feeling; for if it could, the effects of the external objects upon the senses, might be rendered perpetual; pain and pleasure would become capable of endless repetition by an *act* of the *will*, and one smelling-bottle might serve a nation: nor would it be true, as is always observed, that the memory of past sufferings is attended with pleasure, according to that of the Poet;

—— Dulce est meminisse laborum.

It is difficult, says Dr. Reid, p. 26, to unravel the operations of the human understanding, and to reduce *them* to their *first* principles. Now what are we to understand by the *first* principles of the *operations* of the human understanding? We cannot expect, the Doctor says, to succeed in the attempt (to unravel the operations of the human understanding) but by beginning with the simplest, and proceeding to the more complex. Now what do these words, the simplest, and more complex refer to? not surely to principles, for who ever heard of *complex principles*? Or do these words refer to the operations of the human understanding? for so the Doctor should have worded it, if he had meant to be consistent with what he had just before written: but he had a different end in view, viz. that of introducing *unperceived* what he calls his principles of common sense, and so he artfully substitutes the human *faculties* in the place of the human *understanding*; well knowing that the word *faculties* is applicable to the *corporeal*, as well as to the *mental powers*, but that the operations of the human under-

standing relate to the powers of the *mind ONLY*; and so, having cunningly made this dextrous shift, he goes on with the most assured confidence to inform his reader, that in an Analysis of the human *faculties* the *five senses* may for *this reason* (for what reason?) *claim* to be *first* considered; but had he honestly put, what his own assertions required, that in an Analysis of the human understanding, the *five senses* claim to be first considered, who but must have seen that the *operations* of the human mind, that is, of the intellectual faculties, are as different in their *nature*, as they are in their *purposes*, from *those* of the five senses? The external senses are merely avenues, by which one species of perceptions, viz. those which take their rise from objects without the mind, are admitted into it.

The precedence in *this* consideration is to be given, the Doctor tells us, not to the *noblest*, or most useful, but to the *simplest* sense, which the Doctor deems to be the sense of smelling. But why smelling is more simple than hearing, or tasting, we are not told; yet the effects of these senses comprehend only one *species* of perceptions, viz. odours, or sounds, or tastes.

Those who think it worth their while to examine Dr. Reid's book, will find that it abounds with the *like precision* of ideas, and reasoning of a *similar* sort. Perhaps much of this confusion would have been prevented, and much useless argumentation saved, had the Doctor not been so fearful of defining; for whatever incredible paradoxes he might suppose to have risen from this practice, none surely can be more incredible than the imagination that the more ignorant we are of the meaning of the words we use, the better we should understand them. Without any apprehensions of those dreadful consequences at which the Doctor is so terribly alarmed, I shall venture to ascer-



tain the precise signification of some words which must necessarily be used upon this subject.

1. By memory then I mean that faculty of the mind, by which we are enabled to recall our *knowledge* of past perceptions, whether attained by consciousness, or sensation: the exertion of this faculty, I call, recollection.

2. By consciousness I understand that faculty of the mind by which we become acquainted with the operations of our various intellectual powers, and the effects of these operations; also with the exertion of our affections and passions, with our desires, and with those acts of the mind which we call intention, and design, and with the acts of the will.

Thus we see that memory relates chiefly to that knowledge which we *receive* from *external* objects; consciousness to that knowledge which *arises* from the action of our *own internal* powers. We cannot be conscious of the mental operations of *other* men, but we may remember their words or their actions, and may be conscious of this remembrance, as we are conscious of all other acts of our own minds. Memory can relate *only* to *past* knowledge. Consciousness may relate to the present as well as to the past actions of our minds. We certainly remember what we have a *past* consciousness of, but the converse is by no means true, that we are conscious of whatever we remember, yet this would have been the case had consciousness and memory been, as Dr. Reid asserts, the *same thing*.

3. By sensation I mean that faculty of the mind, by which we become acquainted with the effects of external objects upon our corporeal senses.

4. By perception I understand that *information* respecting the *internal* acts of the mind, and the external actions of objects upon the senses, which we receive by consciousness or sensation.—And

5. By ideas I understand the effects of these internal acts of our mind, and of external objects transmitted through our corporeal senses. So that ideas are not perceptions, but the consequences of them; and with Dr. Reid's leave I must beg to use this word, till I am furnished with a better reason for laying it aside than any I can find in his book: for unless you admit this species of intuitive knowledge, which we receive from the faculty of consciousness, however inexplicable the nature of it may be (though perhaps not more so than many other of our mental or corporeal faculties,) you deprive men of the character, both of *rational* and *moral* beings; since this consciousness of the internal acts of our intellectual powers, and of our moral dispositions, is the great characteristic distinction, between mankind and the animal world.

It may be proper to observe, that the word perception is sometimes used for *that* power of the mind by which it discerns the various objects presented to it, whether voluntarily or involuntarily. Sometimes for the *exertion* of this power, and sometimes for the *effect* produced by this exertion.

The information attained by the use of our perceptive power is either;

- I. Acquired:—Or
- II. Received.

When this information is derived from the *voluntary* exertion of our intellectual faculties, I say that it is acquired. But when it is forced upon the mind by the involuntary emotions of the affections, and passions, and desires; or by the usual and customary action of external objects upon the senses, I say it is received.

The information acquired by the voluntary exertion of our intellectual powers, is such as we owe to intuition, or demonstration. We cannot remember an intuitive truth, without being conscious of the intuition, whereby we know it to be such; but we may remember that we have been *convinced* by a demonstration without being conscious of the various intuitive steps which led to that conviction. The last is the recollection of a past fact—the other is a present operation of the mind.

The following observations of Mr. Locke, B. I. Chap. ii. Sect. 7. are so strongly verified in the conduct of most serious persons (as they are now *technically* called) in these days, and the practice therein noticed so strongly encouraged by the religious teachers of *all* denominations, that I could not forbear quoting them. “With these persons, doubtful expressions, that have scarce any signification, go for *clear* reasons to those, who being *prepossessed*, take not the pains to examine even *what* they themselves say,”—For—“The great difference, Chap. iv. Sect. 22. that is to be found in the notions of mankind, is from the different use they put their faculties to; whilst some (and those the most) taking things upon *trust*, misemploy their power of assent, by lazily enslaving their minds to the dictates, or dominion of others in doctrines which it is their duty carefully to examine, and not blindly, and implicitly to swallow.” But though the *generality* can no more be expected to examine for themselves, than they can be expected to calculate an eclipse, yet the teachers of religion, those especially who have had an university education, may surely be expected to be well aware of the heinous crime of misleading others, through their own prejudices, or their own ignorance. Of the students from academies I say nothing, for such institutions *generally* profess to teach a great deal too much to afford a reasonable expectation, that persons educated in them, can possibly understand *any one* subject *accurately*.

Observation i. upon Book II. Chap. i. Sect. 10.

Our being sensible of *it* (i. e. of the existence of some certain thing,) is not necessary to any thing (not necessary to the existence of such thing) but to the existence of our thoughts; i. e. our being sensible of our thoughts, is necessary to *their* existence—necessary to constitute them such.

Observation ii. upon Book II. Chap. ii. Sect. 1.

It seems an inaccurate way of speaking, to say that *ideas* are united in the same subject. Ideas (in the primary signification of the word) are merely sensations excited in the mind by the operation of external objects upon the corporeal senses, and therefore, strictly speaking, can only be united in (i. e. combined by) the mind. The same object may indeed possess powers of suggesting various ideas. See Observation iv. B. II. Chap. xxviii. xxix. xxx. xxxi. See also Chap. xxxii. Sect. 14, 16. & Book IV. Chap. iv. Sect. 4.

Observation iii. upon B. II. Chap. iv. Sect. 5.

Extension of *body*, says Mr. L. is the cohesion, or continuity of solid, separable, moveable parts. The extension of body may be *owing* to the cohesion, and continuity of solid parts. But are not these solid parts extended? and what is their extension owing to? to the cohesion, and continuity of further solid parts? and are we to say with the poet,

So naturalists observe, a flea  
Hath smaller fleas that on him prey;  
And these have smaller fleas to bite'em,  
And so proceed ad infinitum.

But whatever extension of body may be owing to, it cannot be necessary that the solid parts should be separable, and moveable.

Mr. L. calls the extension of *space*, the continuity of *unfluid*, (surely not fluid) inseparable, immoveable parts. What are unfluid, inseparable, immoveable parts? Space is a general, or an abstract idea, and therefore *nothing*. Extension of space is a *negative* idea, it denotes the *absence* of body, or matter. See Observation x.

Observation iv. upon B. II. Chap. viii.

Whenever objects, *however modified*, have a power of exciting the *same* ideas, Mr. L. attributes this power to what he calls their *primary qualities*, and he asserts, Sect. 15, that the *ideas* of *these* primary qualities are *resemblances*; that is, images of such primary qualities; for that *their* patterns (the patterns, namely, of these primary qualities) do really exist in the bodies themselves. But when objects have the power of exciting *ideas*, which ideas have *no* such resemblance, or image, he attributes *this* power to what he calls their *secondary qualities*.

Mr. L. seems to have been led into this notion of primary, and secondary qualities, by not attending to the *difference* between ideas, and images. Images can only be received by the *sight*, they neither are, nor can be conveyed to the mind by any other sense, by the touch suppose, see B. II. Chap. ix. Sect. 8. Dr. Reid indeed supposes that blind persons may become possessed of images, as well as those who have the use of sight, though nothing can be plainer, than that they can only be received into the mind by the eye. Because blind persons can acquire the *idea* of a line, (for who has an image of a mathematical line, i. e. a line which has *no* breadth) and can understand the various relations which arise from the positions of lines, with regard to each

other, and can conceive the ideas of solids, generated by the revolution of plane figures about some *given line*, appertaining to such figure; the Doctor, therefore, imagines that they may be enabled to form images of external objects, as well as persons who have the use of sight. He might with equal reason have imagined, that because blind persons can conceive the *mathematical* relations of the rays of light considered as lines, and the mathematical generation (if I may so call it) of the rain-bow, that therefore they can acquire the idea of colours. Upon what sort of ground the Doctor builds all this notion, may be seen by that imagination of the blind man, who fancied that scarlet resembled the sound of a trumpet. But the Doctor goes further, and endeavours to prove, by a regular demonstration, the truth of his assertion. The blind man is to conceive lines drawn from the center of a sphere, through all the various points of an object of *touch* placed within the sphere, and near to its internal surface; and then lines are to be drawn from the center of the sphere, through all the various (*delineatory*) points of this object of touch, to the internal surface of the sphere, and the points where these radii *terminate* are to be *joined*; and as these lines *so* joined, will become *circles* of the *sphere* the Doctor supposes a complete projection of the object, i. e. a *true* image of it will be formed upon the internal surface of the sphere; but since a blind person can conceive the circles of the sphere, and since these delineatory lines, are all circles of the sphere, therefore it is plain, the Doctor says, that this blind person will also conceive the visible image of the object *so* drawn upon it.

The Doctor is not aware that light and shade (of which a blind man cannot possibly have any conception) i. e. light in the different degrees of it, form a principal part of those images which arise from the sight; and

that unless the *delineatory* lines are projected upon a plane at right-angles to the *principal* visual ray, the image will vary, more or less, from the real appearance, as may be fully seen by the length of the shadows of objects, made upon the ground by the setting sun; for in this case the solar rays resemble the visual ray, and the ground the plane of projection. But the Doctor's ideas upon the subject, are as muddy as they are upon other subjects, or he would have known that an image made according to the rules of perspective upon a curve surface, must present a distorted picture to the eye, as the common optical cylinders sufficiently shew. The subject is of little importance, but the Doctor has exhibited an enormous parade of mathematics, only to oppose what he took to be the opinion of Mr. Locke, with how much judgment, and to how much purpose, the reader of it must determine. But to return to our more immediate subject. Mr. L. was not aware that as soon as you separate the parts of the image, i. e. the different ideas of which the image is made up, the colour, shape, size of a bird suppose, you utterly destroy the resemblance, that is, the image in the mind, suggested by the *particular* object, from which such image was received: for images are the resemblances of *particular* objects. There is no such thing as making, or conceiving an image, which shall resemble *all* birds, of every size, shape, and colour, any more than you can form a resemblance of solidity, extension, mobility, divisibility, &c. And you may just as well say, that the colour, shape, size, &c. exist in the object when you do not see them, as that the solidity, extension, &c. exist in the object, when you do not perceive them. To affirm this, is only to say, that *such* objects have the power of exciting such ideas, whenever these objects occur to the senses; and all objects have, and must have, this power of exciting ideas, or they would not be objects at all.

