

THE
WORKS
OF
JOHN LOCKE.

A NEW EDITION, CORRECTED.

IN TEN VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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P R E F A C E

BY THE

EDITOR.

THE person chiefly concerned in improving this edition of Mr. Locke's Works, having long entertained a high esteem for that author's writings, and being informed that a new edition was preparing, became naturally desirous of seeing one more complete than any of the foregoing; and of contributing his assistance towards it (so far as the short time allowed for that purpose would give leave) by not only collating former editions, and correcting those numerous errors which had crept into most of them; but also by inserting, or giving some description of such other pieces as are known to have come from the same hand, though not appearing in any catalogue or collection of his works.

The farther liberty has been taken to subjoin a few things by other hands, which seemed necessary to a right use of Mr. Locke's discoveries, and a more ready application of the principles whereon they are founded, *v. g.*

1. To the Essay on Human Understanding is prefixed a correct analysis, which has been of considerable service by reducing that Essay into some better method, which the author himself shows us, (preface and elsewhere) that he was very sensible it wanted, though he contented himself with leaving it in its original form, for reasons grounded on the prejudices

then prevailing against so novel a system; but which hardly now subsist.

This map of the intellectual world, which exhibits the whole doctrine of ideas in one view, must to an attentive reader appear more commodious than any of those dry compends generally made use of by young students, were they more perfect than even the best of them are found to be.

2. There is also annexed to the same Essay a small tract in defence of Mr. Locke's opinion concerning personal identity; a point of some consequence, but which many ingenious persons, probably from not observing what passed between him and Molyneux on the subject, [letters in September and December, 1693, and January, February, May, 1694,] have greatly misunderstood.

It may perhaps be expected that we should introduce this edition of Mr. Locke's Works with a particular history of the author's circumstances and connexions; but as several narratives of this kind have been already published by different writers, viz. A. Wood, [Ath. Ox. Vol. 2]; P. Coste, [character of Mr. Locke here annexed]; Le Clerc, [first printed in English before the Letters on Toleration, 1689, but more complete in the edition of 1713, from whence the chief part of the subsequent lives is extracted]; Locke's Article in the Supplement to Collier Addend.; and by the compilers of the General Dictionary, Biographia Britannica, Memoirs of his Life and Character, 1742, &c. &c. and since most of that same account which has been prefixed to some late editions, by way of Life, is likewise here annexed; there seems to be little occasion for transcribing any more of such common occurrences, as are neither interesting enough in themselves, nor sufficiently characteristic of the author. We have therefore chosen to confine the following observations to a critical survey of Mr. Locke's writings, after giving some account of his literary correspondence, and of such

anonymous tracts as are not commonly known to be his, but yet distinguishable from others that have been imputed to him. Besides those posthumous pieces which have been already collected by Des Maizeaux, and joined with some others in the late editions, there is extant,

1. His Introductory Discourse to Churchill's Collection of Voyages, [in 4 vols. fol.] containing the whole History of Navigation from its Original to that Time, (A. D. 1704) with a Catalogue and Character of most Books of Travels*.

These voyages are commonly said to have been published under his direction. They were presented by him to the university of Oxford [v. Collier's Dict.] That he was well versed in such authors is pretty plain, from the good use he has made of them in his essays; and the introductory discourse is by no means unworthy of him, though deemed too large to be admitted into this publication: whether it may be added, some time hence, in a supplemental volume, along with some of his other tracts hereafter mentioned, must be submitted to the public, and those who are styled proprietors.

2. For the same reason we are obliged to suppress another piece usually ascribed to him, and entitled, The History of our Saviour Jesus Christ, related in the Words of Scripture, containing, in Order of Time, all the Events and Discourses recorded in the Four Evangelists, &c. 8vo. printed for A. and J. Churchill, 1705, concerning which a learned friend, who has carefully examined it, gives the following account: "I am inclined to think that this work is the genuine production of Mr. Locke. It is compiled with accuracy and judgment, and is in every respect worthy of that masterly writer. I have compared it with Mr. Locke's Treatise on the Reasonableness of Christianity, and find a striking resemblance be-

* To the present edition this work is added.

tween them in some of their expressions, in their quotations from scripture, and in the arrangement of our Saviour's discourses." Under each of these heads this ingenious writer has produced remarkable instances of such resemblance, but too particular and minute to be here recited: on the last he adds, that whoever reads the Treatise on the Reasonableness of Christianity with the least attention, will perceive that Mr. Locke has every where observed an exact chronological order in the arrangement of his texts, which arrangement perfectly corresponds with that of the History. It would have been very difficult to throw a multitude of citations from the four Evangelists into such a chronological series without the assistance of some Harmony, but Mr. Locke was too cautious a reasoner to depend upon another man's hypothesis; I am therefore persuaded that he compiled this Harmony, the History of Christ, for his own immediate use, as the basis of his Reasonableness of Christianity. And though the original plan of this history may have been taken from Garthwaite's Evangelical Harmony, 4to. 1633, as Dr. Doddridge supposes, yet the whole narrative and particular arrangement of facts is so very different, that Mr. Locke's History in 1705 may properly be termed a new work.

3. Select Moral Books of the Old Testament and Apocrypha, paraphrased, viz. Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Wisdom, and Ecclesiasticus, in one vol. 12mo. 1706. This useful work is given by tradition to Mr. Locke, and his name often written before it accordingly. It was printed for his old booksellers A. and J. Churchill, and is thought by some good judges to bear evident marks of authenticity: of which I shall only observe farther, that by the method there taken of paraphrasing these writers in one close, continued discourse, where the substance is laid together and properly digested, a much better connexion appears to be preserved, and the author's sense more clearly

expressed, than it can be in any separate exposition of each verse with all the repetitions usual in eastern writings, and all the disadvantages arising from the very inaccurate division of their periods, as is hinted in the judicious preface to that work.

4. A letter to Mrs. Cockburn, not inserted before in any collection of Mr. Locke's pieces. It was sent with a present of books to that lady, on her being discovered to have written a Defence of his Essay against some Remarks made upon it by Dr. T. Burnet, author of the Theory of the Earth, &c. Dr. Burnet's Remarks appeared without his name in three parts, the first of which was animadverted on by Mr. Locke at the end of his Reply to Bishop Stillingfleet in 1697; the two others were left to the animadversion of his friends. Mrs. Cockburn, to whom the letter under consideration is addressed, finished her Defence of the Essay in December, 1701, when she was but twenty-two years old, and published it in May, 1702, the author being industriously concealed: which occasioned Mr. Locke's elegant compliment of its being "a generosity above the strain of that groveling age, and like that of superior spirits, who assist without showing themselves." In 1724 the same lady wrote a letter to Dr. Holdsworth on his injurious imputations cast upon Mr. Locke concerning the Resurrection of the same Body, printed in 1726; and afterwards an elaborate Vindication of Mr. Locke's Christian Principles, and his controversy on that subject, first published, together with an account of her works, by Dr. Birch, 1751, and the fore-mentioned letter added here below, Vol. x. p. 314.

5. Of the same kind of correspondence is the curious letter to Mr. Bold, in 1699, (which is also inserted in the tenth vol. p. 315), as corrected from the original. Mr. Bold, in 1699, set forth a piece, entitled, Some Considerations on the principal Objections and Arguments which have been published against Mr. Locke's Essay; and added in a collection

of tracts, published 1706, three defences of his Reasonableness of Christianity; with a large discourse concerning the Resurrection of the same Body, and two letters on the Necessary Immateriality of created thinking Substance.

Our author's sentiments of Mr. Bold may be seen at large in the letter itself, Vol. x. p. 315.

6. Mr. Locke's fine account of Dr. Pococke was first published in a collection of his letters, by Curl, 1714, (which collection is not now to be met with) and some extracts made from it by Dr. Twells, in his Life of that learned author, [Theol. Works, Vol. I. p. 83.] The same is given at full length by Des Maizeaux, as a letter to ****, (intending Mr. Smith of Dartmouth, who had prepared materials for that life) but without specifying either the subject or occasion.

7. The large Latin tract of Locke's, *De Toleratone*, was first introduced in the late 4to. edition of his works; but as we have it translated by Mr. Popple to the author's entire satisfaction, and as there is nothing extraordinary in the language of the original, it was judged unnecessary to repeat so many things over again by inserting it. Perhaps it might afford matter of more curiosity to compare some parts of his Essay with Mr. Burridge's Version, said to be printed in 1701, about which he and his friend Molyneux appeared so extremely anxious, but which he tells Limborch (Aug. 1701) he had not then seen; nor have we learnt the fate of this Latin version, any more than what became of a French one, (probably that of P. Coste, mentioned under Locke's article in the General Dictionary) in correcting which he (Mr. Locke) had taken very great pains, and likewise altered many passages of the original, in order to make them more clear and easy to be translated*. Many of these alterations I have formerly seen under

* Biogr. Britan. p. 2999.

his hand in the library at Oates, where he spent the last and most agreeable part of his life in the company of lady Masham, and where his own conversation must have proved no less agreeable and instructing to that lady, since by means of it, as well as from an education under the eye of her father, Cudworth, she appears to have profited so much as to compose a very rational discourse, entitled, *Occasional Thoughts in Reference to a virtuous and Christian Life*, published 1705, and frequently ascribed to Mr. Locke. [See particularly Boyer's *Annals of Queen Anne*, Vol. III. p. 262.] She was generally believed (as Le Clerc tells us) to be the author of another discourse on the Love of God, in answer to Mr. Norris; which has likewise been attributed to Mr. Locke, and has his name written before it in a copy now in the library of Sion College, but others give it to Dr. Whitby. Of the same excellent lady Mr. Locke gives the following character to Limborch: "Ejus [*i. e.* *Historiæ Inquisitionis*] lectionem sibi et utilissimam et jucundissimam fore spondet domina Cudwortha, quæ paternæ benignitatis hæres omnem de rebus religionis persecutionem maxime aversatur." Lett. June, 1691. "Hospes mea tyrannidi ecclesiasticæ inimicissima, sæpe mihi laudat ingenium et consilium tuum, laboremque huic operi tam opportune impensum, creditque frustra de religionis reformatione et Evangelii propagatione tantum undique strepitum moveri, dum tyrannis in ecclesiâ, vis in rebus religionis (uti passim mos est) aliis sub nominibus utcunque speciosis obtinet et laudatur." Id. Nov. 1691.

8. We cannot in this place forbear lamenting the suppression of some of Mr. Locke's treatises, which are in all probability not to be retrieved. His *Right Method of searching after Truth*, which Le Clerc mentions, is hardly to be met with; nor can a tract which we have good ground to believe that he wrote, in the Unitarian Controversy, be well distinguished at this distance of time; unless it prove to be the

following piece, which some ingenious persons have judged to be his; and if they are right in their conjecture, as I have no doubt but they are, the address to himself that is prefixed to it must have been made on purpose to conceal the true author, as a more attentive perusal of the whole tract will convince any one, and at the same time show what reason there was for so extremely cautious a proceeding. Part of the long title runs thus: "The Exceptions of Mr. Edwards in his Causes of Atheism, against The Reasonableness of Christianity as delivered in the Scriptures, examined and found unreasonable, unscriptural, and injurious, &c. London, printed in the year 1695," 47 pages, 4to.

It is uncertain whether he lived to finish that System of Ethics which his friend Molyneux so frequently recommended to him: but from a letter to the same person, dated April, 1698, it appears, that he had several plans by him, which either were never executed, or never saw the light.

Among the late Mr. Yorke's papers, burnt in his chambers in Lincoln's-Inn, were many of Mr. Locke's letters to lord Sommers, but probably no copies of these remain; which must prove an irreparable loss to the public, many of them being in all likelihood written on subjects of a political nature, as that eminent patriot was well acquainted with, and seems to have availed himself considerably of, Mr. Locke's principles throughout his excellent treatise, entitled, *The Judgment of whole Kingdoms and Nations concerning the Rights and Prerogatives of Kings, and the Rights, Privileges, and Properties of the People*. A work which seems to be but little known at present, though there was a tenth edition of it in 1771. The conclusion is taken almost verbatim from Mr. Locke.