The *idea* of solidity, extension, &c. taken without reference to body, or matter *actually* existing, is nothing but an idea, and is no more in the body from whence it is received, than the idea of pain, or sickness, (see Sect. 18.) is in the manna. To ask, as Dr. Reid does, "whether these perceptions are any *thing*, is to ask whether they are not *something else*, and *not* perceptions? To ask whether they are *real*, is to ask whether in the *same* circumstances, they occur to *all* mankind? To suppose it necessary, as the Doctor does, that there should be a *similitude*, between every perception, and the circumstance from which such perception arises, is to make a supposition, for which there is no general foundation: and in every case, but that of perceptions received by the sight, i. e. of images, the supposition is manifestly impossible. Matter has a power of exciting the ideas of solidity, and extension, and manna has a power of exciting the ideas of sickness, and pain. The former of these ideas can be admitted into the mind by the *touch* of the *hands*, the latter only by the *touch* of the *stomach*; but ideas are still ideas, by whatever way they are admitted, and *as* ideas, they are only *in* the *mind*, they neither are nor can be in the objects which excite them." (B. II. Chap. xxiii. Sect. 10.) The ideas themselves, and the power of exciting these ideas, are very different matters. It seems indeed just as possible to explain the mode by which sensation is produced in us, or the way by which external objects excite ideas in our minds, as it is to explain the nature of sleep, or of dreaming, the operation of recollection, or the beginning of motion in the body, in consequence of the action of the will.

Observation v. upon Book II. Chap. viii. Sect. 9.

What Mr. L. calls *qualities* in objects, is only the

existence of powers in these objects to excite certain ideas, B. II. Chap. xxiii. Sect. 10, in our minds. But what are those qualities which are so inseparable from the body in which they exist, as not to admit of any *possible* change? The power of exciting certain ideas we say, is in the object,—but there are powers in other objects, which can totally destroy these *original* powers, and introduce new ones in their stead. Thus the action of fire, or of aqua regia, can give to gold a power of exciting another idea which it did not possess in its original form, viz. the idea of fluidity; and it takes away the power it before had of exciting the idea of solidity. So the action of the sun takes from bees-wax, the power it had of exciting the idea of yellowness, and gives it a power it had not before, of exciting the idea of whiteness, and so on. We know of no matter whatever which is not liable to such changes. Divide a piece of wood, Mr. Locke would say, yet still each part has solidity, and extension; solidity, and extension are *therefore primary qualities*.—Put it into the fire, say I, and then what becomes of *these* primary qualities? will it still retain them? Yet this is his grand criterion of such qualities. Mr. L. is not aware, that when he talks of qualities that are utterly *inseparable* from the body, in *what estate soever* it be, such qualities, as in *all* the *alterations* and *changes* it suffers, and under *all* the *force* that can be used upon it, it constantly keeps; and when he instances in what he would *call* the *qualities* of extension, and solidity, and figure, &c. he is only reciting the *general* ideas which enter into his abstract idea of matter, or substance, and which of course will always be found with the respective *particular* ideas, from which such *general* ideas are taken, but never can be found without them; in the like way Mr. Dugald Stewart tells us, page 3, of his *Philosophy of the Human Mind*, 8vo. 1802, “that the ideas annexed to the words matter, and

mind, (as he says is well observed by Dr. Reid, in his *Essays on the active powers of Man*, p. 8 & 9,) are merely *relative*.” (I am not sure that I understand what he means by this word,) “if I am asked,” he goes on, “what I mean by *matter*, I can only explain myself by saying it is *that* which is extended, figured, coloured, moveable, hard or soft, rough or smooth, hot or cold—that is, I can *define* it no other way, than by enumerating its *sensible qualities*. It is not *matter* or *body*, which I perceive by my *senses*. To be sure not. Matter or body is a general idea, the mere creature of the mind, and created merely for the conveniency of *verbal* communication. When Mr. Stewart looks at his poultry—it is not *bird* which he perceives by his senses, but cocks, hens, chickens, ducks, geese, and turkeys: ideas taken from actual existence, can only be excited by particular objects, but when we want to discourse about a great number of particular objects, which suggest some ideas that are the *same*, and also some ideas that are *different*, a *general* term comprehending them *all*, but *exactly* agreeing to *no* one in particular, must save the trouble of *referring* to each particular idea. Just so the chymists observe, that phlogiston is never to be met with *pure*,—and how should it? for it is the *general* idea of *inflammability*: but this idea cannot be an object of Sense—like all other general ideas, it is collected from observing many different kinds of substances which *will* burn, as well as many, which *will not*; and it is this difference, which gives rise to the general term in this case, as it does in all others, for if *all* substances would burn, we should have no occasion for *this* term; there would have been no opportunity to distinguish between such matters as would burn, and such as would not. General ideas are *simple* ideas, they cannot be defined, we can only refer to the manner in which they are *acquired*, in

order to communicate our knowledge of them to other persons, they neither are, nor can be objects of sense. Objects of sense must be *particular* from the very nature of them.

Observation vi. upon Book II. Chap. ix. Sect. 3.

Whatever impressions are made on the *outward* parts (senses) if they are not taken notice of *within*, says Mr. Locke, there is no perception; which is only saying, if there is no perception—there is no perception. Mr. Locke meant to have said, that a certain degree of *attention* was necessary, to render the action of external objects perceptible; and by attention, I mean the application of our various powers to their *appropriate* objects. But such is the nature of the human frame, that we cannot attend *equally* to two, or more objects at the *same* time. All persons can hear articulate sounds, which are *familiar* to them, and which they *expect*, with much greater facility, than those to which they are intire strangers.

Observation vii. upon B. II. Chap. xii. Sect. 4.

“I call such ideas,” says Mr. Locke, “complex ideas, which however compounded contain not in them the supposition of *subsisting* by themselves,—but are considered as dependencies on, or affections of substances.” Now what are we to understand by ideas *subsisting* by themselves? and what by their being *dependencies* on, or *affections* of substances? All ideas, except those formed by the mind within itself, are suggested, or excited, by *external* objects. Are we then to consider general, or abstract ideas as *subsisting* by themselves? and *images* of external objects, or ideas suggested by, or arising from, animate, or inanimate matter, as *dependencies* on, or af-

*fections* of substances? Mr. Locke considers the ideas signified by the words, triangle, gratitude, murder, &c. as dependencies on, or affections of substances. But these ideas are all general, or abstract ideas. They are the creation of the mind, and if they can be said to depend upon *any* thing, it must be upon the will of him who forms them, and who chuses *what* ideas he will combine together, and express, by these *names*. The idea of a triangle does not imply that such triangle is isosceles, or equilateral; scalene, or right angled; acute, or obtuse angled; though Mr. Locke calls this idea, B. III. Chap. iii. Sect. 9, a *thing*. The *image* indeed of a triangle does determine the *kind*, but then images are *particular* ideas, that is, they are the image of some *particular* thing, B. IV. Chap. vii. Sect. 9,

Observation viii. upon Book II. Chap. xii. Sect. 6.

“The ideas of substances,” says Mr. Locke, “are such combinations of simple ideas as are taken to *represent* particular things, that is, particular substances.” The ideas of substances are *collections* of all those various simple ideas, which such substances have a power of exciting: but what sort of a representation is the representation of solidity, mobility, divisibility, &c.? But says Mr. Locke, “along with these combinations of simple ideas, the *supposed*, or *confused* idea of substance, *such as it is*, is always the first, or chief.”—Here again, substance is a *general*, or *abstract* idea, and like all other general or abstract ideas, is no more confused, than any other general, or abstract idea, of solidity, or mobility suppose. General or abstract ideas do not admit of *any image* in the mind, however they are made, and you have just as clear an idea of substance as you have of animal, or creature, or human nature, &c.

Observation ix. upon B. II. Chap. xii. Sect. 13.

“The parts of *pure space*,” says Mr. Locke, “are *inseparable, one from the other*; and again, Sect. 14, the parts of *pure space* are *immoveable*.”—The *parts* of an *abstract* idea! He must be cunning who can *divide* an abstract idea, or who can conceive the *motion* of it.

Ideas are the *materials* of all our knowledge. They are either,

I. Suggested to the mind by the various external objects, with which we are every where surrounded.—Or

II. They are formed by the mind within itself.

The *first* sort of ideas are conveyed to the mind through the senses, by the action of these various powers of the human body. The *second* are formed by the mind itself, in consequence of the action of the various powers of the human understanding; by which we are enabled at *will* to *compare, combine, separate, and recall* our ideas; and in consequence to *form* abstract, or general ideas in the mind, for the convenience of language; images in the imagination for pleasure; and also to combine a variety of *images, and ideas* by the faculty of invention, for the various purposes of life. Hence also we further obtain occasion for exercising those other operations of the mind, *attention, consideration, and judgment*.

The ideas conveyed to the mind *through the senses* are always of a *definite* kind, they are the ideas of *particular* objects, for they are excited by particular objects. Whenever ideas are excited by *such* objects, as are not wholly within the reach of our senses, whether from the magnitude of the object, the imperfection of our senses, or from any other cause, these objects can be only *imperfectly* comprehended: the parts out of the reach of our

senses are just the same, with respect to us, as *no* parts: in such circumstances, we have, and can only have, a *partial*, that is, an *imperfect* idea; and when the parts out of the reach of our senses, are utterly *undiscoverable*, as in the case of infinity, to whatever this term is applied, the idea we have cannot be particular, i. e. *defined*—it must be general. But it is impossible that objects should excite *general* ideas. These *general* ideas are, and can only be creatures of the mind, and therefore cannot be *marks*, like *particular* ideas of *real existence*.

The external objects, suggesting ideas to our minds, differ greatly from each other; and ideas suggested by them, are admitted into the mind, by senses no less different, according to the nature of the respective objects suggesting, and the nature of the ideas suggested by them. These ideas sometimes arise from a *single* perception, as is the case of smells, sounds, colours, &c. sometimes they arise from a *number* of different perceptions, as in the case of many images, presented through the eye, and of various substances, and kinds of matter from which we receive ideas by the touch. Some ideas do *not* suggest the notion of parts, as colours, sounds, smells, and tastes: some suggest the *notion* of *dissimilar* parts, as those of substances, whether animate, or inanimate; and some suggest the notion of *similar* parts, as the ideas of number, extension, and perhaps that of duration. When complex ideas are made up by the repeated addition of the *same simple idea*, as all ideas of number, are made up of units, those of linear extension of *particular* lines, &c. these simple ideas become *measures* of the collective ideas, and by means of such measures, the various quantities of number, and extension can be compared with each other respectively; and thus the relative proportion of each can be ascertained: for by comparing *magnitudes* with each other,

by means of some common measure, we acquire the idea of that *relation* which we call proportion: and as there neither *is*, nor can be any limits to *ideal* addition, or division, this ideal addition, or division, is said to be *infinite*. A word which does not imply any *positive* idea, B. II. Chap. xvii. Sect. 18, but only a *negation* of limits, to the perpetual repetition of *such* addition, or division. The same is true of the immensity of space, the infinity of number, the eternity of duration—they are mere negative ideas: but when space, number, or duration by being *defined* in quantity, become *particular*, and *therefore positive* ideas, they acquire the names of time, place and quantity. Yet Mr. Locke applies the *negative*, and *therefore* unattainable idea of infinity, B. II. Chap. xxiii. Sect. 34, & 35, to attain a precise, i. e. a positive idea of God. When we say that the power, wisdom, goodness, and knowledge, &c. of God are infinite, we mean to say, that we know *not how far they extend*. When immensity, eternity, spirituality, &c. are applied to God, these words are not intended to convey any positive idea *what God is*, but what he is *not*. The ideas of the immensity of space, the infinity of number, the eternity of duration, are not suggested to our minds by *any* objects *actually* existing, B. II. Chap. xvii. Sect. 4, & 5; they are *formed* by the mind: but the mind cannot *form*, it can only *receive* the ideas of the objects which *actually exist*, B. II. Chap. ii. Sect. 2. The ideas which the mind *forms*, neither are, nor can be ideas of things which actually exist, they are, and only can be general, i. e. abstract ideas. To say, as is sometimes said, that God is extended through the *whole* of infinite space, when the idea of *whole* cannot possibly be applied to infinity: to talk of the whole, of what, from its very nature, neither has, nor can have a *whole*, is to talk unintelligibly, is to use words which have no meaning. When we speak of the omnipresence, or

ubiquity of God, we mean only, that he knows perfectly the state of, and changes in his own works, however distant from each other, at all times, that nothing is unknown to him.

Observation x. upon Book II. Chap. xiv. Sect. 2.

Mr. Locke supposes the idea of duration may be acquired by observing the succession of ideas in our own minds. Perhaps it might be acquired more readily, by observing the motion of two bodies (of which the swiftest precedes) passing along the *same* line, with unequal velocity. Our ideas of the parts of duration are always referred to those measures which the mind arbitrarily applies to it; for it seems not to have any natural measure like extension, and number. Its parts cannot be *compared* with each other, like those of linear extension, number, or some forms of space, by juxta position.

Observation xi. upon Book II. Chap. 21.

Desire I apprehend is a *state* of mind consequent upon the perception of some good, *without* any consideration whether such good is attainable, or not. This consideration may precede, or follow, but makes *no* part of *such* state. Intention I suppose is a determination of the mind, respecting *future* action, as volition respects *present* action. I call *will* the *power* of *choice*. *This* power as *existing* in the mind, implies from the very nature of it, the most perfect freedom from *all* restraint. I say as existing in the mind: because the effects, (not the *action*) of this power may be hindered by external causes. The thief in jail may *choose* to be at large, and no power on earth can hinder his *choice*, though it may prevent the *execution* of that choice. The man's will is no less free, although his body may be bound in chains,



and his limbs in links of iron ; any more than he loses the *power of sight*, though he chooses to shut his eyes, or is confined in a dark cell, where he can see nothing : the effect of that power is indeed hindered *pro tempore*, by these external restraints. When God, by a voice from heaven, prevented Abraham from slaying his son, the action was as effectually hindered, as if the patriarch had *chosen* to disobey the divine command, given to sacrifice Isaac, or God had struck him with a dead palsy when he stretched forth *his hand to compleat* the sacrifice. It would have been equally compleat, though not to human eyes, if by a band of robbers, Isaac had been carried away during the journey, *to the place of sacrifice*. And God, who seeth not as man seeth, might with equal truth have pronounced the obedience of Abraham perfect in the same words, “ for because thou *hast done* this thing, and hast *not* withheld thy son—thine only son, &c.” Nobody, however, calls *external* hindrances, *necessity*. That restraint alone is necessity, which takes away the *power*, not that which only prevents the wished for effect of choice.

Observation xii. upon Book II. Chap. xxi. Sect. 13.

Agents that have *no* thought—*no* volition—*no* power of choice—are—*no* agents. Such beings are *passive*, not active beings. Those motions of the parts of the body, which the will can neither excite, nor prevent, are, so long as this inability continues, necessary motions ; i. e. they are such for which the person is not responsible. It is the power of choice which makes agents responsible for their actions.

Observation xiii. upon B. II. Chap. xxi. Sect. 15, & 16.

Mr. Locke confounds the *freedom* of choice, with

the *power of acting* in consequence of that choice. If you define *will* to be the power of choice, and *liberty* the power of acting in consequence of that choice, you make two distinct powers ; volition belongs to one, and ability of action to the other.

Observation xiv. upon Book II. Chap. xxi. Sect. 17.

It is surely a strange thing to call the acts of choosing and perceiving, *modes of thinking*. Choice may depend upon *thought* ; i. e. upon reflecting and considering : and sight may depend upon choice. But seeing is no more choosing, than thinking is choosing, and choice is no more thinking than it is seeing, or recollecting. Thinking, and choice are two different operations of the mind, and as distinct from each other, as invention and memory. The *will* certainly directs the operations of the understanding, just as much as it does the actions of the body ; were it not so, a man might employ his judgment, when he should employ his imagination, and his legs, when he should use his hands.

Observation xv. upon B. II. Chap. xxi. Sect. 20, 21, 22, 23, 24.

The human mind is possessed, or consists of a great variety of *powers*, no less *different* in their nature, than *distinct* in the mode of their operations ; and by considering the nature, and operations of each, we attain exact notions of the different sorts of knowledge, which the mind is capable of acquiring ; and also of the manner, by which *each* sort is acquired : and there is no more impropriety in affirming, that the powers of perception, attention, consideration, judgment, imagination, invention, memory, &c. are separate, and distinct

faculties, than that sight, hearing, smelling, tasting, feeling, are separate, and distinct senses of the body. Nor is it more absurd to say, that discernment depends upon the power of perception, than that volition depends upon the power of choice. And to say that the will is *not* free, because a man must receive, or reject what is thus proposed to his choice, is just as wise as to say, that a man is not free to see *no* objects at all, when his eyes are open, nor free to see any, when they are shut.

Observation xvi. upon B. II. Chap. xxi. Sect. 28, & 29.

When Mr. Locke attempts to define volition, which, like most acts of the mind, is a *simple* idea (see Sect. 30,) he is forced to define motion to be (if necessity requires) *no* motion at all—i. e. freedom from motion, that is *rest*. He goes on to inquire, what determines the will? Had he attended, I do not say to the *nature*, but to the *design* of our various faculties, he would have seen that the inquiry was not less useless, than absurd. Indeed he seems to confound the power of choice, which God has given men (just as he has given them the powers of perception, and sight, &c.) with the *particular* reasons for exercising, i. e. for using these various powers. He also confounds the power of choice, which he calls preference, with the power of acting in consequence of this choice, as was before observed. He considers liberty, Sect. 8, & 24, or freedom, Sect. 27, not as the power of choice, but as the power of acting in consequence of this power of choice. But there is a manifest difference. The power of choice, from the very *nature* of it, admits of *no* restraint in *any* case. Men have no longer the power of choice, if this power *can* be *restrained*: but the power of *acting*, may depend upon external circumstances in particular cases. See Observation xi, & xiii.

Observation xvii. upon B. II. Chap. xxi. Sect. 30.

Mr. Locke cautions his readers not to confound desire, and volition. They are as distinct, as desire, and intention. Attentive persons will see that desire may respect *general* objects, choice (which is the action of the will) can only regard particulars.

Observation xviii. upon Book II. Chap. xxi. Sect. 31.

The *most* pressing uneasiness, says Mr. Locke, determines the will; i. e. he *calls that* uneasiness the *most* pressing which *does* determine the will. All this is just like the final perseverance of the saints.—All *who* persevere are *saints*—And all *who* are *saints* persevere—2d. edit.

Observation xix. upon B. II. Chap. xxiii. Sect. 15.

It is curious to see how a man of Mr. Locke's discernment, and wariness, can put the change (to use a gallicism) upon himself. "Putting together, says he, the ideas of thinking, and willing, or the power of moving, or quieting motion, joined to substance, of which we have no distinct or positive idea"—i. e. no idea at all.—Now had this assertion been honestly worded, it would have run thus—putting together the ideas of thinking, and willing, or the idea to excite, or to quiet motion, to the idea of substance, of which we have *no idea at all*, we acquire, &c. A very curious mixture this of ideas, and no ideas!

Observation xx. upon Book II. Chap. xxiii. Sect. 18.

It is not true, that the ideas belonging to spirit, are *thinking*, and *will*; or a power of putting *body* (i. e. matter in general) into motion *by* thought. According

to all our experience, spirit must be connected with body in a very peculiar manner, before it can produce motion *by* thought. Men can only move the parts of their *own* bodies *by* thought : to move *other* bodies, some what *more* than thought is necessary.

Observation xxi. upon B. II. Chap. xxiii. Sect. 30.

“ The idea *we have* of spirit,” says Mr. Locke—we have—we can have *no idea* of spirit—no *positive* idea. All we mean, all we *can* mean by this word, is only a negation of such sort of matter as we are acquainted with : and negative ideas cannot produce actual, i. e. *positive* knowledge. But, says Mr. Locke, “ the substance of spirit is unknown to us—so is the substance of body equally unknown to us.”—Very true to be sure. But matter suggests to us various ideas, through the senses, and it is by the senses *alone*, that we acquire the idea of real existence. A *power* of thinking, or acting is *no* object of our senses ; and though these powers are not found in any such sort of matter, as is the object of our senses, yet the *absence* of these powers from all *such* matter, as we are *acquainted* with, by no means shews the *nature* of that matter in which *these* powers are found. The word *immateriality* means only a negation of all such ideas, as are excited in our minds by substance. See B. IV. Chap. x. Sect. 13, 14, 15. & Chap. xi. Sect. 12.

Mr. Locke calls believing, doubting, intending, fearing, hoping, several *modes* of *thinking*. He might just as well have called expecting, admiring, loving, hating, modes of thinking.—It puts one in mind of the honest sea-lieutenant—“ if any man contradicts me, I knock him down, that’s *my way* of thinking.”

Observation xxii. upon B. II. Chap. xxiv.

What Mr. Locke calls collective ideas, are only *such* ideas to which number is applicable.

Observation xxiii. upon B. II. Chap. xxviii.

Mr. Locke writes a long, unintelligible chapter upon personal identity, to inquire in what identity consists. It is unquestionably a perception of the mind, and you might just as well inquire, in *what* equality, or proportion, or the moral perception of right and wrong, consists. Or, are you inclined to ask, from *whence* this perception arises ? You may just as well ask from *whence* all those perceptions arise, which we call consciousness ? Indeed the whole moral government of God is, and must be founded in the identity of his intelligent creatures. To suppose a responsible being may *vary* from itself, is just as wise as to suppose that beings may contract guilt *before* they come into existence ; or may commit crimes, *before* they are born. Yet however impossible, or absurd these last notions may be, we know that many persons, of the *reality* of whose piety no doubt can be entertained, have zealously maintained them. It is amongst such persons, that we hear of sinners by *nature*, and sinners by *practice* ; a distinction not to be met with in scripture : and had these good persons considered, what is, and only can be meant by the word *nature*, viz. that combination of powers, dispositions, qualifications, and qualities which God has *allotted* to the various beings and matters which he has created, they would have seen the folly of this distinction. For, according to the information of that understanding which our Creator has given us, he can no more *make* or appoint men to be sinners, independent of their own choice, than he can make the united ideas

of two and three, to compose the idea of six; or than he can make a circle to have the properties of a triangle. According to all those ideas of justice which he has enabled us to collect, there cannot be *guilt* without *intention* and *design*, i. e. without the exercise of the *will*: where there is no guilt there can be no transgression, and consequently *no* punishment, in the *proper* sense of the word, for by punishment is meant evil inflicted, for evil done. All that this absurd distinction does, if we have any ideas to our words, is to make God the author of sin. But had men listened to that reason which God has given them, we should never have heard of such notions, or such inquiries.

It is curious to see what sort of reasoning, even able men are given to employ, when they must needs inquire into what cannot be understood. At Sect. 9, Mr. Locke defines person to mean a *thinking, intelligent* being, that has reason and reflection; (are there then any thinking, intelligent beings, which have not reason and reflection?) and can consider itself, as the *same* thinking *thing*, in different times and places. At Sect. 11, he says, "thus we see the *substance* whereof personal-self, (i. e. person) consisted at one time, may be *varied* at another, *without* the change of personal identity; there being no question about the same person," (i. e. the sameness of person) though the limbs, which but now were *part of it*, were cut off.—In these two passages, the word person is used for two *very different* ideas.

But this personal identity consists in a being, which is able to consider itself as the *same* thinking *thing*, in different times and places—that is—personal identity consists in being *able* to perceive it, or in other words, personal identity consists in—personal identity. Waving then all debate about the essence of personal identity, a doubt concerning which the ablest physicians have long held to be the *surest* mark of lunacy; and of which es-

sence we shall be hard set to find a better criterion than that of the Poet—

If I be I, as I think I be,  
I have a Lisle dog that will know me:  
For if I be I, he will wag his tail,  
But if I b'ent I, he will bark and rail:

Observation xxiv. upon B. II. Chap. xxix. Sect. 4.

In enumerating the occasions of indistinct ideas, Mr. Locke omits one common cause, viz. the attempting to convey *simple* ideas by *language*, whether it be by literal, or metaphorical description.

Observation xxv. upon B. II. Chap. xxix. Sect. 13.