9. Thirteen letters to Dr. Mapletoft, giving some account of his friends, with a large description of a severe nervous disorder, and his method of treating it, and frequent intimations of his desire to succeed the

doctor in his professorship at Gresham College, &c. were very obligingly communicated by a grandson of the doctor's; but we have not room to insert them, as they contain very few matters of literature, to which our inquiries are chiefly confined at present; nor shall we be excused perhaps for taking notice of his letter to the earl of **, dated May 6, 1676, with a curious old MS. on the subject of Free-masonry, published in the Gentleman's Magazine for September, 1758.

We are informed, that there is a great number of original letters of Mr. Locke, now in the hands of the Rev. Mr. Tooke, chaplain to the British factory at Petersburg; but have no proper means of applying for them*.

10. Forty letters to Edward Clarke, Esq. M. P. are among Dr. Birch's papers in the Museum, but of like unimportance. Perhaps some readers think that the late editions of Mr. Locke's works are already clogged with too many of that kind; however I shall give one of these for a specimen, on raising the value of coin, as the same method which he there recommends, viz. of weighing it, has of late been practised. See the letter in Vol. x. of this edition, p. 320. The two letters from lord Shaftesbury and sir Peter King will speak for themselves.

11. It may likewise be observed, that our author has met with the fate of most eminent writers, whose names give a currency to whatever passes under them, viz. to have many spurious productions fathered on him. Beside those above-mentioned, there is a *Common-Place-Book to the Bible*, first published in 1693, and afterwards swelled out with a great deal of matter, ill digested, and all declared to be Mr. Locke's; but

* We have been indulged by Mr. Tooke with a sight of some papers, which came into his hands, reputed to be the productions of Mr. Locke. Some of them are evidently not his: and of those which have any importance we are not able just now to ascertain the authenticity. Amongst the latter is a tragedy entitled *Tamerlane the beneficent*.—Ed. of the present edition.

whatever hand he might be supposed to have in the original book itself, it is plain he had none in that preface, which is neither sense nor English. A puerile edition of Æsop's Fables has likewise his name prefixed to it, and was in all probability ascribed to him for no better reason than the frequent mention made of that book in his Thoughts on Education. The title runs thus: "Æsop's Fables in English and Latin, interlineary, for the Benefit of those who, not having a Master, would learn either of those Tongues. The Second Edition, with Sculptures. By John Locke, gent. Printed for A. Bettesworth, 1723."

12. But it is high time to conduct the reader to Mr. Locke's more authentic and capital productions, the constant demand for which shows that they have stood the test of time; and their peculiar tendency to enlarge and improve the mind must continue that demand while a regard to virtue or religion, science or common sense, remains amongst us. I wish it were in my power to give so clear and just a view of these as might serve to point out their proper uses, and thereby direct young unprejudiced readers to a more beneficial study of them.

The Essay on Human Understanding, that most distinguished of all his works, is to be considered as a system, at its first appearance, absolutely new, and directly opposite to the notions and persuasions then established in the world. Now as it seldom happens that the person who first suggests a discovery in any science is at the same time solicitous, or perhaps qualified, to lay open all the consequences that follow from it; in such a work much of course is left to the reader, who must carefully apply the leading principles to many cases and conclusions not there specified. To what else but a neglect of this application shall we impute it that there are still numbers amongst us who profess to pay the greatest deference to Mr. Locke, and to be well acquainted with his writings, and would perhaps take it ill to have

this pretension questioned; yet appear either wholly unable, or unaccustomed, to draw the natural consequence from any one of his principal positions? Why, for instance, do we still continue so unsettled in the first principles and foundation of morals? How came we not to perceive that by the very same arguments which that great author used with so much success in extirpating innate ideas, he most effectually eradicated all innate or connate senses, instincts, &c. by not only leading us to conclude that every such sense must, in the very nature of it, imply an object correspondent to and of the same standing with itself, to which it refers [as each relative implies its correlate], the real existence of which object he has confuted in every shape; but also by showing that for each moral proposition men actually want and may demand a reason or proof deduced from another science, and founded on natural good and evil: and consequently where no such reason can be assigned, these same senses, or instincts, with whatever titles decorated*, whether styled sympathetic or sentimental, common or intuitive,—ought to be looked upon as no more than mere habits; under which familiar name their authority is soon discovered, and their effects accounted for.

From the same principles it may be collected that all such pompous theories of morals, however seemingly diversified, yet amount ultimately to the same thing, being all built upon the same false bottom of innate notions; and from the history of this science we may see that they have received no manner of improvement (as indeed by the supposition of their innateness they become incapable of any) from the days of Plato to our own; but must always take the main point, the ground of obligation, for granted: which

* See a very accurate explanation of Mr. Locke's doctrine on this head and some others, in a Philosophical Discourse on the Nature of Human Being, prefixed to some Remarks upon bishop Berkley's Treatise on the same subject. Printed for Dodsley, 1776.

is in truth the shortest and safest way of proceeding for such self-taught philosophers, and saves a deal of trouble in seeking reasons for what they advance, where none are to be found. Mr. Locke went a far different way to work, at the very entrance on his Essay, pointing out the true origin of all our passions and affections, *i. e.* sensitive pleasure and pain; and accordingly directing us to the proper principle and end of virtue, private happiness, in each individual; as well as laying down the adequate rule and only solid ground of moral obligation, the divine will. From whence also it may well be concluded that moral propositions are equally capable of certainty, and that such certainty is equally reducible to strict demonstration here as in other sciences, since they consist of the very same kind of ideas, [viz. general abstract ones, the true and only ground of all general knowledge]; provided always that the terms be once clearly settled, in which lies the chief difficulty, and are constantly applied (as surely they may be) with equal steadiness and precision: which was undoubtedly Mr. Locke's meaning in that assertion of his which drew upon him so many solicitations to set about such a systematic demonstration of morals.

In the same plain and popular introduction, when he has been proving that men think not always, [a position which, as he observes, letter to Molyneux, August 4, 1696, was then admitted in a commencement act at Cambridge for probable, and which few there now-a-days are found weak enough to question] how come we not to attend him through the genuine consequences of that proof? This would soon let us into the true nature of the human constitution, and enable us to determine whether thought, when every mode of it is suspended, though but for an hour, can be deemed an essential property of our immaterial principle, or mind, and as such inseparable from some imaginary substance, or substratum, [words, by the by, so far as they have a meaning, taken entirely

from matter, and terminating in it] any more than motion, under its various modifications, can be judged essential to the body, or to a purely material system*. Of that same substance or substratum, whether material or immaterial, Mr. Locke has farther shown us that we can form but a very imperfect and confused idea, if in truth we have any idea at all of it, though custom and an attachment to the established mode of philosophising still prevails to such a degree that we scarcely know how to proceed without it, and are apt to make as much noise with such logical terms and distinctions, as the schoolmen used to do with their principle of individuation, substantial forms, &c. Whereas, if we could be persuaded to quit every arbitrary hypothesis, and trust to fact and experience, a sound sleep any night would yield sufficient satisfaction in the present case, which thus may derive light even from the darkest parts of nature; and which will the more merit our regard, since the same point has been in some measure confirmed to us by revelation, as our author has likewise shown in his introduction to the Reasonableness of Christianity.

The above-mentioned Essay contains some more refined speculations which are daily gaining ground among thoughtful and intelligent persons, notwithstanding the neglect and the contempt to which studies of this kind are frequently exposed. And when we consider the force of bigotry and the prejudice in favour of antiquity which adheres to narrow minds, it must be matter of surprise to find so small a number of exceptions made to some of his disquisitions which lie out of the common road.

* Vide Defence of Locke's Opinion concerning Personal Identity, Appendix to the Theory of Religion, p. 431, &c. and note 1. to Archbishop King's Or. of E. Sir Isaac Newton had the very same sentiments with those of our author on the present subject, and more particularly on that state to which he was approaching; as appears from a conversation held with him a little before his death, of which I have been informed by one who took down sir Isaac's words at the time, and since read them to me.

That well-known chapter of Power has been termed the worst part of his whole Essay*, and seems indeed the least defensible, and what gave himself the least satisfaction, after all the pains he and others took to reform it; [v. letters between him and Molyneux and Limborch. To which may be added note 45 to King's Or. of E. p. 220, 4th edit.] which might induce one to believe that this most intricate subject is placed beyond human reach; since so penetrating a genius confesses his inability to see through it. And happy are those inquirers who can discern the extent of their faculties! who have learnt in time where to stop and suspend a positive determination! "If you will argue," says he, for or against liberty from consequences, "I will not undertake to answer you; for I own freely to you the weakness of my understanding, that though it be unquestionable that there is omnipotence and omniscience in God our Maker, yet I cannot make freedom in man consistent with omnipotence and omniscience in God, though I am as fully persuaded of both as of any truths I most firmly assent to; and therefore I have long left off the consideration of that question, resolving all into this short conclusion: that, if it be possible for God to make a free agent, then man is free; though I see not the way of it." Letter to M. Jan. 20, 169 $\frac{2}{3}$.

13. Connected in some sort with the fore-mentioned Essay, and in their way equally valuable, are his tracts on Education and the early Conduct of the Understanding, both worthy, as we apprehend, of a more careful perusal than is commonly bestowed upon them, the latter more especially, which seems to be little known, and less attended to. It contains an easy popular illustration of some discoveries in the foregoing Essay, particularly that great and universal law of nature, the support of so many mental powers, (*v. g.* that of memory under all its modifications) and

* Biogr. Brit. though others are pleased to style it the finest.

which produces equally remarkable effects in the intellectual, as that of gravitation does in the material world;—I mean the association of ideas: the first hint whereof did not appear till the fourth edition of his Essay, and then came in as it were by the by, under some very peculiar circumstances, and in comparatively trivial instances; the author himself seeming not to be sufficiently aware of its extensiveness, and the many uses to which it is applicable, and has been applied of late by several of our own writers. The former tract abounds with no less curious and entertaining than useful observations on the various tempers and dispositions of youth: with proper directions for the due regulation and improvement of them, and just remarks on the too visible defects in that point; nor should it be looked upon as merely fitted for the instruction of schoolmasters or nurses, but as affording matter of reflection to men of business, science, and philosophy. The several editions of this treatise, which has been much esteemed by foreigners, with the additions made to it abroad, may be seen in Gen. Dict. Vol. VII. p. 145.

14. Thus much may serve to point out the importance of some of our author's more private and reclusive studies; but it was not in such only that this excellent person exercised his learning and abilities. The public rights of mankind, the great object of political union; the authority, extent, and bounds of civil government in consequence of such union; these were subjects which engaged, as they deserved, his most serious attention. Nor was he more industrious here in establishing sound principles and pursuing them consistently, than firm and zealous in support of them, in the worst of times, to the injury of his fortune, and at the peril of his life (as may be seen more fully in the life annexed); to which may be added, that such zeal and firmness must appear in him the more meritorious, if joined with that

timorousness and irresolution which is there observed to have been part of his natural temper, p. xxviii. Witness his famous Letter from a Person of Quality, giving an account of the debates and resolutions in the house of lords concerning a bill for establishing passive obedience, and enacting new oaths to enforce it: [V. Biogr. Brit. p. 2996, N. 1.] which letter, together with some supposed communications to his patron lord Shaftesbury, raised such a storm against him as drove him out of his own country, and long pursued him at a distance from it. [Ib. p. 2997, &c. from A. Wood.] This letter was at length treated in the same way that others of like tendency have been since, by men of the same spirit, who are ready to bestow a like treatment on the authors themselves, whenever they can get them into their power. Nor will it be improper to remark how seasonable a recollection of Mr. Locke's political principles is now become, when several writers have attempted, from particular emergencies, to shake those universal and invariable truths whereon all just government is ultimately founded; when they betray so gross an ignorance or contempt of them, as even to avow the directly opposite doctrines, viz. that government was instituted for the sake of governors, not of the governed; and consequently that the interests of the former are of superior consideration to any of the latter;—that there is an absolute indefeasible right of exercising despotism on one side, and as unlimited an obligation of submitting to it on the other;—doctrines that have been confuted over and over, and exploded long ago, and which one might well suppose Mr. Locke must have for ever silenced by his incomparable treatises upon that subject*, which have indeed

* First published in 1698, the several additions to which (all I believe, inserted in the subsequent editions) remain under his own hand in the library of Christ's College, Cambridge.

exhausted it; and notwithstanding any objections that have yet been, or are likely to be brought against them, may, I apprehend, be fairly justified, and however unfashionable they grow, continue fit to be inculcated; as will perhaps be fully made appear on any farther provocation.

15. Nor was the religious liberty of mankind less dear to our author than their civil rights, or less ably asserted by him. With what clearness and precision has he stated the terms of it, and vindicated the subject's just title to it, in his admirable letters concerning Toleration! How closely does he pursue the adversary through all his subterfuges, and strip intolerance of all her pleas!

The first Lord Shaftesbury has written a most excellent treatise on the same subject, entitled, An Essay concerning Toleration, 1667, which, though left unfinished, well deserves to see the light; and, as I am assured, in due time will be published at the end of his lordship's life, now preparing.

16. From one who knew so well how to direct the researches of the human mind, it was natural to expect that christianity and the scriptures would not be neglected, but rather hold the chief place in his inquiries. These were accordingly the object of his more mature meditations; which were no less successfully employed upon them, as may be seen in part above. His Reasonableness of Christianity, as delivered in the Scriptures, is a work that will richly repay the labour of being thoroughly studied, together with both its Vindications, by all those who desire to entertain proper notions concerning the pure, primitive plan of Christ's religion, as laid down by himself; where they will also meet with many just observations on our Saviour's admirable method of conducting it. Of this book, among other commendations, Limborch says, "Plus veræ Theologiæ ex illo quam ex operosis multorum Systematibus

hausisse me ingenue fateor." Lett. March 23, 1697.

In his Paraphrase and Notes upon the Epistles of St. Paul, how fully does our author obviate the erroneous doctrines (that of absolute reprobation in particular), which had been falsely charged upon the apostle! And to Mr. Locke's honour it should be remembered, that he was the first of our commentators who showed what it was to comment upon the apostolic writings: by taking the whole of an epistle together, and striking off every signification of every term foreign to the main scope of it; by keeping this point constantly in view, and carefully observing each return to it after any digression; by tracing out a strict, though sometimes less visible, connexion in that very consistent writer, St. Paul; touching the propriety and pertinence of whose writings to their several subjects and occasions, he appears to have formed the most just conception, and thereby confessedly led the way to some of our best modern interpreters. Vide Pierce, pref. to Coloss. and Taylor on Rom. No. 60.

I cannot dismiss this imperfect account of Mr. Locke and his works, without giving way to a painful reflection, which the consideration of them naturally excites. When we view the variety of those very useful and important subjects which have been treated in so able a manner by our author, and become sensible of the numerous national obligations due to his memory on that account, with what indignation must we behold the remains of that great and good man, lying under a mean mouldering tombstone, [which but too strictly verifies the prediction he had given of it, and its little tablet, as *ipsa brevi peritura*] in an obscure country churchyard—by the side of a forlorn wood—while so many superb monuments are daily erected to perpetuate names and characters hardly worth preserving!

Books and Treatises written, or supposed to be written, by Mr. Locke.

Epistola de Tolerantia.

The History of our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Select Books of the Old Testament and Apocrypha paraphrased.

Introductory Discourse to Churchill's Collection of Voyages.

Exceptions of Mr. Edwards to the Reasonableness of Christianity, &c. examined.

Pieces groundlessly ascribed, or of doubtful authority.

Occasional Thoughts in Reference to a Virtuous and Christian Life.

Discourse on the Love of God.

Right Method of searching after Truth.

Spurious ones:

Common-Place-Book to the Bible.

Interlineary Version of Æsop's Fables.

P. S. Having heard that some of Mr. Locke's MSS. were in the possession of those gentlemen to whom the library at Oates belonged, on application made to Mr. Palmer, he was so obliging as to offer that a search should be made after them, and orders given for communicating all that could be found there; but as this notice comes unhappily too late to be made use of on the present occasion, I can only take the liberty of intimating it along with some other sources of intelligence, which I have endeavoured to lay open, and which may probably afford matter for a supplemental volume, as above-mentioned.

THE
LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

JOHN LOCKE, one of the greatest philosophers and most valuable writers who have adorned this country, was born at Wrington in Somersetshire, on the twenty-ninth of August, 1632. His father, who had been bred to the law, acted in the capacity of steward, or court-keeper, to colonel Alexander Popham; and, upon the breaking out of the civil war, became a captain in the service of the parliament. He was a gentleman of strict probity and economy, and possessed of a handsome fortune; but, as it came much impaired into the hands of his son, it was probably injured through the misfortunes of the times. However, he took great pains in his son's education; and though while he was a child, he behaved towards him with great distance and severity, yet as he grew up, he treated him with more familiarity, till at length they lived together rather as friends, than as two persons, one of whom might justly claim respect from the other. When he was of a proper age, young Locke was sent to Westminster school, where he continued till the year 1651; when he was entered a student of Christ-church-college, in the university of Oxford. Here he so greatly distinguished himself by his application and proficiency, that he was considered to be the most ingenious young man in the college. But, though he gained such reputation in the university, he was afterwards often heard to complain of the little satisfaction which he had found in the method of study which had been prescribed to him, and of the little service which it had afforded him, in enlightening and enlarging his mind, or in making him more exact in his reasonings. For the only philosophy then taught at Oxford was the Peripatetic, perplexed with obscure terms, and encumbered with useless questions. The first books which gave him a relish for the study of philosophy, were the writings of Des Cartes; for though he did not approve of all his notions, yet he found that he wrote with great perspicuity. Having taken

his degree of B.A. in 1655, and that of M.A. in 1658, Mr. Locke for some time closely applied himself to the study of physic, going through the usual courses preparatory to the practice; and it is said that he got some business in that profession at Oxford. So great was the delicacy of his constitution, however, that he was not capable of a laborious application to the medical art; and it is not improbable that his principal motive in studying it was, that he might be qualified when necessary to act as his own physician. In the year 1664, he accepted of an offer to go abroad, in the capacity of secretary to sir William Swan, who was appointed envoy from king Charles II. to the elector of Brandenburg, and some other German princes; but returning to England again within less than a year, he resumed his studies at Oxford with renewed vigour, and applied himself particularly to natural philosophy. While he was at Oxford in 1666, an accident introduced him to the acquaintance of lord Ashley, afterwards earl of Shaftesbury. That nobleman, having been advised to drink the mineral waters at Astrop, for an abscess in his breast, wrote to Dr. Thomas, a physician in Oxford, to procure a quantity of them to be in readiness against his arrival. Dr. Thomas, being obliged to be absent from home at that time, prevailed with his friend Mr. Locke to execute this commission. But it happening that the waters were not ready on the day after lord Ashley's arrival, through the fault of the person who had been sent for them, Mr. Locke found himself obliged to wait on his lordship, to make excuses for the disappointment. Lord Ashley received him with his usual politeness, and was satisfied with his apology. Upon his rising to go away, his lordship, who had received great pleasure from his conversation, detained him to supper, and engaged him to dinner on the following day, and even to drink the waters, that he might have the more of his company. When his lordship left Oxford to go to Sunning-hill, he made Mr. Locke promise to visit him there; as he did in the summer of the year 1667. Afterwards lord Ashley invited Mr. Locke to his house, and prevailed on him to take up his residence with him. Having now secured him as an inmate, lord Ashley was governed entirely by his advice, in submitting to have the abscess in his breast opened; by which operation his life was saved, though the wound was never closed. The success which attended this operation gave his lordship a high opinion of Mr. Locke's medical skill, and contributed to increase his attachment to him, notwithstanding that he regarded this as the least of his qualifications. Sensible that his great abilities were calculated to

render him eminently serviceable to the world in other departments of knowledge, he would not suffer him to practise medicine out of his house, excepting among some of his particular friends; and he urged him to apply his studies to state affairs, and political subjects, both ecclesiastical and civil. Mr. Locke's inclination was not backward in prompting him to comply with his lordship's wishes; and he succeeded so well in these studies, that lord Ashley began to consult him upon all occasions.

By his acquaintance with this nobleman, Mr. Locke was introduced to the conversation of the duke of Buckingham, the earl of Halifax, and other of the most eminent persons of that age, who were all charmed with his conversation. The freedom which he would take with men of that rank, had something in it very suitable to his character. One day, three or four of these lords having met at lord Ashley's, when Mr. Locke was present, after some compliments, cards were brought in, before scarcely any conversation had passed between them. Mr. Locke looked on for some time while they were at play, and then, taking his pocket-book, began to write with great attention. At length, one of them had the curiosity to ask him what he was writing. "My lord," said he, "I am endeavouring to profit, as far as I am able, in your company; for having waited with impatience for the honour of being in an assembly of the greatest geniuses of the age, and having at length obtained this good fortune, I thought that I could not do better than write down your conversation; and, indeed, I have set down the substance of what has been said for this hour or two." Mr. Locke had no occasion to read much of what he had written; those noble persons saw the ridicule, and diverted themselves with improving the jest. For, immediately quitting their play, they entered into rational conversation, and spent the remainder of the day in a manner more suitable to their character. In the year 1668, at the request of the earl and countess of Northumberland, Mr. Locke accompanied them in a tour to France, and staid in that country with the countess, while the earl went towards Italy, with an intention of visiting Rome. But this nobleman dying on his journey at Turin, the countess came back to England sooner than was at first designed, and Mr. Locke with her, who continued to reside, as before, at lord Ashley's. That nobleman, who was then chancellor of the exchequer, having, in conjunction with other lords, obtained a grant of Carolina, employed Mr. Locke to draw up the fundamental constitutions of that province. In executing this task, our author had formed articles relative to religion, and public worship, on those liberal and enlarged

principles of toleration, which were agreeable to the sentiments of his enlightened mind; but some of the clergy, jealous of such provisions as might prove an obstacle to their ascendancy, expressed their disapprobation of them, and procured an additional article to be inserted, securing the countenance and support of the state only to the exercise of religion according to the discipline of the established church. Mr. Locke still retained his student's place at Christ-church, and made frequent visits to Oxford, for the sake of consulting books in the prosecution of his studies, and for the benefit of change of air. At lord Ashley's he inspected the education of his lordship's only son, who was then about sixteen years of age; and executed that province with the greatest care, and to the entire satisfaction of his noble patron. As the young lord was but of a weakly constitution, his father thought proper to marry him early, lest the family should become extinct by his death. And, since he was too young, and had too little experience to choose a wife for himself, and lord Ashley had the highest opinion of Mr. Locke's judgment, as well as the greatest confidence in his integrity, he desired him to make a suitable choice for his son. This was a difficult and delicate task: for though lord Ashley did not insist on a great fortune for his son, yet he would have him marry a lady of a good family, an agreeable temper, a fine person, and, above all, of good education and good understanding, whose conduct would be very different from that of the generality of court ladies. Notwithstanding the difficulties attending such a commission, Mr. Locke undertook it, and executed it very happily. The eldest son by this marriage, afterwards the noble author of the *Characteristics*, was committed to the care of Mr. Locke in his education, and gave evidence to the world of the master-hand which had directed and guided his genius.