Complex ideas, says Mr. Locke, being made up of a number, or collection of simple ideas may be distinct in *one* part, and confused in *another*. He instances, in the idea of a solid (and he might have instanced, in that of a plain figure) of a thousand sides. The *idea*, says he, of the *number* is *distinct*, that of the *figure* is confused. He here confounds ideas and images. The image of a figure of three or four sides, is as distinct as the ideas of the number three, or the number four: it is the multitude of the sides that render the *idea* of the image indistinct. While numbers continue to be unapplied to any particular subjects, the ideas excited by the *names* of such numbers, are only general ideas. The words two—three—three dozen—three score—three hundred, convey no ideas, till joined to some subject capable of number. They are indeed *precise* names, and admit of *no* degrees, like many other simple ideas; and when applied can be *distinctly* ascertained. The mind can clearly conceive a small number of objects to which number can be applied, but the distinctness of

*this* idea is lost in a multitude; and, therefore, what Mr. Locke calls collective ideas, are a sort of general ideas—ideas, to be *precise*, must be particular ideas.

Observation xxvi. upon B. II. Chap. xxx.

Our ideas are of two sorts—They are either,

I. Such as are introduced into the mind through the senses, being the effects of powers implanted in the various works of God, and ordained by him to raise these sensations in us—Or they are,

II. Modifications of these *original* ideas, and are the productions of our own minds, in consequence of the voluntary exercise of our various intellectual powers, and therefore may, perhaps, be more properly called *primary* and *secondary*, or *native*, and *factitious* ideas, (primary, or native, as suggested, or excited, by the works of nature, i. e. of God: and secondary, or factitious, as not being *originally received*, but being the voluntary productions of our minds,) rather than real and fantastical: because *all* our ideas are equally *real*, though not equally marks of real existence. And we conclude certain ideas to be *marks* of *real* existence, since when men have the perfect use of those senses, through which *these* ideas are admitted into the mind, *they* appear to be *alike* in *all* mankind. And we reasonably conclude that the powers, by which objects excite *these* ideas, to be *permanent*, because upon the *uniformity* and *regularity* of causes, and effects, not only the comfortable subsistence, but the very existence of mankind does, in their present circumstances, and unavoidably must, depend.

Observation xxvii. upon B. II. Chap. xxx. Sect. 2.

“ Our simple ideas,” says Mr. Locke, “ are all *real*,

and *true*, because they answer and agree to those powers of things which produce them.” We *believe* these ideas, as far as we can judge, are the *effects* of such powers, and we *believe* the existence of such powers, because *these* ideas are excited by *these* things, in the minds of *all* mankind: and we conclude from the uniformity, and regularity of *this* effect, that *the things* constantly, and universally exciting such ideas, are *real*, i. e. actually exist.

Observation xxviii. upon B. II. Chap. xxx. Sect. 4.

Mixed modes and relations, says Mr. Locke, have no *other* reality, but what they have in the minds of men, i. e. they are *mere* ideas. As *simple* ideas are suggested to the mind by the works of God, so the ideas, called mixed modes, or relations, are suggested to the mind by the *actions* of men, both through the senses, and by reflection; just as the knowledge of the existence of God is suggested by his works through the senses, or communicated by his word through the understanding to mankind.

These ideas, (i. e. mixed modes) says Mr. Locke, are *themselves* archetypes, and therefore cannot differ from *their* archetypes, nor be chimerical, unless any one will jumble together inconsistent ideas (as Joseph Milner, and Bishop Hoadley, have jumbled together the inconsistent ideas of pardon and acquittal, see Hoadley's Terms of Acceptance, and the Dissertation prefixed to Four Essays, by T. Ludlam.) But Chap. xxxi. Sect. 3, Mr. Locke says, our complex ideas of modes, are voluntary collections of simple ideas, which the mind puts together, *without* any reference to *real* archetypes, or *standing* patterns; (a few lines lower he says, mixed modes, and relations *are* archetypes *without* patterns)

because not being intended for copies of *things really* existing, but for archetypes *made* by the mind. Is it proper to talk of archetypes *made* by the mind? If an archetype means any thing, it means a pattern, or similitude, to which recourse may be had by *all* men; and can such recourse be had to archetypes formed in, or by the mind, for the purpose of comparing it with what is supposed to be similar? Complex ideas can only be communicated by definitions, i. e. by enumerations of *all* the simple ideas they contain, which are combined under one name, Book III. Chap. xii. Sect. 15, 16.

Observation xxix. upon Book II. Chap. xxx. Sect. 7.

If the essence of things is intelligible, it can only be known from an enumeration of that *whole* collection of powers to excite certain ideas, which are usually found combined together in such things; each of *these* powers are called *qualities*, or *properties*; but properties mean only a *partial* consideration of *such* things. *Nominal* essences are therefore nothing, B. III. Chap. iii. Sect. 15. Chap. iv. Sect. 3. Chap. viii. Sect. 1. Chap. ix. Sect. 17. Mr. Locke says, B. III. Chap. v. Sect. 2, that abstract ideas are the *essences* of mixed modes. Abstract ideas are *nothing*, i. e. they have, they can have no connection with real existence, but are only general names. Mixed modes, says Mr. Locke, are only made by the mind—they are made *arbitrarily*, i. e. without patterns. See Observation xxix. It is not true, as Mr. Locke says, that mixed modes are made *without any* reference to *real* existence. They are made from observing the actions of, and the relations interceding between men and each other, and between themselves and their own actions.

Observation xxx. upon B. II. Chap. xxxi. Sect. 1.

When Mr. Locke says such ideas are inadequate, which are partial, or imperfect *representations* of the archetypes to which they are referred, he must be understood to speak of *images*.

Observation i. upon Book III. Chap. vi. Sect. 28.

“It is necessary,” says Mr. Locke, “to the making any nominal essence, i. e. any *specific* idea, that the ideas, whereof it consists, have *such* an union as to make but *one* idea how compounded soever. *Such* union may, to be sure, have *one* name; but how it can become *one* idea I am not able to understand. Mr. Locke means, I suppose, that the specific idea of substances, must be made up of *all* those ideas which are suggested by such substances respectively. The specific ideas of mixed modes, so far as they are arbitrary, cannot be *false*; but when we are to ascertain the ideas annexed to words, which are used in *writers*, to *whom* we cannot have recourse for any desired explanation, we can only collect these ideas from *their* use of words, conveying these ideas in different parts of their writings. The specific ideas of substances are in *no* case arbitrary; they must not contain any ideas which are not suggested by such substances, he who should put malleability into his idea of glass, or fixity in the fire, into his idea of steel, would give a *false* idea of these substances.

For an illustration of Book III. Chap. ix. Sect. 9. See the following

#### ESSAY UPON THE COMMUNICATION OF KNOWLEDGE.

The various faculties of the human frame plainly shew, that man was intended by his Creator to acquire

a variety of knowledge; and the organs of speech vouchsafed unto him, as plainly shew, that it was also intended, that he should communicate this knowledge to his fellow-creatures. Because, to what purpose was he thus qualified to make an endless *variety* of articulate, i. e. distinct sounds, (a power *not* vouchsafed to any other creature) and also to repeat with exactness these specific sounds, as often as he chooses; unless these sounds were intended to be made signs of the ideas which pass through his mind, and so to become means of communicating to each other the knowledge possessed by each individual.

But men are no less plainly intended for *social* life, and the principal benefits of such a mode of living *can only* arise from the *mutual* communication of knowledge: but without a ready mode of such communication, the benefits of society would be in a great measure lost, as is plain from that very confined sort of it, which obtains amongst the lower orders of living creatures. When therefore such articulate sounds are *invariably* connected with certain ideas, they become unequivocal *marks*, or *signs* of these particular ideas; and thus we are enabled to make known to other men the ideas which exist in our own minds. And when *visible* marks are used to denote, either simple sounds, as in the letters of the alphabet, or combinations of these sounds, as in the Chinese characters; each of which represents *not an idea* (as is, I believe, often thought) but denotes combined sounds, suggesting, like our words, a particular idea, then we have every thing necessary for the construction of language.

The sensations excited in the mind by external objects are of two sorts,

- I. Such as are excited by the objects themselves, and,
- II. Such as are excited by *changes* in these objects—

and the various *modes* of these changes form an endless variety of ideas, and occasion endless relations between the words used to express the modes of these changes.\*

\* The application of *visible* words, or audible sounds to express constantly some certain ideas must be *arbitrary*: because words or sounds have in general no kind of connection with the ideas they are usually chosen to express. But though *this* circumstance of language is plainly *arbitrary*, yet the *nature* of it, as far as regards the relations of words to each other, must unquestionably arise from the *original* relations of the ideas to be expressed.

Now the first application of *single* words, would naturally be to *express* the *existence* of external objects, and accordingly the word allotted for this purpose has usually been called the *nominative* case of such word. The *involuntary* use of the corporeal senses would suggest the existence of a great variety of objects, but the knowledge of the relations of these objects to each other, that is, the different powers possessed by them, of producing changes in each other, would require greater attention to, and more extended acquaintance with them. Men would distinguish between the objects which *produced* these various changes, and those *in which* these changes *were* produced, and this *difference* would suggest the notion of *active* and *passive* powers, as they are called: and the observation of instances in which the exertion of power produced a change only in the object itself, and not in any other, would give rise to the idea expressed by the *middle* verb in the greek, (an idea between agent and patient, or rather made up of both) the reciprocal verbs in modern languages; and hence also the idea of the *neuter*, in both ancient and modern, would naturally arise.

The powers of producing changes, which were observed to be constant and uniform, would naturally be supposed to reside in the object, and belong to, or be possessed by it; and hence the notion of the *genitive* case in nouns. The change *produced* would be attributed to the operation of this power, which would be supposed to introduce, or effect such change, and *give*, as it were, this *new nature* to the object changed, and hence would arise the idea of the *dative* case. When the effect of the operation of these powers *was* to be pointed out, or the agents exercising such powers were to be *denounced*, a case, (hence called the accusative case) is used: and when these powers were observed to be taken from the objects in which they were supposed usually to reside, and the instrument of this *deprivation* was also observed; words expressive of these circumstances, would of course constitute the *ablative* case; and as instruments of action must *accompany* the actor, the signification of *accompanying*

Now we can collect the nature of our ideas, and of the knowledge arising from them, only by considering

was also applied to *this* case. When particular men were wanted for particular purposes, their attention would be excited by a *personal* address, in what is hence called the *vocative* case.

To prevent an embarrassing multitude of words, wholly different from each other, the practice of prefixing small words, and transferring their signification to the compound, or rather of combining the significations of *both*, took place; and the ideas annexed to each part of the compound, *slid* as it were into each other. A few instances will explain my meaning. In the greek language, *καλειω* is to call, and *ανακαλιω*, to call *aloud* (to speak *up* as we say) and as we call aloud to persons at a distance, when we wish them to hear us, it signifies to *recall*: and when things, which being worn, or broken, are by being repaired, *recalled* as much as possible into their *former* state, this same word signifies to *mend*. Thus again *φειρω* is to bring, *καταφειρω* to bring *down*, and, as in striking the arm is brought down, it also signifies to *strike*. And these *derivative* significations, are sometimes directly opposite to the sense from which they take their rise. Thus *ιστημι* is to set, or place, and *απιστημι* to set *up*, hence it signifies to *build*; and as buildings are then most completely destroyed when their very foundations are raised (razed) up, it also signifies to pull down. Thus again the proposition *Δια* signifies *through*: and as when things are pierced through, they are *completely* divided, when joined to the verb *λαμβάνω* to take, it signifies to share, i. e. to *divide* into shares; and so Plutarch tells us that at the funeral of Paulus Emilius, the strong young men, *διαλαβόντες τὸ λειχός*, carried it to the grave, *dividing* sharing the load, equally, i. e. *completely* amongst them. So again describing the attack of Philopœmen upon Machanidas, each being on horseback, he says that Philopœmen (not *λαβων* but) *διαλαβων τοξυτον*—taking his javelin or lance by the centre of gravity, dividing the weight equally in his hand, that is *poizing* his weapon. Here the simple word *λαβων* would not have conveyed that *image*, or picture of the combat, which the writer so graphically describes.