In 1670, and in the following year, Mr. Locke began to form the plan of his *Essay on Human Understanding*, at the earnest request of some of his friends, who were accustomed to meet in his chamber, for the purpose of conversing on philosophical subjects; but the employments and avocations which were found for him by his patron, would not then suffer him to make any great progress in that work. About this time, it is supposed, he was made fellow of the Royal Society. In 1672, lord Ashley, having been created earl of Shaftesbury, and raised to the dignity of lord high chancellor of England, appointed Mr. Locke secretary of the presentations; but he held that place only till the end of the following year, when the earl was obliged to resign the great seal. His dismissal

was followed by that of Mr. Locke, to whom the earl had communicated his most secret affairs, and who contributed towards the publication of some treatises, which were intended to excite the nation to watch the conduct of the Roman Catholics, and to oppose the arbitrary designs of the court. After this his lordship, who was still president of the Board of Trade, appointed Mr. Locke secretary to the same; which office he retained not long, the commission being dissolved in the year 1674. In the following year, he was admitted to the degree of bachelor of physic; and it appears that he continued to prosecute this study, and to keep up his acquaintance with several of the faculty. In what reputation he was held by some of the most eminent of them, we may judge from the testimonial that was given of him by the celebrated Dr. Sydenham, in his book, entitled, *Observationes Medicæ circa Morborum Acutorum Historiam et Curationem, &c.* "You know likewise," says he, "how much my method has been approved of by a person who has examined it to the bottom, and who is our common friend: I mean Mr. John Locke, who, if we consider his genius, and penetrating and exact judgment, or the strictness of his morals, has scarcely any superior, and few equals now living." In the summer of 1675, Mr. Locke, being apprehensive of a consumption, travelled into France, and resided for some time at Montpellier, where he became acquainted with Mr. Thomas Herbert, afterwards earl of Pembroke, to whom he communicated his design of writing his *Essay on Human Understanding*. From Montpellier he went to Paris, where he contracted a friendship with M. Justel, the celebrated civilian, whose house was at that time the place of resort for men of letters; and where a familiarity commenced between him and several other persons of eminent learning. In 1679, the earl of Shaftesbury being again restored to favour at court, and made president of the council, sent to request that Mr. Locke would return to England, which he accordingly did. Within six months, however, that nobleman was again displaced, for refusing his concurrence with the designs of the court, which aimed at the establishment of popery and arbitrary power; and, in 1682, he was obliged to retire to Holland, to avoid a prosecution for high treason, on account of pretended crimes of which he was accused. Mr. Locke remained steadily attached to his patron, following him into Holland; and upon his lordship's death, which happened soon afterwards, he did not think it safe to return to England, where his intimate connexion with lord Shaftesbury had created him some

powerful and malignant enemies. Before he had been a year in Holland, he was accused at the English court of being the author of certain tracts which had been published against the government; and, notwithstanding that another person was soon afterwards discovered to be the writer of them, yet as he was observed to join in company at the Hague with several Englishmen who were the avowed enemies of the system of politics on which the English court now acted, information of this circumstance was conveyed to the earl of Sunderland, then secretary of state. This intelligence lord Sunderland communicated to the king, who immediately ordered that bishop Fell, then dean of Christ-church, should receive his express command to eject Mr. Locke from his student's place, which the bishop executed accordingly. After this violent procedure of the court against him in England, he thought it prudent to remain in Holland, where he was at the accession of king James II. Soon after that event, William Penn, the famous quaker, who had known Mr. Locke at the university, used his interest with the king to procure a pardon for him; and would have obtained it had not Mr. Locke declined the acceptance of such an offer, nobly observing, that he had no occasion for a pardon, since he had not been guilty of any crime.

In the year 1685, when the duke of Monmouth and his party were making preparations in Holland for his rash and unfortunate enterprise, the English envoy at the Hague demanded that Mr. Locke, with several others, should be delivered up to him, on suspicion of his being engaged in that undertaking. And though this suspicion was not only groundless, but without even a shadow of probability, it obliged him to lie concealed nearly twelve months, till it was sufficiently known that he had no concern whatever in that business. Towards the latter end of the year 1686, he appeared again in public; and in the following year formed a literary society at Amsterdam, of which Limborch, Le Clerc, and other learned men, were members, who met together weekly for conversation upon subjects of universal learning. About the end of the year 1687, our author finished the composition of his great work, the *Essay concerning Human Understanding*, which had been the principal object of his attention for some years; and that the public might be apprised of the outlines of his plan, he made an abridgment of it himself, which his friend Le Clerc translated into French, and inserted in one of his "*Bibliothèques*." This abridgment was so highly approved of by all thinking persons, and sincere lovers of truth, that they

expressed the strongest desire to see the whole work. During the time of his concealment, he wrote his first Letter concerning Toleration, in Latin, which was first printed at Gouda, in 1689, under the title of *Epistola de Tolerantia*, &c. 12mo. This excellent performance, which has ever since been held in the highest esteem by the best judges, was translated into Dutch and French, in the same year, and was also printed in English in 4to. Before this work made its appearance, the happy Revolution in 1688, effected by the courage and good conduct of the prince of Orange, opened the way for Mr. Locke's return to his native country; whither he came in the fleet which conveyed the princess of Orange. After public liberty had been restored, our author thought it proper to assert his own private rights; and therefore put in his claim to the student's place in Christ-church, of which he had been unjustly deprived. Finding, however, that the society resisted his pretensions, on the plea that their proceedings had been conformable to their statutes, and that they could not be prevailed upon to dispossess the person who had been elected in his room, he desisted from his claim. It is true, that they made him an offer of being admitted a supernumerary student; but, as his sole motive in endeavouring to procure his restoration was, that such a measure might proclaim the injustice of the mandate for his ejection, he did not think proper to accept it. As Mr. Locke was justly considered to be a sufferer for the principles of the Revolution, he might without much difficulty have obtained some very considerable post; but he contented himself with that of commissioner of appeals, worth about 200*l.* per annum. In July, 1689, he wrote a letter to his friend Limborch, with whom he frequently corresponded, in which he took occasion to speak of the act of toleration, which had then just passed, and at which he expressed his satisfaction; though he at the same time intimated, that he considered it to be defective, and not sufficiently comprehensive. "I doubt not," says he, "but you have already heard, that toleration is at length established among us by law; not, however, perhaps, with that latitude which you, and such as you, true Christians, devoid of envy and ambition, would have wished. But it is somewhat to have proceeded thus far. And I hope these beginnings are the foundations of liberty and peace, which shall hereafter be established in the church of Christ."

About this time Mr. Locke had an offer to go abroad in a public character; and it was left to his choice whether he would be envoy at the court of the emperor, the elector of Brandenburg, or any other where he thought that the air would best

agree with him; but he declined it on account of the infirm state of his health. In the year 1690, he published his celebrated Essay concerning Human Understanding, in folio; a work which has made the author's name immortal, and does honour to our country; which an eminent and learned writer has styled, "one of the noblest, the usefullest, the most original books the world ever saw." But, notwithstanding its extraordinary merit, it gave great offence to many people at the first publication, and was attacked by various writers, most of whose names are now forgotten. It was even proposed, at a meeting of the heads of houses of the university of Oxford, to censure and discourage the reading of it; and, after various debates among themselves, it was concluded, that each head of a house should endeavour to prevent it from being read in his college. They were afraid of the light which it poured in upon the minds of men. But all their efforts were in vain; as were also the attacks of its various opponents on the reputation either of the work or its author, which continued daily to increase in every part of Europe. It was translated into French and Latin, and the fourth in English, with alterations and additions, was printed in the year 1700: since which time it has passed through a vast number of editions. In the year 1690, likewise, Mr. Locke published his Second Letter concerning Toleration, in 4to., written in answer to Jonas Proast, a clergyman of Queen's-college, Oxford, who published an attack upon the First Letter; and in the same year he sent into the world his Two Treatises on Government, 8vo. Those valuable treatises, which are some of the best extant on the subject in any language, are employed in refuting and overturning sir Robert Filmer's false principles, and in pointing out the true origin, extent, and end of civil government. About this time the coin of the kingdom was in a very bad state, owing to its having been so much clipped, that it wanted above a third of the standard weight. The magnitude of this evil, and the mischiefs which it threatened, having engaged the serious consideration of parliament, Mr. Locke, with the view of assisting those who were at the head of affairs to form a right understanding of this matter, and to excite them to rectify such shameful abuse, printed *Some Considerations of the Consequences of lowering the Interest, and raising the Value of Money*, 1691, 8vo. Afterwards he published some other small pieces on the same subject; by which he convinced the world, that he was as able to reason on trade and business, as on the most abstract parts of science. These writings occasioned his being frequently consulted by the ministry, relative

to the new coinage of silver, and other topics. With the earl of Pembroke, then lord keeper of the privy seal, he was for some time accustomed to hold weekly conferences; and when the air of London began to affect his lungs, he sometimes went to the earl of Peterborough's seat, near Fulham, where he always met with the most friendly reception. He was afterwards, however, obliged to quit London entirely, at least during the winter season, and to remove to some place at a greater distance. He had frequently paid visits to sir Francis Masham, at Oates in Essex, about twenty miles from London, where he found that the air agreed admirably well with his constitution, and where he also enjoyed the most delightful society. We may imagine, therefore, that he was persuaded, without much difficulty, to accept of an offer which sir Francis made to give him apartments in his house, where he might settle during the remainder of his life. Here he was received upon his own terms, that he might have his entire liberty, and look upon himself as at his own house; and here he chiefly pursued his future studies, being seldom absent, because the air of London grew more and more troublesome to him.

In 1692, Mr. Locke published *A third Letter for Toleration*, to the Author of the third Letter concerning Toleration, 8vo.; which being replied to about twelve years afterwards, by his old antagonist, Jonas Proast, he began *A fourth Letter*, which was left at his death in an unfinished state, and published among his posthumous pieces. In 1693, he published his *Thoughts concerning Education*, 8vo. which he greatly improved in subsequent editions. In 1695, king William, who knew how to appreciate his abilities for serving the public, appointed him one of the commissioners of trade and plantations; which obliged him to reside more in London than he had done for some time past. In the same year he published his excellent treatise, entitled, *The Reasonableness of Christianity*, as delivered in the Scriptures, 8vo., which was written, it is said, in order to promote the scheme which king William had so much at heart, of a comprehension with the dissenters. This book having been attacked, in the following year, by Dr. Edwards, in his *Socinianism unmasked*, and in a manner that was rude and scurrilous; Mr. Locke published, in the same year, a first, and a second *Vindication of the Reasonableness of Christianity*, &c. 8vo.; in which he defended his work with such strength of argument, that, if his adversary had been an ingenuous one, he might have justly expected from him a public acknowledgment of his error. Mr. Locke's defence against Dr. Edwards was also ably maintained by a