That a combination of two or more words into one was intended to change the signification of the *simple* word, none can doubt, for otherwise, why make this addition to it? When then we see translators paying no regard to such addition, but preserving the signification of the uncompounded word, we may have much reason to suspect that they do not give us the *true*, or the *full* sense of the passage, and then we should always examine for ourselves. Thus, when St. Paul speaking to the Elders of the Ephesian church, represents himself as not withholding any information from them, which could be

the ways by which we become possessed of them: and we can collect the relations of words to each other, only

useful for their furtherance in the faith, in order to strengthen his own vindication, he not only recounts his own *public* and *private* diligence, but he adds *διαμαρτυρημένος*, both to Jews and Greeks repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ. Beza saw that some addition was wanting to strengthen the sense of the simple verb *μαρτυρομαι*, and therefore translates it *etiam atque etiam* testificans. He was aware that the Apostle meant an opposition to *εἰδὼν ὑπεριλάμην, τῶν συμφερόντων*; but he was not aware of the *peculiar force* of the preposition *δια* which is derived from the *compleatness* of that *division* which is caused by piercing any thing through and through, as we commonly express it. For this idea of *compleatness* which we express by the word *thoroughly*, attends this preposition in instances where even the metaphorical signification of it is quite inapplicable; and such it is in the present case. Where it means not *simply* testifying, but bringing such complete, such *thorough* evidence of the truth of what he taught as could not *possibly*, that is, innocently be rejected. And it may be observed, that this sense clearly points out the force of the apostle's intended antithesis, between *διαμαρτυρομαι* & *ὑποσπλομαι* for he might have testified some particulars *over* and *over again*, and yet have not mentioned many of the *τὰ συμφέροντα* to their conviction; nor have the different meanings of the preposition *δια*, any the least relation to the idea of repetition that I can discover.

The following observations may further shew the importance of attending to the meaning of compound words. The doctrine of assurance as held by the Calvinists, implying, as I collect from their writings, not what the apostle calls a lively hope, to which we are led by the abundant evidence of the gospel, but absolute certainty of our own salvation, and which is wholly founded upon their interpretation of the words *πληροφορια* and its derivatives. For all their writers take what is delivered, without examination, from one another, like the poet's hogs, "in huts of Westphaly." According to their exposition of *πληροφοριω* it means *plenam fidem facio* and *πληροφορομαι* *plene persuadeor*—*certus reddor*: And the German critic Stock, from whom this is taken, says *generatim notat pleno motu in aliquid ferri*—*speciatim, proprie est navium, quæ plenis velis in portum feruntur*—*metaphorice est animi qui pleno assensu et fiducia in aliquid fertur*. The whole of this exposition is intirely imaginary, and not at all grounded upon the real meaning of the words. *Πληροφορια*, and *πληροφοριω* are compounded of the words *πληρης* full, and *φοριω* to bear or carry, which is derived from *φορα* a load, or burden, whatever is brought; and *πληροφορια* means a full load, such as was supposed to be the cargo of ships, returning



by considering the nature of the ideas they are intended to express. This knowledge of the relations of words to

to their own country; *deeply laden* with the produce of other nations; like bees to their hives, laden with wax and honey, the produce of distant flowers, as fast as they can: but the notion of ships entering their ports with *full sail*, is as far from real practice, as this critics ideas are from those which are really annexed to this word; for it is always used in scripture to express, not the *strength* of the evidence, but the *abundance* of it: because it is of the *essence* of probable evidence to admit of augmentation, and hence we find the *degrees* of faith continually noticed in the gospel; but certainty admits not of degrees; the information arising from the *full* and *fair* evidence of our senses, from intuition, and from demonstration, cannot be increased. *Twenty* different demonstrations of the same proposition do not make the truth of it a whit more certain than *one*; but fresh circumstances may increase probable evidence, till the truth of it becomes, not *certain* indeed, but utterly *indisputable* and *unquestionable*. The gospel might come with evidence, *wonderful* in its nature, and *abundant* in quantity, as the Apostle expresses it, not in word only but in (miraculous) power, and in the Holy Ghost, and *therefore* with much assurance; but the assurance St. Paul speaks of here, is what he elsewhere calls the full assurance of *hope*: he understood too well, though modern divines do not, the difference between the full assurance of *hope*, and the full assurance of *certainty*, to confound these utterly inconsistent states of mind together, or to imagine them to be the *same*; and so he justly observes, that hope which is *seen*, i. e. hope for the *reality* of whose objects we have the *full* and *fair* evidence of *sense*, is not hope: because whatever is the object of sense is *certain*, but hope from the very nature of it implies *some* uncertainty. With equal clearness and propriety he speaks of the *full* assurance of the understanding; that assurance, namely, which arises from understanding the *nature*, and the *number* of the proofs of the truths of the gospel, which he says came in full assurance, that is, with unquestionable evidence of its truth, though not with the conviction of demonstration. Thus the very argument used to prove this *desirable* doctrine, the *certainty* of assurance, unanswerably shews the thing to be impossible: indeed the inconsistency of these good persons is not a little remarkable, for while some of them wish to have it thought that the proofs of the christian religion amount to absolute certainty, others of them are fearful that faith should be forced upon them by mathematical demonstration. Knox's Christian Philosophy, page 42.

each other, constitutes what we call grammar; it has its foundation in the constitution of the human mind, and in the construction of those organs which fit us for intellectual communication, because, in all languages, modes of speaking are adopted, *Euphoniæ gratia*.

The human mind is enabled to receive immediate knowledge respecting the nature of and changes in the material world—the actions of living creatures, and also respecting what passes in the minds of *other* men, from their information, communicated *viva voce*, or by writing. Now the knowledge received through our own *external* senses, when these senses are accurate, *must* be true, but the information received from *other* men, *may* be false. Because we can know exactly the *degree* of accuracy of our *own* senses, and the degree of care with which we have used them; but we can neither know the accuracy of the senses of other men, nor the care with which they have used them, nor the ability, integrity, or impartiality of the several persons who may have been employed in transmitting this knowledge: upon all which circumstances, the truth of transmitted information must depend.

Besides the information received by *external perception*, (as that which we *receive* through our outward senses, may not improperly be called) men are *conscious* of the *exercise* and *application* of their own *internal* powers (in consequence of the action of their own will :) this latter kind of knowledge is wholly *personal*, it cannot be *acquired* by any other man whatever; it can *only* be *received* from the information of the individual who possesses it.

All these different sorts of information excite in the human mind various sensations, and *these* sensations I call *ideas*; when these ideas are to be communicated to other men, it can only be done by *words*, which are arbi-

trary marks of our internal sensations, that is, signs of our various ideas, agreed upon by men for the purpose of mutual intercourse, and the mutual interchange of their respective knowledge.

Now these *signs* of our ideas being wholly *arbitrary*, the accuracy of these signs must intirely depend upon the care and exactness of him who uses them. The uncertainty of language is often attributed to the imperfection of words, but it arises much oftner from the imperfection, i. e. the negligence, inattention, or ignorance of him who uses them; just as the deceitfulness, and punishment of sin, so much insisted on by certain divines, means, in reality, the *dishonesty* and *punishment of sinners*. It is true that the mode of construction in *some* languages is better adapted for precision of expression, than it is in *others*: or what amounts to the same thing, the relations of words to each other (upon the knowledge of which the exactness of language must much depend) are capable of being ascertained, with *more* certainty in some tongues than in others. This relation of words to each other constitutes what is called the *idiom* of a language, and when writers in one language use the idiom of another, they render their own meaning utterly uncertain, unless they either give notice *when* they do so, or invariably use a fixed mode of expressing themselves to convey the same ideas; for then they form a language *peculiar* to themselves. When then the connexion, between the *relative parts* of *speech*, is clearly and invariably pointed out, as it is in all languages in which the use of *genders* obtains, we cannot depart with safety from the *usual* signification of the *general* idiom, to introduce and establish a *particular* sense *inconsistent* with it. For, if in any instance you break through the *customary* construction of language, without a better reason than an imagination, that the interpretation you propose conveys the weightiest and

most natural sense, by what *rule* shall any one know when we are to admit, and when to reject the manifest intention of such construction? Will not *every* man esteem his *favourite* interpretation to be the *weightiest*, and most *natural* sense of the passage? But without a better rule than the mere fancy of every man, will not the meaning of many passages of scripture become utterly uncertain.

Dr. Dodderidge, (in his note upon Eph. ii. 8. See his Family Expositor) in order to set aside the authority of a very general, and very remarkable idiom, thinks it sufficient to *assert*, that to understand the Apostle as affirming, that grace and the mode of that grace, is the gift of God, is to make the Apostle guilty of a flat tautology. Surely not more so, than when the same Apostle affirms, Tit. iii. 5. "that God saved us by his mercy, *not* by works of righteousness which we have done." For if we are saved by the *divine mercy*, we cannot be saved by our *own* works, since mercy is compassion to the guilty, as pardon is deliverance from *just* punishment. Nor does this assertion involve tautology: for our salvation, i. e. deliverance from punishment, and admission into heaven, might be received through the *favour*, the *grace* of *One*; and the intention of this benevolent design might originate in *Another*. And so we are told, that the salvation of sinners was in consequence of the eternal purpose of God the Father, which he purposed in *Himself*, and which he purposed to accomplish in (i. e. by) Christ Jesus. There is therefore *no* tautology in affirming that grace, and also the means of grace, *are* the gift of God.\* The Doctor goes on, "taking the

\* It is a matter of the most awful, and painful concern to such persons as are truly desirous to attain clear views (and who have been called in *scorn*, by the writers of the Christian Observer, *Mathematical Divines*)—not of the divine reasons for chusing the *particular* mode of redemption *set forth* in the gospel—nor of the *manner* in which

clause as we explain it, i. e. as asserting the *agency* of divine grace in the production of *faith*, which in his Comment he calls a *great* and *divine principle* in our *souls*, the thought rises, &c.—Now if instead of this pious eulogy upon Faith, he had told us what he meant by *that* word, we should have been better able to judge of the truth of his assertions. For if by faith we are to understand a firm belief, and well grounded persuasion of the general truth of Christianity, founded upon that evidence which God has given for it; how is receiving the truth, upon the evidence of faith, a more divine prin-

*this mode* has its *efficacy* (see the groundless, and therefore foolish explanations of these matters, in the writings of almost all the ancient, and modern Calvinists—because of the *former* the Scriptures say *nothing*, and only *simply*, and *frequently assert* the latter) but of the *value* of this redemption, and of the obligations sinners are under in the first place to that *merciful* being; who, though he denounced death as the *certain* and *immediate* punishment to the transgression of His command, Gen. ii. 17. was nevertheless pleased to suspend the execution of his threatening (whether the wisdom of modern theologians can explain this seeming alteration of the divine counsels or not) and still continues to preside over that gracious dispensation, which originated *wholly*, and *only* in himself, Eph. i. 9. For without his *special* agency, all that Christ has done, or suffered can profit men nothing. Since our Lord assures us, that *no* man can come unto him—can receive the benefit of his atonement and intercession, except the *Father* draw him, John vi. 44. What shall we say then? that we are under no obligation to the Redeemer?—God forbid! Great, and astonishing surely, was the generous benevolence of Jesus, who seconded the amazing love of the Father, and accomplished this great salvation at such an expence to Himself. For benevolence means only the desire of the happiness of others, but generosity means promoting that happiness at the expence of the promoter.