worthy and pious clergyman of the name of Bolde, who was the author of *A Collection of Tracts*, published in *Vindication of Mr. Locke's Reasonableness of Christianity*, as delivered in the Scriptures, and of his *Essay concerning Human Understanding*, in 8vo. Scarcely was he disengaged from this controversy, before he was drawn into another, on the following occasion. Some time before this, Mr. Toland published a book, entitled *Christianity not mysterious*, in which he endeavoured to prove, "that there is nothing in the Christian religion, not only contrary to reason, but even nothing above it;" and in explaining some of his notions, he made use of several arguments from Mr. Locke's *Essay concerning Human Understanding*. About the same time several treatises were published by some Unitarians, maintaining, that there was nothing in the Christian religion but what was rational and intelligible, which sentiment had been advanced by Mr. Locke. The use which was made of his writings in these instances, determined Dr. Stillingfleet, bishop of Worcester, to make an attack upon our author. Accordingly, in his *Defence of the Doctrine of the Trinity*, published in 1697, he censured some passages in the *Essay concerning Human Understanding*, as tending to subvert the fundamental doctrines of Christianity. Mr. Locke immediately published an answer to this charge, in *A Letter to the Right Reverend Edward, Lord Bishop of Worcester, &c.* to which the bishop replied in the same year. This was confuted in a second letter of Mr. Locke's, which drew a second answer from the bishop, in 1698. A third letter of Mr. Locke's was the last which appeared in this controversy, the death of the bishop having taken place not long after its publication. It was generally admitted, that Mr. Locke had greatly the advantage of the bishop in this controversy. When speaking of it, M. Le Clerc says, "Every body admired the strength of Mr. Locke's reasonings, and his great clearness and exactness, not only in explaining his own notions, but in confuting those of his adversary. Nor were men of understanding less surprised, that so learned a man as the bishop should engage in a controversy, in which he had all the disadvantages possible: for he was by no means able to maintain his opinions against Mr. Locke, whose reasoning he neither understood, nor the subject itself about which he disputed. This eminent prelate had spent the greatest part of his time in the study of ecclesiastical antiquities, and reading a prodigious number of books; but was no great philosopher; nor had ever accustomed himself to that close mode of thinking and reasoning, in which Mr. Locke did so highly excel. How-

ever, though our excellent philosopher obtained so great a victory over the bishop, and had reason to complain of his unjust charges against him, and of his writing on subjects of which he had not a sufficient knowledge, yet he did not triumph over his ignorance, but detected and confuted his errors with civility and respect." And an Irish prelate, in a letter to Mr. Molyneux, an intimate friend of Mr. Locke, thus expresses himself upon the subject: "I have read Mr. Locke's letter to the bishop of Worcester with great satisfaction, and am wholly of your opinion, that he has fairly laid the great bishop on his back; but it is with so much gentleness, as if he were afraid not only of hurting him, but even of spoiling or tumbling his clothes. Indeed, I cannot tell which I most admire, the great civility and good manners in his book, or the forcibleness and clearness of his reasonings."

Mr. Locke's publications in the controversy above-mentioned were the last which were committed by himself to the press. The asthmatic complaint, to which he had been long subject, increasing with his years, began now to subdue his constitution, and rendered him very infirm. He, therefore, determined to resign his post of commissioner of trade and plantations; but he acquainted none of his friends with his design, till he had given up his commission into the king's own hand. His majesty was very unwilling to receive it, and told our author, that he would be well pleased with his continuance in that office, though he should give little or no attendance; for that he did not desire him to stay in town one day to the injury of his health. But Mr. Locke told the king, that he could not in conscience hold a place, to which a considerable salary was annexed, without discharging the duties of it; upon which the king reluctantly accepted his resignation. Mr. Locke's behaviour in this instance discovered such a degree of integrity and virtue, as reflects more honour on his character than his extraordinary intellectual endowments. His majesty entertained a great esteem for him, and would sometimes desire his attendance, in order to consult with him on public affairs, and to know his sentiments of things. From this time Mr. Locke continued altogether at Oates, in which agreeable retirement he applied himself wholly to the study of the sacred Scriptures. In this employment he found so much pleasure, that he regretted his not having devoted more of his time to it in the former part of his life. And his great regard for the sacred writings appears from his answer to a relation who had inquired of him, what was the shortest and surest way for a young gentleman to attain a true knowledge of the Christian religion? "Let him

study," said Mr. Locke, "the holy Scripture, especially in the New Testament. Therein are contained the words of eternal life. It has God for its author; salvation for its end; and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter." Mr. Locke now found his asthmatic disorder growing extremely troublesome, though it did not prevent him from enjoying great cheerfulness of mind. In this situation his sufferings were greatly alleviated by the kind attention and agreeable conversation of the accomplished lady Masham, who was the daughter of the learned Dr. Cudworth; as this lady and Mr. Locke had a great esteem and friendship for each other. At the commencement of the summer of the year 1703, a season, which, in former years, had always restored him some degrees of strength, he perceived that it had begun to fail him more remarkably than ever. This convinced him that his dissolution was at no great distance, and he often spoke of it himself, but always with great composure; while he omitted none of the precautions which, from his skill in physic, he knew had a tendency to prolong his life. At length his legs began to swell; and that swelling increasing every day, his strength visibly diminished. He therefore prepared to take leave of the world, deeply impressed with a sense of God's manifold blessings to him, which he took delight in recounting to his friends, and full of a sincere resignation to the divine will, and of firm hopes in the promises of future life. As he had been incapable for a considerable time of going to church, he thought proper to receive the sacrament at home; and two of his friends communicating with him, as soon as the ceremony was finished he told the minister, "that he was in perfect charity with all men, and in a sincere communion with the church of Christ, by what name soever it might be distinguished." He lived some months after this; which time he spent in acts of piety and devotion. On the day before his death, lady Masham being alone with him, and sitting by his bed-side, he exhorted her to regard this world only as a state of preparation for a better; adding, "that he had lived long enough, and that he thanked God he had enjoyed a happy life; but that, after all, he looked upon this life to be nothing but vanity." He had no rest that night, and resolved to try to rise on the following morning; which he did, and was carried into his study, where he was placed in an easy chair, and slept for a considerable time. Seeming a little refreshed, he would be dressed as he used to be; and observing lady Masham reading to herself in the Psalms while he was dressing, he requested her to read aloud. She did so; and he appeared very attentive, till, feeling the approach of death,

he desired her to break off, and in a few minutes expired, on the twenty-eighth of October, 1704, in the seventy-third year of his age. He was interred in the church of Oates, where there is a decent monument erected to his memory, with a modest inscription in Latin, written by himself.

Thus died that great and most excellent philosopher John Locke, who was rendered illustrious not only by his wisdom, but by his piety and virtue, by his love of truth, and diligence in the pursuit of it, and by his generous ardour in defence of the civil and religious rights of mankind. His writings have immortalized his name; and, particularly, his *Essay concerning the Human Understanding*. In this work, "discarding all systematic theories, he has, from actual experience and observation, delineated the features, and described the operations of the human mind, with a degree of precision and minuteness not to be found in Plato, Aristotle, or Des Cartes. After clearing the way, by setting aside the whole doctrine of innate notions and principles, both speculative and practical, the author traces all ideas to two sources, sensation and reflection; treats at large on the nature of ideas, simple and complex; of the operations of the human understanding in forming, distinguishing, compounding, and associating them; of the manner in which words are applied as representations of ideas; of the difficulties and obstructions in the search after truth, which arise from the imperfections of these signs; and of the nature, reality, kinds, degrees, casual hinderances, and necessary limits, of human knowledge. Though several topics are treated of in this work, which may be considered as episodic with respect to the main design; though many opinions which the author advances may admit of controversy; and though on some topics he may not have expressed himself with his usual perspicuity, and on others may be thought too verbose; the work is of inestimable value, as a history of the human understanding, not compiled from former books, but written from materials collected by a long and attentive observation of what passes in the human mind." His next great work, the *Two Treatises of Government*, is also a performance which will render his memory dear to the enlightened friends of civil and religious freedom. But even in this country, the constitution of which is defensible only on the principles therein laid down, it has been violently opposed by the advocates for those slavish doctrines which were discarded at the Revolution in 1688; and by that class of politicians who would submit to the abuses and corruptions to which the best systems of government are liable, rather than encourage attempts after those improvements in civil policy, which the

extension of knowledge, and of science, might give men just reason to hope for, and to expect. And in our time, we have seen a formal attempt made to overturn the principles in Mr. Locke's work by Dr. Tucker, dean of Gloucester, in his *Treatise on Civil Government*, published in the year 1781. That gentleman was pleased to assert, that the principles of Mr. Locke "are extremely dangerous to the peace and happiness of all society;" that his writings, and those of some of the most eminent of his disciples, "have laid a foundation for such disturbances and dissensions, such mutual jealousies and animosities, as ages to come will not be able to settle and compose;" and, speaking of the paradoxes which he supposes to attend the system of Mr. Locke and his followers, he asserted, that "they rendered it one of the most mischievous, as well as ridiculous schemes, that ever disgraced the reasoning faculties of human nature." To the disgrace of the age, it was for a time fashionable to applaud his libel on the doctrines of our author. But his gross misrepresentations of the principles of Mr. Locke, his laborious attempts to involve him in darkness and obscurity, and to draw imaginary consequences from his propositions, which cannot by any just reasoning be deducible from them, were ably exposed in different publications; and by no writer with greater force and spirit, than by Dr. Towers, in his *Vindication of the political Principles of Mr. Locke*, in *Answer to the Objections of the Rev. Dr. Tucker*, Dean of Gloucester, published in 1782, in octavo.

Of Mr. Locke's private character an account was first published by Mr. Peter Coste, who had lived with him as an amanuensis, which was afterwards prefixed by M. des Maizeaux to *A Collection of several Pieces of Mr. Locke never before printed, &c.*, published in 1720; from which, together with M. le Clerc's *Bibliothèque Choisie*, we shall present our readers with some interesting particulars relating to this great man. Mr. Locke possessed a great knowledge of the world, and was intimately conversant in the business of it. He was prudent, without cunning; he engaged men's esteem by his probity; and took care to secure himself from the attacks of false friends and sordid flatterers. Averse to all mean compliance, his wisdom, his experience, and his gentle manner, gained him the respect of his inferiors, the esteem of his equals, the friendship and confidence of those of the highest quality. He was remarkable for the ease and politeness of his behaviour; and those who knew him only by his writings, or by the reputation which he had acquired, and who had supposed him a reserved or austere man, were surprised, if they happened to be introduced to him,

to find him all affability, good-humour, and complaisance. If there was any thing which he could not bear, it was ill-manners, with which he was always disgusted, unless when it proceeded from ignorance; but when it was the effect of pride, ill-nature, or brutality, he detested it. Civility he considered to be not only a duty of humanity, but of the Christian profession, and what ought to be more frequently pressed and urged upon men than it commonly is. With a view to promote it, he recommended a treatise in the moral essays written by the gentlemen of Port Royal, "concerning the means of preserving peace among men;" and also the Sermons of Dr. Wichcote on this and other moral subjects. He was exact to his word, and religiously performed whatever he promised. Though he chiefly loved truths which were useful, and with such stored his mind, and was best pleased to make them the subjects of conversation; yet he used to say, that, in order to employ one part of this life in serious and important occupations, it was necessary to spend another in mere amusements; and, when an occasion naturally offered, he gave himself up with pleasure to the charms of a free and facetious conversation. He remembered many agreeable stories, which he always introduced with great propriety; and generally made them yet more delightful, by his natural and pleasant manner of telling them. He had a peculiar art, in conversation, of leading people to talk concerning what they best understood. With a gardener, he conversed of gardening; with a jeweller of jewels; with a chemist of chemistry, &c. "By this," said he, "I please those men, who commonly can speak pertinently upon nothing else. As they believe I have an esteem for their profession, they are charmed with showing their abilities before me; and I, in the meanwhile, improve myself by their discourse." And, indeed, he had by this method acquired a very good insight into all the arts. He used to say too, that the knowledge of the arts contained more true philosophy, than all those fine learned hypotheses, which, having no relation to the nature of things, are fit only to make men lose their time in inventing or comprehending them. By the several questions which he would put to artificers, he would find out the secret of their art, which they did not understand themselves; and often give them views entirely new, which sometimes they put in practice to their profit. He was so far from assuming those affected airs of gravity, by which some persons, as well learned as unlearned, love to distinguish themselves from the rest of the world, that, on the contrary, he looked upon them as infallible marks of impertinence. Nay, sometimes he would divert himself with imitating that studied

gravity, in order to turn it the better into ridicule; and upon such occasions he always recollected this maxim of the duke de la Rochefoucault, which he particularly admired, "that gravity is a mystery of the body, invented to conceal the defects of the mind." One thing, which those who lived any time with Mr. Locke could not help observing in him was, that he used his reason in every thing he did; and that nothing that was useful seemed unworthy of his attention and care. He often used to say, that "there was an art in every thing;" and it was easy for any one to see it, from the manner in which he went about the most trifling things.

As Mr. Locke kept utility in view in all his disquisitions, he esteemed the employments of men only in proportion to the good which they were capable of producing. On this account he had no great value for those critics, or mere grammarians, who waste their lives in comparing words and phrases, and in coming to a determination in the choice of a various reading, in a passage of no importance. He valued yet less those professed disputants, who, being wholly possessed with a desire of coming off with victory, fortify themselves behind the ambiguity of a word, to give their adversaries the more trouble; and whenever he had to argue with such persons, if he did not beforehand strongly resolve to keep his temper, he was apt to grow somewhat warm. For his natural disposition was irritable; but his anger never lasted long. If he retained any resentment, it was against himself, for having given way to such a ridiculous passion, which, as he used to say, may do a great deal of harm, but never yet did the least good. He was charitable to the poor, excepting such as were idle or profane, and spent their Sundays in ale-houses, instead of attending at church. And he particularly compassionated those, who, after they had laboured as long as their strength would permit, were reduced to poverty. He said, that it was not enough to keep them from starving, but that a provision ought to be made for them, sufficient to render them comfortable. In his friendships he was warm and steady; and, therefore, felt a strong indignation against any discovery of treachery or insincerity in those in whom he confided. It is said, that a particular person, with whom he had contracted an intimate friendship in the earlier part of his life, was discovered by him to have acted with great baseness and perfidy. He had not only taken every method privately of doing Mr. Locke what injury he could in the opinion of those with whom he was connected, but had also gone off with a large sum of money which was his property, and at a time too when he knew that such a step must involve

him in considerable difficulties. Many years after all intercourse had, by such treachery, been broken off between them, and when Mr. Locke was one of the lords of trade and plantations, information was brought to him one morning, while he was at breakfast, that a person shabbily dressed requested the honour of speaking to him. Mr. Locke, with the politeness and humanity which were natural to him, immediately ordered him to be admitted; and beheld, to his great astonishment, his false friend, reduced by a life of cunning and extravagance to poverty and distress, and come to solicit his forgiveness, and to implore his assistance. Mr. Locke looked at him for some time very steadfastly, without speaking one word. At length, taking out a fifty-pound note, he presented it to him with the following remarkable declaration: "Though I sincerely forgive your behaviour to me, yet I must never put it in your power to injure me a second time. Take this trifle, which I give, not as a mark of my former friendship, but as a relief to your present wants, and consign to the service of your necessities, without recollecting how little you deserve it. No reply! It is impossible to regain my good opinion; for know, friendship once injured is for ever lost."

Mr. Locke was naturally very active, and employed himself as much as his health would permit. Sometimes he diverted himself by working in the garden, at which he was very expert. He loved walking; but being prevented by his asthmatic complaint from taking much of that exercise, he used to ride out after dinner, either on horseback or in an open chaise, as he was able to bear it. His bad health occasioned disturbance to no person but himself; and persons might be with him without any other concern than that created by seeing him suffer. He did not differ from others in the article of diet; but his ordinary drink was only water; and this he thought was the cause of his having his life prolonged to such an age, notwithstanding the weakness of his constitution. To the same cause, also, he thought that the preservation of his eye-sight was in a great measure to be attributed; for he could read by candle-light all sorts of books to the last, if they were not of a very small print, and he had never made use of spectacles. He had no other disorder but his asthma, excepting a deafness of six months' continuance about four years before his death. Writing to a friend, while labouring under this affliction, he observed, that since it had entirely deprived him of the pleasures of conversation, "he did not know but it was better to be blind than deaf." Among the honours paid to the memory of this great man, that of queen Caroline, consort of king

George II., ought not to be overlooked; for that princess, having erected a pavilion in Richmond park in honour of philosophy, placed in it our author's bust, with those of Bacon, Newton, and Clarke, as the four prime English philosophers. Mr. Locke left several MSS. behind him, from which his executors, sir Peter King, and Anthony Collins, Esq. published, in 1705, his Paraphrase and Notes upon St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, in quarto, which were soon followed by those upon the Corinthians, Romans, and Ephesians, with an essay prefixed, for the understanding of St. Paul's Epistles, by consulting St. Paul himself. In 1706, Posthumous Works of Mr. Locke were published in octavo, comprizing a treatise On the Conduct of the Understanding, supplementary to the author's essay; An Examination of Malebranche's Opinion of seeing all Things in God, &c. In 1708, Some Familiar Letters between Mr. Locke and several of his Friends were also published in octavo; and in 1720, M. des Maizeaux's Collection, already noticed by us. But all our author's works have been collected together, and frequently reprinted, in three vols. folio, in four vols. quarto, and in ten vols. octavo.

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THOMAS,

EARL OF PEMBROKE AND MONTGOMERY.

BARON HERBERT OF CARDIFF, LORD ROSS OF KENDAL, PAR,
 FITZHUGH, MARMION, ST. QUINTIN, AND SHURLAND;
 LORD PRESIDENT OF HIS MAJESTY'S MOST
 HONOURABLE PRIVY COUNCIL, AND LORD
 LIEUTENANT OF THE COUNTY OF
 WILTS, AND OF SOUTH WALES.

MY LORD,

THIS Treatise, which is grown up under your lordship's eye, and has ventured into the world by your order, does now, by a natural kind of right, come to your lordship for that protection, which you several years since promised it. It is not that I think any name, how great soever, set at the beginning of a book, will be able to cover the faults that are to be found in it. Things in print must stand and fall by their own worth, or the reader's fancy. But there being nothing more to be desired for truth than a fair, unprejudiced hearing, nobody is more likely to procure me that than your lordship, who are allowed to have got so intimate an acquaintance with her, in her more retired recesses. Your lordship is known to have so far advanced your speculations in the most abstract and general knowledge of things, beyond

the ordinary reach, or common methods, that your allowance and approbation of the design of this treatise will at least preserve it from being condemned without reading; and will prevail to have those parts a little weighed, which might otherwise, perhaps, be thought to deserve no consideration, for being somewhat out of the common road. The imputation of novelty is a terrible charge amongst those who judge of men's heads, as they do of their perukes, by the fashion; and can allow none to be right, but the received doctrines. Truth scarce ever yet carried it by vote any where at its first appearance: new opinions are always suspected, and usually opposed, without any other reason, but because they are not already common. But truth, like gold, is not the less so for being newly brought out of the mine. It is trial and examination must give it price, and not any antique fashion: and though it be not yet current by the public stamp; yet it may, for all that, be as old as nature, and is certainly not the less genuine. Your lordship can give great and convincing instances of this, whenever you please to oblige the public with some of those large and comprehensive discoveries you have made of truths hitherto unknown, unless to some few, from whom your lordship has been pleased not wholly to conceal them. This alone were a sufficient reason, were there no other, why I should dedicate this Essay to your lordship; and its having some little correspondence with

some parts of that nobler and vast system of the sciences your lordship has made so new, exact, and instructive a draught of; I think it glory enough, if your lordship permit me to boast, that here and there I have fallen into some thoughts not wholly different from yours. If your lordship think fit, that, by your encouragement, this should appear in the world, I hope it may be a reason, some time or other, to lead your lordship farther; and you will allow me to say, that you here give the world an earnest of something, that, if they can bear with this, will be truly worth their expectation. This, my lord, shows what a present I here make to your lordship; just such as the poor man does to his rich and great neighbour, by whom the basket of flowers or fruit is not ill taken, though he has more plenty of his own growth, and in much greater perfection. Worthless things receive a value, when they are made the offerings of respect, esteem, and gratitude: these you have given me so mighty and peculiar reasons to have, in the highest degree, for your lordship, that if they can add a price to what they go along with, proportionable to their own greatness, I can with confidence brag, I here make your lordship the richest present you ever received. This I am sure, I am under the greatest obligations to seek all occasions to acknowledge a long train of favours I have received from your lordship; favours, though great and important in themselves, yet made much more so by the forwardness,

concern, and kindness, and other obliging circumstances, that never failed to accompany them. To all this, you are pleased to add that which gives yet more weight and relish to all the rest: you vouchsafe to continue me in some degrees of your esteem, and allow me a place in your good thoughts; I had almost said friendship. This, my lord, your words and actions so constantly show on all occasions, even to others when I am absent, that it is not vanity in me to mention what every body knows: but it would be want of good manners, not to acknowledge what so many are witnesses of, and every day tell me, I am indebted to your lordship for. I wish they could as easily assist my gratitude, as they convince me of the great and growing engagements it has to your lordship. This I am sure, I should write of the understanding without having any, if I were not extremely sensible of them, and did not lay hold on this opportunity to testify to the world, how much I am obliged to be, and how much I am,

My lord,

Your lordship's

Most humble, and

Most obedient servant,

JOHN LOCKE.

*Dorset-Court, 24th
of May, 1689.*

THE

EPISTLE TO THE READER.

READER,

I HERE put into thy hands, what has been the diversion of some of my idle and heavy hours: if it has the good luck to prove so of any of thine, and thou hast but half so much pleasure in reading, as I had in writing it, thou wilt as little think thy money, as I do my pains, ill bestowed. Mistake not this for a commendation of my work; nor conclude, because I was pleased with the doing of it, that therefore I am fondly taken with it now it is done. He that hawks at larks and sparrows, has no less sport, though a much less considerable quarry, than he that flies at nobler game: and he is little acquainted with the subject of this treatise, the UNDERSTANDING, who does not know, that as it is the most elevated faculty of the soul, so it is employed with a greater and more constant delight than any of the other. Its searches after truth are a sort of hawking and hunting, wherein the very pursuit makes a great part of the pleasure. Every step the mind takes in its progress towards knowledge makes some discovery, which is not only new, but the best too, for the time at least.

For the understanding, like the eye, judging of objects only by its own sight, cannot but be pleased with what it discovers, having less regret for what has escaped it, because it is unknown. Thus he who has raised himself above the alms-basket, and, not content to live lazily on scraps of begged opinions, sets his own

thoughts on work, to find and follow truth, will (whatever he lights on) not miss the hunter's satisfaction; every moment of his pursuit will reward his pains with some delight, and he will have reason to think his time not ill spent, even when he cannot much boast of any great acquisition.

This, reader, is the entertainment of those who let loose their own thoughts, and follow them in writing; which thou oughtest not to envy them, since they afford thee an opportunity of the like diversion, if thou wilt make use of thy own thoughts in reading. It is to them, if they are thy own, that I refer myself: but if they are taken upon trust from others, it is no great matter what they are, they not following truth, but some meaner consideration: and it is not worth while to be concerned, what he says or thinks, who says or thinks only as he is directed by another. If thou judgest for thyself, I know thou wilt judge candidly; and then I shall not be harmed or offended, whatever be thy censure. For though it be certain, that there is nothing in this treatise, of the truth whereof I am not fully persuaded; yet I consider myself as liable to mistakes, as I can think thee, and know that this book must stand or fall with thee, not by any opinion I have of it, but thy own. If thou findest little in it new or instructive to thee, thou art not to blame me for it. It was not meant for those that had already mastered this subject, and made a thorough acquaintance with their own understandings; but for my own information, and the satisfaction of a few friends, who acknowledged themselves not to have sufficiently considered it. Were it fit to trouble thee with the history of this Essay, I should tell thee, that five or six friends meeting at my chamber, and discoursing on a subject very remote from this, found themselves quickly at a stand, by the difficulties that rose on every side. After we had a while puzzled ourselves, without coming any nearer a resolution of those doubts which perplexed us, it

came into my thoughts, that we took a wrong course; and that before we set ourselves upon inquiries of that nature, it was necessary to examine our own abilities, and see what objects our understandings were, or were not, fitted to deal with. This I proposed to the company, who all readily assented; and thereupon it was agreed, that this should be our first inquiry. Some hasty and undigested thoughts on a subject I had never before considered, which I set down against our next meeting, gave the first entrance into this discourse; which having been thus begun by chance, was continued by entreaty; written by incoherent parcels; and, after long intervals of neglect, resumed again, as my humour or occasions permitted; and at last, in a retirement, where an attendance on my health gave me leisure, it was brought into that order thou now seest it.