It is undoubtedly astonishing that any should neglect, or disregard the unspeakable love and kindness of Jesus, but that any, who are sensible of their obligations to him, should overlook, or disregard the no less unspeakable love and kindness of the Father, from whom this gracious dispensation took its rise, is still more astonishing. Because it is only in consequence of the eternal purpose of God, which he purposed, *only*, and *solely* in Himself, that we have *acceptance* in the *beloved*.

ciple in the soul, than receiving it upon the evidence of demonstration, analogy, &c. ? You would not say, that by knowledge is meant the effect of it. If you wish to understand by faith (what is indeed the *natural* consequence of it, i. e. *that* consequence which may *justly* be expected from it) reliance, confidence, trust; you may just as well understand the words intuition, and demonstration to mean (what is indeed no less the natural consequence of them) certainty. (See an Essay upon the Nature of Faith, printed in the Orthodox Churchman's Magazine for November, 1802.) Indeed certain divines speak as if they thought, the *weaker* the evidence, the *more acceptable* to God the *act* of believing: they are very fearful, where no fear is, that faith should be *forced* upon them by *mathematical* demonstration, (Knox's Christian Philosophy, page 42, in the note, edit. 2.) Carry but this wise notion as far as it will go, and you will arrive at that celebrated maxim *Credo quia impossibile*. We need not indeed wonder that little excellence should be attributed to the voluntary operations of our intellectual powers, since even one of the warmest, and most amiable of the affections, and that temper of mind which is the natural consequence of it, and which is held not a little commendable amongst men, is very slightly spoken of, by much higher authority. If ye love those which love you, what thank have you? for sinners also do the like.—The Doctor says, as for the Apostle's using *πιστις* in the *neuter* gender to signify faith (*πιστις*) the thing he had just before mentioned, there are so many *similar* instances to be found in Scripture, that one would wonder how it were possible for any judicious critics to have laid so much stress upon *this* as they do, in rejecting what *seems* beyond all comparison, the *weightiest*, and most *natural* interpretation. Now what are we to understand by a *weighty* interpretation? And do we not mean by a *natural* interpreta-

tion, such an interpretation as arises from taking the words in their *common* and *usual* acceptation, according to their grammatical construction? And might not one equally wonder how it were possible for any judicious divines to have laid so much stress upon this *weightiest* and most *natural* interpretation, without ever thinking of ascertaining the meaning of the words, or shewing what they take to be the sense of them. To confirm the truth of *this* assertion the Doctor quotes Philip. i. 28. The words of the Apostle are as follows: Καὶ μὴ πτυρόμενοι ἐν μηδενὶ ὑπὸ τῶν ἀνθι κειμένων· ἥτις ἀυλοῖς μὲν εἰσὶν ἐνδείξεις ἀπωλείας, ὑμῖν δὲ σωτηρίας, καὶ ΤΟΥΤΟ ἀπὸ Θεοῦ. Also Eph. vi. 18. διὰ πάσης προσευχῆς καὶ δεήσεως πρὸς εὐχομένοι ἐν παντὶ καιρῷ ἐν πνεύματι, καὶ εἰς ΑΥΤΟ ΤΟΥΤΟ ἀγγυπνευτες· And Galat. iii. 17. Τὸτο δελέγω διαθηκὴν προκεκυρωμένην ἀπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ εἰς Χριστὸν Ὁ μετὰ ἔτη, &c. Also iv. 19. τέκνια μὲν ΟΥΣ. He might have added 2. Cor. ii. 6. and Apocal. ii. 15. He refers likewise to two celebrated scripture critics, Elsner and Raphael, but he has not thought proper to adduce their observations in a matter, which might seem of some importance, when he was endeavouring to establish an interpretation, which, for aught appears, may be unintelligible, and not less opposite to common sense, than to the rules of grammar. In such circumstances, one should have thought, a writer would avail himself of every thing he could: for not only the most judicious critics, by whom he sets so light, grammarians in general, are so sensible of the usefulness of preserving the uniformity and regularity of the established construction of language, that they constantly, and universally adhere to the customary rules, as the only way of ascertaining, and rendering permanent the information conveyed by, and received from it. Wherever therefore these apparently anomalous constructions are to be met with, they universally refer them to an elliptical expression, or a propositional antecedent. For propositions can be the predicate of other propositions; and how numerous soever these irregular constructions

may be, you are not authorised by their frequency to violate the general analogy of grammar, unless you can shew that the referring these expressions to an ellipse, or a propositional antecedent renders the sentence, in which they are found, unintelligible.

Had Doctor Dodderidge attended to the accuracy of St. Paul's language, rather than to his *own* system of divinity, he would have seen that the Apostle was sufficiently careful of precision in his style: for he might have noticed, in the very verse quoted from Philipians, that in the second clause St. Paul uses ἥτις (which faith) not ὅτι (which thing) plainly referring to Π. 28 in the verse immediately preceding.

But not only the grammatical construction of the words used, the ideas conveyed by them, equally forbid the reception of Dr. Dodderidge's interpretation, as may appear from the Essay before referred to, and from the Appendix to that Essay, to both which *this* was intended as an introduction; but was I believe thought too *Logical* for a religious magazine.

#### AN ESSAY UPON THE NATURE AND USE OF ABSTRACT IDEAS.

The ideas which men are possessed of arise in their minds, either

I. In consequence of the action of external objects upon the corporeal senses. For the Creator of mankind has so formed the human frame, that the various works of creation, i. e. external objects, can produce changes in the *state* (though not in the *nature*) both of our *faculties* and *dispositions*, by means of our corporeal senses; changes in which our *power* of choice, i. e. our will, has no concern: and the involuntary, i. e. the unsought information arising from these effects of external objects

upon our *senses*, make a very great and a very useful part of our knowledge.

Or they are,

II. Modifications of these original ideas, produced by means of the *operations* of the internal powers of the mind, in consequence of the *action* of the will.

The *first* information received by human creatures, is plainly that which is received from the *effects*, or as it is sometimes called, from the *impressions* of external objects upon the senses of the body, that is, as Mr. Locke would say, from sensation. Now I call every information arising from a *single* effect produced upon the senses by an external object, an *original* perception, and the effect itself produced upon the mind by this *original* perception, I call an *idea*: so that ideas are *not* perceptions, but the effects, or consequences of perceptions, of whatever sort these perceptions are: and in proof of *this* difference, it may be observed, that although the human mind has a power of recalling its ideas, which power we call *memory*, and the exercise of this power, recollection, yet men cannot recall the *actual* perception received by the senses; for if they could, the effects of the actions of external objects might be rendered *perpetual*; pain and pleasure derived from the senses would become capable of endless repetition, or rather of endless continuation; one smelling bottle might serve a nation, and the dog would cry at the sound of that bell, which now he only runs from, through apprehensions of the whip which is tied to it.

But though the mind has little or no power over its *original*, or *transmitted* perceptions, it has great power over its own ideas: and though it cannot *create* an idea, *originally*, from itself, independent of the actions of ex-

ternal objects; yet just as men cannot *create* matter, but can only alter the form and size of that which is created; can separate it, or join it together in various ways; so they can also modify their ideas: can by comparing them discern the differences between them; can *separate* from each other such as have been *suggested together*, as it were in company: and can *combine together*, such as have been *suggested separately*. But these ideas *thus* modified, neither are, nor can be suggested to the mind by external objects, through the immediate action of the senses; they owe their origin to the voluntary operations of the intellectual powers, yet these ideas thus modified are capable of various relations; and while the ideas remain unchanged, these relations remain unalterable. Matter indeed can, and often does admit of changes, which may not be perceptible at the time they take place, though discoverable afterwards, but our ideas admit of no imperceptible changes. When then we *select* certain ideas from amongst others, for our contemplation and consideration; and remove from our attention certain other ideas which were received along with them, the ideas so selected are called *abstract*, i. e. abstracted ideas, that is, ideas taken from such as accompanied them when they entered into the mind.

It seems to me that Mr. Locke speaks of this and other operations of the mind, as if they were the effects of much, and mature reflexion. But like words, and what is more, the peculiar force of words, they appear to be learned, by intercourse and experience. I have known a child perfectly acquainted with the expressive force of language, before it was able to speak plain, say "I ownt"—"I ownt"—*I say* I ownt; and upon being corrected, say "I'll—I'll—*indeed* I'll." From perceiving several objects of the same kind, children

soon learn the nature and use of numbers, and quickly discern that one is not two, and that one and two put together do not make four. From observing the different size and colour of birds they soon learn to include them under the general name; and thus they begin to exercise the power of abstraction, before they are able to understand the nature and the use of it, and without knowing what a self-evident proposition is, they perceive clearly that the whole is greater than a part, and when half an apple is offered to them, wisely cry for the whole. It is in ways like these that mankind learn to exert their various powers, and to exercise their various faculties of body and mind.

Abstract ideas may relate either to

I. Quantity.—Under the idea of quantity, I comprehend whatever is capable of measure—as lines—surfaces—solids: and it may be angles—ratios—numbers. It will readily be understood, that by measures, is meant measures sui generis. The purpose of this kind of abstraction is to obtain *general* truths, respecting different kinds of magnitude. These truths are the subjects of all mathematical reasoning.

When mathematicians prepare ideas for the discovery of what is called mathematical truth by abstraction, the ideas removed from consideration, are (as in all cases of abstract ideas) universally such, as have any connexion with *real* existence, that is, such as are matters of sense. So the solids have *no* substance—the plain surfaces *no* thickness—the lines *no* breadth—the points *no* magnitude—the figures *no* size. The triangles suppose are neither equilateral—equicrural—scalene—acute, right, or obtuse angled, &c. The knowledge acquired is *general* knowledge, and therefore is only *ideal*. Draw

the figures upon paper, cut them out of any substance whatever, and the proposition (as referred to such figures) is *not* true. The *assumed* circumstances are wholly arbitrary, and upon these arbitrary circumstances, the truth to be demonstrated intirely depends.

Having thus ascertained the ideas, whose relations they propose to investigate, they usually proceed to lay down what they call postulates, that is, requisitions to admit, not the possibility of making a solid, which has *no* substance; a surface, which has *no* thickness, or of drawing a line, which has *no* breadth, and making a point, which has *no* size; nor yet of *conceiving* such a solid, or such a surface, line, or point, which is equally impossible; but to admit the possibility of considering a solid with regard to extension *only*; a surface merely with regard to its length and breadth; a line with regard to its length and direction, when compared with other lines, as to these circumstances; and the possibility of considering a point with regard to its *situation only*. A postulate then implies, that such *partial* consideration does not involve any *ideal contradiction*; such as it is to require the *whole* to be taken out of a part.

When then a mathematician proposes certain ideas for consideration, he does not say conceive a line, or lines in general, or conceive a point in general: he supposes you possessed of these ideas by *some* way or other: for such ideas are *simple* ideas, and do not admit of being *defined*: but he says conceive a line of such or such a length, or continued in such a direction: or conceive a point so and so placed, &c. As, conceive three lines of such a sort, that any two of them, taken together, may be longer than the third, and let these lines be so joined as to *include* space: or conceive a curve *returning* into *itself*, of such a sort that a point may be taken *within* the curve, at an equal distance from every part of such

curve, &c. Now all these circumstances are matters of *choice* to him, and from ideas so circumstanced, according to his pleasure, he can trace out various relations, and deduce various truths.

But abstract ideas may relate

II. To the circumstances which discriminate the various sorts of animate and inanimate matter from each other respectively.—Now when we remove from our attention the peculiar ideas, which accompany the particular external objects that excite these ideas in our minds; and select for our contemplation, those ideas which are excited *not* by *one* single object only, but by a *considerable number* of these objects; that is, when we abstract *such* ideas as are to be found in *all* these objects, from those in which *every* individual differs from every other individual, we form a *general idea*, not indeed agreeing with any one individual, but generally descriptive of the whole species.

Therefore when we have recourse to abstraction in order to generalize our ideas, and to rank *numbers* of particular beings under *one term*; the ideas to be abstracted, are not matters of *arbitrary* appointment; this abstraction must be so made as to *include* those ideas only, in which *all* the particular beings to be comprehended under this *one term* agree; rejecting from our consideration all the rest. Thus if you chuse to generalize the term bird, and, instead of applying it to one particular individual, you wish to extend it to, and to comprehend under it every *sort* of birds, whatever be their shape, size, colour, &c.; you must select such circumstances as belong to the *whole kind*, and to this species of living creatures *only*. It will not therefore be sufficient to describe birds as such creatures which *lay*

*eggs* suppose, because tortoises and alligators lay eggs; nor will it be sufficient to describe them as such living things as fly, for then you would exclude ostriches, and take in flying fishes and insects; but if you describe them as having two legs and two wings, and perhaps you may add feathers, though I know not whether bats are not covered with hair, your *general* description may be exact.

As the subject of one sort of abstraction is that from whence we derive the different relations of quantity, or magnitude, in *general*; and another sort that by which we are enabled to make a general arrangement of beings, whether animate, or inanimate, in order to comprehend great numbers under one *generic* term, the subject of the next sort of abstraction is that which comprehends,

III. Such abstract ideas as arise from the consideration of the actions of *intelligent* and *responsible* beings: and by generalizing such actions we arrive at those *moral* ideas called, *mixed modes*.

Now I call beings responsible beings, who are capable of *receiving*, and also of *discerning* the *fitness*, *propriety* and *rectitude* of such *rules* of action as may be given unto them. Animals are capable of having their actions governed in some degree, and in an imperfect manner, by the application of *immediate* pain. The horse that is troublesome to the smith that shoes him, may be restrained from his offensive tricks, by a great knock on his ribs with the hammer, or a good kick on the guts; but this correction affords *no* instruction to the team which is passing by at the instant. Man alone of all creatures that we are acquainted with, is capable of perceiving the *fitness*, *propriety* and *rectitude* of that rule

of action which God his Creator has given him, by whatever way it may be made known to him.

We become acquainted with the *mere* actions of men, in the same way as we become acquainted with the actions of all other creatures, or with the nature of, and changes in the material world about us. And we are called upon by that mental constitution which God has given us, to consider the *nature* of our own actions, for the direction of our *own* conduct just in the same way, and just as much, as we are called upon by the possession of sight, to direct our steps; because to what purpose are the manifold gifts of God bestowed upon us, but that we may avail ourselves of all the benefits from them which they can afford us. For this is the *peculiar* advantage of intelligence.

God then has made men responsible creatures; and all those relations which intercede between agents and their actions, that is, between men and their conduct, arise from, or are built upon this responsibility; and upon these relations *all moral* character is founded. But character is not discoverable from, or to be attributed to a few detached actions. It arises from the *general cast*, or tenor of our dispositions, and these can only be collected from the *general cast* and *tenor* of our actions; that is, from our usual and customary conduct. Known indeed to God are all our dispositions, even *before* they proceed to *intention*; but man seeth not as God seeth, and can only judge of the *internal* dispositions, that is of the character, from the *outward* conduct.

Now it is *intention alone* which constitutes the difference between the voluntary operations of intelligent agents, and the *casual* effects proceeding from irrational creatures, or from those of inanimate matter. Because intention implies a *desire* of producing certain *foreseen* effects; and the intentions of intelligent agents can only be collected by the *occasional* circumstances of each

particular action: just as their *permanent* dispositions can alone be discovered by the *constant tenor* of their conduct; and as the presence or absence of intention can only be collected by the occasional circumstances of each *particular* action, so the *nature* of these intentions, that is, the *morality*, the rectitude, or depravity, their title to approbation, or abhorrence can likewise alone be known by a consideration of these *same* occasional circumstances, of mens' respective actions. For the more ready communication of knowledge, men have generalized these ideas respecting their various dispositions, and the conduct arising from these dispositions, just as they generalize many other ideas, reducing them into sorts, and giving names to the *various* sorts; names, not expressive of the particular dispositions, or particular conduct of *single* individuals, but of *all* dispositions, and *all* conduct of a *similar* sort, to be found in men of all ages and nations: and these ideas, thus joined together under, or (as Mr. Locke would say) by one name, are usually called *mixed modes*.

Thus, we call contentment a *habit* of restraining our uneasiness under the *want* of some good, patience a habit of restraining our uneasiness under the *pressure* of some evil. Thus again, fortitude is a habit of bearing *present* evil, for the sake of future good. Self-denial an habit of restraining *innocent* desires, that *blamable* ones may be more easily governed. Benevolence an habitual desire of promoting the good of others, generosity an habit of promoting the good of others at the *expence* of the *promoter*, and soon.

Now these mixed modes have their foundation, like all other abstract ideas, in that constitution, or frame which God has appointed in this world. (See Butler's Sermons, edit. iii. p. 47.) that is to say, in the relations of human creatures to each other, or to other intelligent beings: and this constitution is *permanent*, or, according



to the usual way of speaking, nature is always the *same* : that is, certain *sorts* of dispositions, i. e. certain *similar* dispositions, (for by *sorts* of things we always mean *similar* things) are to be found in great numbers of individuals. It never happens that some dispositions, which *once* generally prevailed in considerable portions of mankind, cease to be found in the human race. The *general* ideas taken from these dispositions, or from the conduct such dispositions naturally, i. e. *usually* produce, like all other abstract ideas, are *fixed* and *invariable* ; and *these* ideas must have been generally included under *those* names, which have been commonly annexed to such ideas ; which names are to be found in the languages of almost all nations. For it is to be presumed, that writers no more use their words, without any meaning annexed to such words, than men ever talk a language to others, which the speakers know is not understood by the hearers. As then the ideas annexed to the *words used by writers* to express mixed modes, must be *fixed* and *invariable* ; it is not possible that such expressions should *wholly* change their meaning : e. g. justice cannot signify injustice, or cruelty humanity, generosity selfishness, profuseness parsimony, or truth falsehood. In enumerating then the ideas which enter into mixed modes used by any writers, we must not include amongst them such ideas, with which it is impossible these writers should be acquainted. Thus we find the word virtue used by the Grecian and Roman moralists, but if you say that virtue consists in conformity of the human conduct to the will of God, you put into your definition of virtue an idea, with which it is impossible that these moralists should be acquainted. Because obedience to the will of God, implies a *knowledge* of the *unity* of God : but the unity of God, was either not known, or not acknowledged, by the professors of Polytheism. This definition of virtue then seems liable

to the same objection, as that of Dr. Paley, (see the second set of Essays by T. Ludlam, Essay viii.) It involves ideas, which neither were, nor could be known to many, who were no strangers to this mixed mode. For moral modes are founded upon the *common* principles of our *common nature*, and therefore must lie within the bounds of *natural* knowledge. They cannot have any connexion with such knowledge as is plainly supernatural, however desirable this latter sort of knowledge may become from circumstances, which although foreseen, certainly *could not be intended* ; because to suppose a deficiency of knowledge *intended*, is to overturn *all* those ideas, which men are enabled to collect, and which it seems was the *design* of their Creator, that they *should* collect from his works, concerning his *nature* and his *dispositions*.

But it is not merely to those abstract ideas which regard the relations, that either make part of, or arise from, that constitution which God has appointed us, that our attention is necessary, if we would attain *precise* knowledge : we must never forget that *these* ideas are not received from *any one* particular object, like *those* of sense, but that they are wholly *fictitious*, the mere creation of the mind, formed only for the purpose of giving readiness to the verbal communication of knowledge. Abstract terms are nothing but an invention to assist human language : These terms must therefore never be used as if they were expressive of objects really existing ; because when general terms, which are only expressive of abstract ideas, are used as if such terms were applicable to *real* existence, that is, to such objects for which we have the *testimony* of our *senses*, much confusion must arise from this improper and injudicious application, as the following instances will abundantly shew :—

“To fathers in their private families,” says Bishop Horne, in his Discourse upon the Origin of Civil Government, “*nature* has given *supreme* power.”—Nature! —The God of nature surely! The term nature is a *mere* word: the mark not of any particular, but of a general or abstract idea, to which *no precise* meaning is, or can be annexed. It refers to that *usual* and *established* mode of acting, which God has thought proper to employ in his work of creation: and when we talk of the gifts of nature, we mean those gifts of God, those powers, faculties, qualities, qualifications which *he* bestows indiscriminately, though perhaps not equally, upon all the various *species* of beings *respectively*: and these powers, faculties, qualifications, qualities, when referred to each respective species, are called the *nature* of that species: when writers then apply this general, or abstract term, as if it stood for some *particular* matter, and fancy they affirm some thing, they in reality affirm nothing, no *particular* truth. But general truths have no relation to—are no marks of real existence; and so the *same general term*, which represents to the mind no *one* thing in the universal world, *equally* serves the pious Bishop of Norwich, and the Infidel defenders of Atheism, (see Dr. Paley’s Natural Theology, page 446,) for the support of their respective systems.

So again, when Mr. Robinson, a celebrated gospel minister affirms, that the *same* nature which sinned, atoned, (Script. Charact. Vol. iii. p. 29, or 35) and when Dr. Hawker, a no less celebrated gospel minister affirms the direct contrary, (see his Essay upon the Divinity of Christ, page 8,) that the *same* nature which sinned, did *not* atone, for that the *divine* nature, (which *could not* sin) atoned; neither one nor the other of these two great divines, was able to perceive that they had no ideas to their words; for both divine and human nature are merely abstract terms, and could no more atone,

than they could talk. It would have been just as intelligible, and just as wise to say that human nature might be punished, might be hanged suppose, or transported to Botany Bay, or be whipped at the cart’s-tail. Take another instance of this literary legerdemain. “The Holy Spirit,” (says Mr. Cruden, see his Concordance, word Spirit) “is called a person,” (not in Scripture surely) “because whatever *belongs* to person, as to understand, to will, to give, to call, to do, to subsist of himself, doth agree to the spirit,” and he adds, “who appeared in a visible shape.” But surely Mr. Cruden would no more call the Dove a person, or the fiery tongues, than he would call the flame of fire in the bush, which Moses saw, a person, Deut. iv. 12, 13. By person Mr. Cruden plainly means the *general* idea of living being; though this is by no means the common idea of person; for if person means any thing, it means a visible human form; and if it does not, it would be equally proper to talk of the persons of animals.

In a note of Dr. Hey’s Norrisonian Lectures, Vol. ii. p. 275, we are told that Bishop Pearson says, “God died for us,” and Dr. Hey adds, that the Bishop means that *person* died. Here the idea annexed to the word person is not the idea of *being in general*, but that of a particular sort, which we call (and understand by it human) body: and it might with equal propriety have been affirmed, no less than of person, that presence (another general, or abstract idea) died. With equal want of *distinct* ideas, we are told in the same Note (what is indeed often said by divines, but I think never in Scripture) that *Christ* has two natures, in *one* person. Ascertain but the ideas conveyed by the words nature and person, and the proposition will be found utterly *unintelligible*. The word person conveys only an abstract, or general idea; we do not understand by this term the idea of body, or of living body in *general*, for then we might speak of the

persons of animals: still less can it be supposed to mean, the same as it meant by the word spirit; for the idea annexed to the word spirit is merely negative, (see an Essay upon the Epistle to the Romans, printed in the Orthodox Churchman's Magazine for January, 1803,) and when we speak of spirits, it means, if it means any thing, that spirits have *no* persons; i. e. no visible form, as men have; because the word person is only used to express the *general* form of the human body, that is, a form which has *no* size, colour, &c. and therefore the word person in general, neither does, nor can imply any thing which really exists, that is, which is the object of sense; because we neither have, nor can have, any *sensible* knowledge of whatever exists without colour, size, &c. We may indeed *believe* that such things exist, but *faith* is *not* *knowledge*; and it is never supposed that the word person conveys what is only an object of *faith*. Divines indeed have applied this word to the Supreme Being, but unquestionably without any idea,\*

• A remarkable instance of this misapplication we have in the 23d Chapter of Dr. Paley's Natural Theology, written expressly upon what he calls the *Personality* of God, as if it was an attribute of the divine nature.

At p. 419, 2d edit. The Doctor says contrivance proves the Personality of the Deity. He should have said, the *existence* of a *contriver*, in opposition to those who talk of nature, &c. as capable of supplying the *place* of an *intelligent* agent. He goes on, now *that* (being I suppose) *which* can design must be a *person*. If he had said, must be a *living* agent, he would have expressed himself more clearly. For any idea which we can form of *person*, has no more *necessary* connection with activity, or intelligence, than activity, or intelligence have, with the *exercise* of them, being connected with objects of sight—it is also not unusual to speak of *dead* persons. He further says, the capacities of contrivance and design imply consciousness and thought; and therefore *constitute* *personality*. If he had said these capacities imply an *intelligent* agent, he would have expressed himself still more clearly: and if this is not his meaning he should have told us *what* is; because the words person, and personality are not applicable to all *living* beings, as we have just observed. For the

and it has been done only to support an *unintelligible* notion; and so the greek words χαρακτήρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως have

abstract idea annexed to the word person, is made up of a visible human form, unattended with any of the particular ideas of great, or small, tall or short, corpulent or thin, fair or black, fresh coloured or pale, ugly or handsome, &c. The word person therefore when applied to a particular being, means, if it means any thing, an object of sense. Nobody talks of the *person* of the *soul*. To say then that in *whatever* the *mind* *resides* is a *person*, and that the *seat* of intelligence is a *person*, is humana ad Deos transferre; is to use his own words a perversion of language, for it is to use words without ideas. Because what are we to understand by a *mind* *residing*? and what by the *seat* of the intellect? To apply such ideas to God, is, it should seem, to suppose that he has parts; otherwise why the distinction of *where* the *mind* *is*, and where it is not? And to apply the word person to him, is surely, if we have any ideas to our words, to suppose him an object of sense, in direct contradiction to Scripture, Job xxiii. 8, 9. For what other reason can be given, why the word person is never applied to the human mind, which alone has the capacity of thought, and consciousness, and therefore of contrivance and design? And if the application of the word person to God, is not to suppose him an object of sense, *what* is the *difference* between a person and an intelligent being? Perhaps higher orders of intelligent beings may be qualified to discern more of the Deity, as well as more of his works, than is permitted to men: but we neither have, nor under our present circumstances can have any more notion (unless the Lord imparts new faculties to us, as he did to the prophet and his servant, 2 Kings vi. 17,) of this perception than we have of the perceptions, which St. Paul had in the third heaven. *Particular* language therefore in these cases is utterly inapplicable. To have said, as is very properly said, p. 444, that contrivance implies an intelligent author of what is contrived, would have removed this justly exceptionable mode of speaking.