This discontinued way of writing may have occasioned, besides others, two contrary faults, viz. that too little and too much may be said in it. If thou findest any thing wanting, I shall be glad, that what I have writ gives thee any desire, that I should have gone farther: if it seems too much to thee, thou must blame the subject; for when I put pen to paper, I thought all I should have to say on this matter would have been contained in one sheet of paper; but the farther I went, the larger prospect I had; new discoveries led me still on, and so it grew insensibly to the bulk it now appears in. I will not deny, but possibly it might be reduced to a narrower compass than it is; and that some parts of it might be contracted; the way it has been writ in, by catches, and many long intervals of interruption, being apt to cause some repetitions. But to confess the truth, I am now too lazy, or too busy, to make it shorter.

I am not ignorant how little I herein consult my own reputation, when I knowingly let it go with a fault, so apt to disgust the most judicious, who are always the nicest readers. But they who know sloth

is apt to content itself with any excuse, will pardon me, if mine has prevailed on me, where, I think, I have a very good one. I will not therefore allege in my defence, that the same notion, having different respects, may be convenient or necessary to prove or illustrate several parts of the same discourse; and that so it has happened in many parts of this: but waving that, I shall frankly avow, that I have sometimes dwelt long upon the same argument, and expressed it different ways, with a quite different design. I pretend not to publish this Essay for the information of men of large thoughts, and quick apprehensions; to such masters of knowledge I profess myself a scholar, and therefore warn them beforehand not to expect any thing here, but what, being spun out of my own coarse thoughts, is fitted to men of my own size; to whom, perhaps, it will not be unacceptable, that I have taken some pains to make plain and familiar to their thoughts some truths, which established prejudice, or the abstractedness of the ideas themselves, might render difficult. Some objects had need be turned on every side: and when the notion is new, as I confess some of these are to me, or out of the ordinary road, as I suspect they will appear to others; it is not one simple view of it, that will gain it admittance into every understanding, or fix it there with a clear and lasting impression. There are few, I believe, who have not observed in themselves or others, that what in one way of proposing was very obscure, another way of expressing it has made very clear and intelligible: though afterward the mind found little difference in the phrases, and wondered why one failed to be understood more than the other. But every thing does not hit alike upon every man's imagination. We have our understandings no less different than our palates; and he that thinks the same truth shall be equally relished by every one in the same dress, may as well hope to feast every one with the same sort of cookery: the meat may be the same, and

the nourishment good, yet every one not be able to receive it with that seasoning; and it must be dressed another way, if you will have it go down with some, even of strong constitutions. The truth is, those who advised me to publish it, advised me, for this reason, to publish it as it is: and since I have been brought to let it go abroad, I desire it should be understood by whoever gives himself the pains to read it; I have so little affection to be in print, that if I were not flattered this Essay might be of some use to others, as I think it has been to me, I should have confined it to the view of some friends, who gave the first occasion to it. My appearing therefore in print, being on purpose to be as useful as I may, I think it necessary to make what I have to say as easy and intelligible to all sorts of readers as I can. And I had much rather the speculative and quick-sighted should complain of my being in some parts tedious, than that any one, not accustomed to abstract speculations, or prepossessed with different notions, should mistake, or not comprehend my meaning.

It will possibly be censured as a great piece of vanity or insolence in me, to pretend to instruct this our knowing age; it amounting to little less, when I own, that I publish this Essay with hopes it may be useful to others. But if it may be permitted to speak freely of those, who with a feigned modesty condemn as useless what they themselves write, methinks it savours much more of vanity or insolence, to publish a book for any other end; and he fails very much of that respect he owes the public, who prints, and consequently expects men should read that, wherein he intends not they should meet with any thing of use to themselves or others: and should nothing else be found allowable in this treatise, yet my design will not cease to be so; and the goodness of my intention ought to be some excuse for the worthlessness of my present. It is that chiefly which secures me from the fear of censure, which I expect not to escape more than better

writers. Men's principles, notions, and relishes are so different, that it is hard to find a book which pleases or displeases all men. I acknowledge the age we live in is not the least knowing, and therefore not the most easy to be satisfied. If I have not the good luck to please, yet nobody ought to be offended with me. I plainly tell all my readers, except half a dozen, this treatise was not at first intended for them; and therefore they need not be at the trouble to be of that number. But yet if any one thinks fit to be angry, and rail at it, he may do it securely: for I shall find some better way of spending my time than in such kind of conversation. I shall always have the satisfaction to have aimed sincerely at truth and usefulness, though in one of the meanest ways. The commonwealth of learning is not at this time without master-builders, whose mighty designs in advancing the sciences will leave lasting monuments to the admiration of posterity: but every one must not hope to be a Boyle, or a Sydenham: and in an age that produces such masters, as the great Huygenius, and the incomparable Mr. Newton, with some others of that strain; it is ambition enough to be employed as an under-labourer in clearing the ground a little, and removing some of the rubbish that lies in the way to knowledge; which certainly had been very much more advanced in the world, if the endeavours of ingenious and industrious men had not been much cumbered with the learned but frivolous use of uncouth, affected, or unintelligible terms, introduced into the sciences, and there made an art of, to that degree, that philosophy, which is nothing but the true knowledge of things, was thought unfit, or incapable to be brought into well-bred company, and polite conversation. Vague and insignificant forms of speech, and abuse of language, have so long passed for mysteries of science; and hard and misapplied words, with little or no meaning, have, by prescription, such a right to be mistaken for deep learning, and height of speculation,

that it will not be easy to persuade either those who speak, or those who hear them, that they are but the covers of ignorance, and hinderance of true knowledge. To break in upon the sanctuary of vanity and ignorance, will be, I suppose, some service to human understanding; though so few are apt to think they deceive or are deceived in the use of words, or that the language of the sect they are of has any faults in it, which ought to be examined or corrected; that I hope I shall be pardoned, if I have in the third book dwelt long on this subject, and endeavoured to make it so plain, that neither the inveterateness of the mischief, nor the prevalence of the fashion, shall be any excuse for those who will not take care about the meaning of their own words, and will not suffer the significancy of their expressions to be inquired into.

I have been told, that a short epitome of this treatise, which was printed 1688, was by some condemned without reading, because innate ideas were denied in it; they too hastily concluding, that if innate ideas were not supposed, there would be little left either of the notion or proof of spirits. If any one take the like offence at the entrance of this treatise, I shall desire him to read it through; and then I hope he will be convinced, that the taking away false foundations is not to the prejudice, but advantage of truth; which is never injured or endangered so much, as when mixed with, or built on, falsehood. In the second edition, I added as followeth:

The bookseller will not forgive me, if I say nothing of this second edition, which he has promised, by the correctness of it, shall make amends for the many faults committed in the former. He desires too, that it should be known, that it has one whole new chapter concerning identity, and many additions and amendments in other places. These I must inform my reader are not all new matter, but most of them either farther confirmations of what I had said, or explications, to prevent others being mistaken in the sense of

what was formerly printed, and not any variation in me from it; I must only except the alterations I have made in Book II. Chap. 21.

What I had there writ concerning liberty and the will, I thought deserved as accurate a view as I was capable of: those subjects having in all ages exercised the learned part of the world with questions and difficulties that have not a little perplexed morality and divinity, those parts of knowledge that men are most concerned to be clear in. Upon a closer inspection into the working of men's minds, and a stricter examination of those motives and views they are turned by, I have found reason somewhat to alter the thoughts I formerly had concerning that, which gives the last determination to the will in all voluntary actions. This I cannot forbear to acknowledge to the world with as much freedom and readiness, as I at first published what then seemed to me to be right; thinking myself more concerned to quit and renounce any opinion of my own, than oppose that of another, when truth appears against it. For it is truth alone I seek, and that will always be welcome to me, when or from whence soever it comes.

But what forwardness soever I have to resign any opinion I have, or to recede from any thing I have writ upon the first evidence of any error in it; yet this I must own, that I have not had the good luck to receive any light from those exceptions I have met with in print against any part of my book; nor have, from any thing that has been urged against it, found reason to alter my sense in any of the points that have been questioned. Whether the subject I have in hand requires often more thought and attention than cursory readers, at least such as are prepossessed, are willing to allow; or, whether any obscurity in my expressions casts a cloud over it, and these notions are made difficult to others' apprehensions in my way of treating them: so it is, that my meaning, I find, is often mistaken, and I have not the good luck to be every

where rightly understood. There are so many instances of this, that I think it justice to my reader and myself to conclude, that either my book is plainly enough written to be rightly understood by those who peruse it with that attention and indifferency, which every one who will give himself the pains to read ought to employ in reading; or else, that I have writ mine so obscurely, that it is in vain to go about to mend it. Whichever of these be the truth, it is myself only am affected thereby, and therefore I shall be far from troubling my reader with what I think might be said, in answer to those several objections I have met with to passages here and there of my book: since I persuade myself, that he who thinks them of moment enough to be concerned whether they are true or false, will be able to see, that what is said is either not well founded, or else not contrary to my doctrine, when I and my opposer come both to be well understood.

If any, careful that none of their good thoughts should be lost, have published their censures of my Essay, with this honour done to it, that they will not suffer it to be an Essay; I leave it to the public to value the obligation they have to their critical pens, and shall not waste my reader's time in so idle or ill-natured an employment of mine, as to lessen the satisfaction any one has in himself, or gives to others, in so hasty a confutation of what I have written.

The booksellers preparing for the fourth edition of my Essay, gave me notice of it, that I might, if I had leisure, make any additions or alterations I should think fit. Whereupon I thought it convenient to advertise the reader, that besides several corrections I had made here and there, there was one alteration which it was necessary to mention, because it ran through the whole book, and is of consequence to be rightly understood. What I thereupon said was this:

Clear and distinct ideas are terms, which, though familiar and frequent in men's mouths, I have reason

to think every one, who uses, does not perfectly understand. And possibly it is but here and there one, who gives himself the trouble to consider them so far as to know what he himself or others precisely mean by them: I have therefore in most places chose to put determinate or determined, instead of clear and distinct, as more likely to direct men's thoughts to my meaning in this matter. By those denominations, I mean some object in the mind, and consequently determined, *i. e.* such as it is there seen and perceived to be. This, I think, may fitly be called a determinate or determined idea, when such as it is at any time objectively in the mind, and so determined there, it is annexed, and without variation determined to a name or articulate sound, which is to be steadily the sign of that very same object of the mind or determinate idea.

To explain this a little more particularly. By determinate, when applied to a simple idea, I mean that simple appearance which the mind has in its view, or perceives in itself, when that idea is said to be in it: by determinate, when applied to a complex idea, I mean such an one as consists of a determinate number of certain simple or less complex ideas, joined in such a proportion and situation, as the mind has before its view, and sees in itself, when that idea is present in it, or should be present in it, when a man gives a name to it: I say should be; because it is not every one, not perhaps any one, who is so careful of his language, as to use no word, till he views in his mind the precise determined idea, which he resolves to make it the sign of. The want of this is the cause of no small obscurity and confusion in men's thoughts and discourses.

I know there are not words enough in any language to answer all the variety of ideas that enter into men's discourses and reasonings. But this hinders not, but that when any one uses any term, he may have in his mind a determined idea, which he makes it the sign of, and to which he should keep it steadily annexed, during that present discourse. Where he does not, or

cannot do this, he in vain pretends to clear or distinct ideas: it is plain his are not so; and therefore there can be expected nothing but obscurity and confusion, where such terms are made use of, which have not such a precise determination.