It is well observed, at p. 446, that the *force* of the reasoning. (the reasoning *itself* he should have said) is frequently sunk by our taking up with *mere* names. Thus nature means *not* an *agent*, but the *order*, according to which the author of that nature acts; and it is absurd to ascribe to the order of things, a power of producing that order: the things themselves must *first* be produced, before that order can take place; for order means only a regular arrangement; but to arrange is the proper work of an intelligent agent, because it implies choice, and choice implies volition, but volition is only the property of living beings. Nature, order, mechanism, are abstract ideas, but the names of abstract ideas are never the marks of real existence.

been translated, the express image of his person, although the word *ὑπόστασις*, no more signifies *person*, than it signifies *body*. But this juggling change of the meaning has been effected by the magical operation of school divinity.—And what can be meant by the word *nature*, but that system or combination of powers, dis-

It is truly observed, p. 458, that persons who speak of abstract ideas, such as nature, order, mechanism, &c. as causes of objects which exist, mean to *deny*, or *set aside* the operation of a particular *personal* intelligence; that is to say, the exertions of an intending, and contriving mind; what is called, p. 462, a designing mind, and p. 464, an intelligent designing Creator. Now when we speak of an intending, contriving, designing mind, we talk of what we *clearly* understand, as *far* as we understand, though it may not be what we *perfectly*, i. e. intirely comprehend: artificers, and architects, are terms familiar with us; but what idea are we to annex to a *personal* intelligence, i. e. a *personal mind*? Design must have had a designer; is any thing *more* meant, when it is said, that such designer must have been a *person*? If there is, *what* is it? If there is not, why use the word? I am apt to suspect that names like this, to use Dr. Paley's words, *refer us to nothing*; excite no idea, convey a sound to the ear but no more.—*Vox et præterea nihil*.

At p. 475, we are told that it is one of the advantages of revelation, that it introduces the Deity to human apprehensions under an idea more *personal*, more *determinate*, more within its compass than the theology of nature. To be sure if we consider natural theology alone, we learn little more than that a wise, good, and powerful Being is the author and preserver of the universe. It is from revelation that we learn the most particular (which make the idea, if not more *personal*, certainly more determinate) and therefore the most *important relations* in which God stands to us, as our supreme governor, and our judge; and it is from His word alone that we become acquainted with Him as our redeemer, and our sanctifier: But if these ideas are more *personal*, it is because Christ is *appointed* to be our judge, John v. 22. Acts xvii. 31; and we are further told, John v. 27, the reason of this appointment. But though revelation shews us more of the divine goodness, it affords us no clearer, nor any further conceptions of the divine power, than we can gather from His works, much less does it add any thing to our knowledge of what is here called His *personality*: of that, so far as we can have any idea to the word, we understand not a whit more than we did before, that is—*just nothing*.

positions, qualifications, &c. which the Creator of all things has been pleased to appoint to the productions of his own will? And then how is it possible that any thing can have *two* natures. But these divines tell us, what the Scriptures no where do, “that Christ has two natures, the divine, and the human.” But because Christ exercised powers far superior to those of men, Luke xi. 20. John iii. 2. are we therefore to ascribe to him the *undervived* possession of such power, without *express* authority for such ascription from holy writ. We should be careful to distinguish between the *weak* and *uncertain inferences* of human reason, and the *clear* and positive declarations of divine revelation, in subjects upon which we cannot possibly acquire any other information than what is imparted to us by God himself. And how can we ascribe the divine nature to any being unless we are clearly acquainted with the powers, and dispositions of that nature? Men have frequently exercised powers far superior to those usually allotted to the human race, but whoever thought of ascribing the divine nature to them. St. Peter exhorts his converts to the practice of the moral virtues, that they may become, *not possessors*, but partakers of the divine nature; i. e. may resemble in their measure, the great author and possessor of all moral goodness, Matt. v. 48. Luke vi. 35, 36. Matt. v. 45. And as we cannot have any foundation, unless from revealed information, to ascribe the divine nature to any being but the Supreme, so we learn from *that* information, that there are parts of the divine nature, which either *could* not, or *do* not, 2. Tim. vi. 16. Matt. xxiv. 36. Mark xiii. 32. belong to any other being but the Supreme. And let not eager, ignorant zeal take fire, as if any thing which is here said is any diminution of the glory, or any disparagement to the honour of the Redeemer. However little we may understand of the relations in which Christ stands to God, we *clearly*

understand those in which he stands to us. We certainly know that he was our Creator, and is the governor and preserver of this world, and therefore has a claim to every duty and service appendant upon those relations, as well as to all those which arise from his character as our Redeemer. And his most earnest followers would have done better, to have received *implicitly* without attempting to *explain* what we are utterly unable to understand: thus *disgracing* themselves, and dishonouring him, by esteeming it possible that the fruits of ignorance and folly could be acceptable to him.

#### AN ESSAY UPON THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MATHEMATICAL AND MORAL PROOF.

Few writers attend to the difference between such proof as is applicable to mathematical, and such as is applicable to moral truth. Hence we often hear of *such* truths being *demonstrated*, as are utterly incapable of this sort of proof. Mr. Locke himself seems inclined to think both sorts of truth equally capable of demonstration in his Essay upon the Human Understanding, B. III. Chap. xi. Sect. 16. and B. IV. Chap. iii. Sect. 18. Chap. xii. Sect. 8. But had he attended to the different *nature* of mathematical and moral ideas, and also to *that* of the relations interceding between each respective sort, he would probably have been of a different opinion. Ideas are the *materials* of *all* our knowledge; and the *relations* interceding between these *ideas*, determine the *species* of our knowledge.

By ideas I understand,

I. *Original* sensations arising in the mind in conse-

quence of the actions of *external* objects upon the corporeal senses.—Or

II. *Voluntary* modifications of these ideas so received, in consequence of the operation of our *internal* powers.

If we consider the different ways by which we become possessed of our ideas, we may perhaps discover more accurately the *nature* of these ideas, the *relations* which arise from their nature, and also the species of proof applicable to each respective sort, as depending upon *this* nature, and *these* relations.

All our original sensations are admitted into the mind through our various senses. Such as are derived from *sight*, are properly called *images*. A representation of the appearance of the object, is formed in some manner within the mind. Such sensations as spring from our *other* senses are called more properly *ideas*. No resemblance attends the perceptions from which these ideas rise. Hence it follows that though *all images* are *ideas*, yet *all ideas* are *not images*; and also that images are, and must be, ideas of particular objects. There can be no such thing as *general*, or *abstract images*, though there may be *general* or *abstract ideas*. For the mind has certain powers over its ideas, and can at pleasure, compare, combine, separate, or recall them; and in consequence of these powers can produce various *modifications* of them, for the more *ready* acquisition, or communication of knowledge. Thus by abstracting *all* those circumstances in which a number of particular ideas *differ* from each other, and retaining all those circumstances in which they *agree*, the mind *forms* what are called *general*, or *abstract ideas*. But these *general* or *abstract ideas* are never presented to, or produced in the mind, like our *original* perceptions, by causes from *without*, or

*foreign* to itself: they are the *voluntary formation* of the mind; and that they are so, is plain; because the mind can form ideas of *this* kind, which are more or less general. Thus, bird is a more general idea than sparrow, and creature than bird, and being than creature. So again solid bodies consist of three dimensions, viz. length, breadth and thickness. By abstracting the idea of thickness, and retaining those of length and breadth, we form the idea of a plain surface: by abstracting from the idea of surface its breadth, we obtain the idea of a line; and by still further abstracting from our idea of a line, its length we arrive at, the idea of a *mathematical point*.

The exertion of this power we call the *act* of conceiving; though it may be that we understand no more of this faculty, than we do of that which we call recollection. It is nevertheless a real power, and is plainly unconnected with that species of ideas which we call images. For blind persons are capable, in consequence of *this* power, of understanding the various relations of lines, surfaces and solids, and also the mathematical laws of optics, though how much they know of colours may be collected from the reply of that blind person, who said he supposed that scarlet resembled the *sound* of a trumpet; nor is it at all likely that such persons can by any means acquire that species of ideas which we call images. Mr. Locke mentions an inquiry made by his friend Mr. Molineux, B. II. Chap. ix. Sect. 8. whether a blind person who was acquainted with the different properties of the sphere and cube, might not, upon the recovery of sight, distinguish by the use of it, one of these solids from the other? But had Mr. Molineux considered that the visible appearances of bodies depend *wholly* upon the different degrees of light and shade, and upon the angles made by the visual ray with the various bounding lines of such objects, both which can *only* be

suggested through the *eye*, he might have safely concluded that such a person could not distinguish by sight *only*, triangles from squares.\* Hence it is plain that images can *only* be received by *sight*; that they neither are, nor can be received by the touch, even when they respect the boundaries of extension, or of space, i. e. of figure. Mathematical ideas, therefore, like all abstract ideas, are unquestionably *formed* by the mind, in a manner perhaps inexplicable, the fact however cannot be doubted. *Conceive* such and such ideas is the language respecting their formation. They are therefore, and must be the *same* in all mankind, because they are formed by *prescription*. Their formation is a matter of *command*, not of *choice*. Every idea prescribed must be taken in, not one can be left out consistent with the truths proposed to be established, for it is the relations of *given* ideas to speak in mathematical language, which are to be ascertained. The idea of a triangle is precisely the *same* in every mind. It is composed of the ideas of three straight lines, joined together in such a manner as to include space. So the idea of a circle is exactly *alike* in every man. It is the idea of a curve returning into itself, of such a sort that a point can be taken *within* the curve, *equidistant* from *every part* of the curve. A straight line drawn through this point, and continued to each side of the curve is called a diameter. Every person who forms the idea of such a curve, sees *immediately*, and *intuitively*, that the diameter is, and must *necessarily* be double the radius. Again the relations subsisting between these ideas, is, and must be *immutable*. With ever be the proportions and inclinations of the sides of triangles to each other, the three angles of every triangle will invariably be equal to two right angles: Whatever the length of the diameter of any circle, it will al-

\* A matter of a similar sort is related in Addison's Tatler.

ways be double the length of the radius : And so of every mathematical proposition. Mathematical truths are therefore *necessary* truths.

The case with *moral* truths is totally different. The ideas from whose relations these truths arise, do not spring like mathematical truths from *prescribed* conceptions : for mixed modes are the voluntary combination of the mind that forms them. The ideas themselves, of which these modes consist, are not *facilitious*, as mathematical ideas are ; it is the *combination* of them into *one complex* idea which is alone *facilitious* ; for this combination is perfectly arbitrary, Locke, B. II. Chap. xxii. It depends upon the *will* of him who makes it, and who *chooses* what ideas he will combine together. But the formation of mathematical ideas, so far as regards the nature of them, does not depend upon the will of him who forms them : this nature is ascertained by the *original* formation of them, in consequence of a *prescribed* conception, and therefore admits of no variation. Now by demonstration we mean a *general* proof ; viz. one that holds true of *all* the ideas of one sort. Thus what is true of one triangle, or one circle, is true of all other triangles, and all other circles whatever, however they may differ from each other, and so of every other figure. But the truth of propositions consisting of mixed modes, must depend not upon the ideas themselves, but upon this *arbitrary* combination of them ; and men rarely agree, either in the ideas they actually join together, or in determining what ideas it is *expedient* to join. So moral obligation is a mixed mode, but what very different definitions are given of it ? That is to say, what different ideas are combined together by different persons under this name ? so different indeed as to occasion great variety in the conclusions respecting it. But this is not all. For if demonstration was applicable to moral truths, the conclusion *must* be *necessary*. Because

we mean by demonstration that proof only, whose conclusion is *necessary*. But if the conclusions of proofs respecting human actions were necessary (and moral truths respect human actions only) there would be an end of *moral* agency, because liberty is the ground of all moral agency ; but necessity and liberty are inconsistent : for by liberty I mean the *power* of choice, and by necessity the *want* of this power. Where matters *must* be what they *are*, choice can have no place. Could you *demonstrate* that men *must* obey God ; i. e. that they could *not possibly* disobey him, obedience would cease to be acceptable. Men would be mere machines. There are indeed who talk of *moral necessity* ; they might as well talk of necessary liberty. The ideas are utterly inconsistent, as inconsistent as a strait curve.

F I N I S.