Upon this ground I have thought determined ideas a way of speaking less liable to mistakes, than clear and distinct: and where men have got such determined ideas of all that they reason, inquire, or argue about, they will find a great part of their doubts and disputes at an end. The greatest part of the questions and controversies that perplex mankind, depending on the doubtful and uncertain use of words, or (which is the same) indetermined ideas, which they are made to stand for; I have made choice of these terms to signify, 1. Some immediate object of the mind, which it perceives and has before it, distinct from the sound it uses as a sign of it. 2. That this idea, thus determined, *i. e.* which the mind has in itself, and knows and sees there, be determined without any change to that name, and that name determined to that precise idea. If men had such determined ideas in their inquiries and discourses, they would both discern how far their own inquiries and discourses went, and avoid the greatest part of the disputes and wranglings they have with others.

Besides this, the bookseller will think it necessary I should advertise the reader, that there is an addition of two chapters wholly new; the one of the association of ideas, the other of enthusiasm. These, with some other larger additions never before printed, he has engaged to print by themselves after the same manner, and for the same purpose, as was done when this Essay had the second impression.

In the sixth edition, there is very little added or altered; the greatest part of what is new is contained in the 21st chapter of the second book, which any one, if he thinks it worth while, may, with a very little labour, transcribe into the margin of the former edition.

C O N T E N T S

OF
VOLUME I.

B O O K I.

OF INNATE NOTIONS.

CHAPTER I.

THE INTRODUCTION.

SECT.

1. An inquiry into the understanding pleasant and useful.
2. Design.
3. Method.
4. Useful to know the extent of our comprehension.
5. Our capacity proportioned to our state and concerns, to discover things useful to us.
6. Knowing the extent of our capacities will hinder us from useless curiosity, scepticism, and idleness.
7. Occasion of this Essay.
8. What idea stands for.

CHAPTER II.

NO INNATE PRINCIPLES IN THE MIND, AND PARTICULARLY NO INNATE SPECULATIVE PRINCIPLES.

SECT.

1. The way shown how we come by any knowledge, sufficient to prove it not innate.
2. General assent, the great argument.
3. Universal consent proves nothing innate.
4. What is, is; and it is impossible for the same thing to be, and not to be; not universally assented to.
5. Not on the mind naturally imprinted, because not known to children, idiots, &c.
- 6, 7. That men know them when they come to the use of reason, answered.
8. If reason discovered them, that would not prove them innate.
- 9—11. It is false that reason discovers them.
12. The coming to the use of reason, not the time we come to know these maxims.
13. By this, they are not distinguished from other knowable truths.
14. If coming to the use of reason were the time of their discovery, it would not prove them innate.

- 15, 16. The steps by which the mind attains several truths.
17. Assenting as soon as proposed and understood, proves them not innate.
18. If such an assent be a mark of innate, then that one and two are equal to three; that sweetness is not bitterness; and a thousand the like, must be innate.
19. Such less general propositions known before these universal maxims.
20. One and one equal to two, &c. not general nor useful, answered.
21. These maxims not being known sometimes till proposed, proves them not innate.
22. Implicitly known before proposing, signifies that the mind is capable of understanding them, or else signifies nothing.
23. The argument of assenting on first hearing is upon a false supposition of no precedent teaching.
24. Not innate, because not universally assented to.
25. These maxims not the first known.
26. And so not innate.
27. Not innate, because they appear least, where what is innate shows itself clearest.
28. Recapitulation.

CHAPTER III.

NO INNATE PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES.

SECT.

1. No moral principles so clear and so generally received as the fore-mentioned speculative maxims.
2. Faith and justice not owned as principles by all men.
3. Obj. Though men deny them in their practice, yet they admit them in their thoughts, answered.
4. Moral rules need a proof, *ergo*, not innate.
5. Instance in keeping compacts.
6. Virtue generally approved, not because innate, but because profitable.
7. Men's actions convince us, that the rule of virtue is not their internal principle.
8. Conscience no proof of any innate moral rule.
9. Instances of enormities practised without remorse.
10. Men have contrary practical principles.
- 11—13. Whole nations reject several moral rules.
14. Those who maintain innate practical principles, tell us not what they are.
- 15—19. Lord Herbert's innate principles examined.
20. Obj. Innate principles may be corrupted, answered.
21. Contrary principles in the world.
- 22—26. How men commonly come by their principles.
27. Principles must be examined.

CHAPTER IV.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS ABOUT INNATE PRINCIPLES, BOTH SPECULATIVE AND PRACTICAL.

SECT.

1. Principles not innate, unless their ideas be innate.
- 2, 3. Ideas, especially those belonging to principles, not born with children.
- 4, 5. Identity, an idea not innate.
6. Whole and part, not innate ideas.
7. Idea of worship not innate.
- 8—11. Idea of God, not innate.
12. Suitable to God's goodness, that all men should have an idea of him, therefore naturally imprinted by him, answered.
- 13—16. Ideas of God various in different men.
17. If the idea of God be not innate, no other can be supposed innate.
18. Idea of substance not innate.
19. No propositions can be innate, since no ideas are innate.
20. No ideas are remembered, till after they have been introduced.
21. Principles not innate, because of little use, or little certainty.
22. Difference of men's discoveries depends upon the different applications of their faculties.
23. Men must think and know for themselves.
24. Whence the opinion of innate principles.
25. Conclusion.

B O O K II.

OF IDEAS.

CHAPTER I.

OF IDEAS IN GENERAL.

SECT.

1. Idea is the object of thinking.
2. All ideas come from sensation or reflection.
3. The objects of sensation one source of ideas.
4. The operations of our minds, the other source of them.
5. All our ideas are of the one or the other of these.
6. Observable in children.
7. Men are differently furnished with these, according to the different objects they converse with.
8. Ideas of reflection later, because they need attention.
9. The soul begins to have ideas when it begins to perceive.
10. The soul thinks not always; for this wants proofs.

11. It is not always conscious of it.
12. If a sleeping man thinks without knowing it, the sleeping and waking man are two persons.
13. Impossible to convince those that sleep without dreaming, that they think.
14. That men dream without remembering it, in vain urged.
15. Upon this hypothesis, the thoughts of a sleeping man ought to be most rational.
16. On this hypothesis, the soul must have ideas not derived from sensation or reflection, of which there is no appearance.
17. If I think when I know it not, nobody else can know it.
18. How knows any one that the soul always thinks? For if it be not a self-evident proposition, it needs proof.
19. That a man should be busy in thinking, and yet not retain it the next moment, very improbable.
- 20—23. No ideas but from sensation or reflection, evident, if we observe children.
24. The original of all our knowledge.
25. In the reception of simple ideas the understanding is most of all passive.

CHAPTER II.

OF SIMPLE IDEAS.

SECT.

1. Uncompounded appearances.
- 2, 3. The mind can neither make nor destroy them.

CHAPTER III.

OF IDEAS OF ONE SENSE.

SECT.

1. As colours, of seeing ; sounds, of hearing.
2. Few simple ideas have names.

CHAPTER IV.

OF SOLIDITY.

SECT.

1. We receive this idea from touch.
2. Solidity fills space.
3. Distinct from space.
4. From hardness.
5. On solidity depend impulse, resistance, and protrusion.
6. What it is.

CHAPTER V.

OF SIMPLE IDEAS BY MORE THAN ONE SENSE.

CHAPTER VI.

OF SIMPLE IDEAS OF REFLECTION.

SECT.

1. Simple ideas are the operations of the mind about its other ideas.
2. The idea of perception, and idea of willing, we have from reflection.

CHAPTER VII.

OF SIMPLE IDEAS, BOTH OF SENSATION AND REFLECTION.

SECT.

- 1—6. Pleasure and pain.
7. Existence and unity.
8. Power.
9. Succession.
10. Simple ideas, the materials of all our knowledge.

CHAPTER VIII.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS CONCERNING SIMPLE IDEAS.

SECT.

- 1—6. Positive ideas from privative causes.
- 7, 8. Ideas in the mind, qualities in bodies.
- 9, 10. Primary and secondary qualities.
- 11, 12. How primary qualities produce their ideas.
- 13, 14. How secondary.
- 15—23. Ideas of primary qualities, are resemblances ; of secondary, not.
- 24, 25. Reason of our mistake in this.
26. Secondary qualities twofold ; first, immediately perceivable ; secondly, mediately perceivable.

CHAPTER IX.

OF PERCEPTION.

SECT.

1. It is the first simple idea of reflection.
- 2—4. Perception is only when the mind receives the impression.
- 5, 6. Children, though they have ideas in the womb, have none innate.
7. Which ideas first, is not evident.
- 8—10. Ideas of sensation often changed by the judgment.
- 11—14. Perception puts the difference between animals and inferior beings.
15. Perception the inlet of knowledge.

CHAPTER X.

OF RETENTION.

SECT.

1. Contemplation.
2. Memory.
3. Attention, repetition, pleasure, and pain, fix ideas.
- 4, 5. Ideas fade in the memory.
6. Constantly repeated ideas can scarce be lost.
7. In remembering, the mind is often active.
- 8, 9. Two defects in the memory, oblivion and slowness.
10. Brutes have memory.

CHAPTER XI.

OF DISCERNING, &c.

SECT.

1. No knowledge without it.
2. The difference of wit and judgment.
3. Clearness alone hinders confusion.
4. Comparing.
5. Brutes compare but imperfectly.
6. Compounding.
7. Brutes compound but little.
8. Naming.
9. Abstraction.
- 10, 11. Brutes abstract not.
- 12, 13. Idiots and madmen.
14. Method.
15. These are the beginnings of human knowledge.
16. Appeal to experience.
17. Dark room.

CHAPTER XII.

OF COMPLEX IDEAS.

SECT.

1. Made by the mind out of simple ones.
2. Made voluntarily.
3. Are either modes, substances, or relations.
4. Modes.
5. Simple and mixed modes.
6. Substances single or collective.
7. Relation.
8. The abstrusest ideas from the two sources.

CHAPTER XIII.

OF SPACE AND ITS SIMPLE MODES.

SECT.

1. Simple modes.
2. Idea of space.
3. Space and extension.
4. Immensity.
- 5, 6. Figure.
- 7—10. Place.
- 11—14. Extension and body not the same.
15. The definition of extension, or of space, does not explain it.
16. Division of beings into bodies and spirits proves not body and space the same.
- 17, 18. Substance, which we know not, no proof against space without body.
- 19, 20. Substance and accidents of little use in philosophy.
21. A vacuum beyond the utmost bounds of body.
22. The power of annihilation proves a vacuum.
23. Motion proves a vacuum.
24. The ideas of space and body distinct.
- 25, 26. Extension being inseparable from body, proves it not the same.
27. Ideas of space and solidity distinct.
28. Men differ little in clear simple ideas.

CHAPTER XIV.

OF DURATION AND ITS SIMPLE MODES.

SECT.

1. Duration is fleeting extension.
- 2—4. Its idea from reflection on the train of our ideas.
5. The idea of duration applicable to things whilst we sleep.
- 6—8. The idea of succession not from motion.
- 9—11. The train of ideas has a certain degree of quickness.
12. This train the measure of other successions.
- 13—15. The mind cannot fix long on one invariable idea.
16. Ideas, however made, include no sense of motion.
17. Time is duration set out by measures.
18. A good measure of time must divide its whole duration into equal periods.
19. The revolutions of the sun and moon the properest measures of time.
20. But not by their motion, but periodical appearances.
21. No two parts of duration can be certainly known to be equal.
22. Time not the measure of motion.
23. Minutes, hours, and years not necessary measures of duration.
- 24—26. Our measure of time applicable to duration before time.
- 27—30. Eternity.

CHAPTER XV.

OF DURATION AND EXPANSION CONSIDERED TOGETHER.

SECT.

1. Both capable of greater and less.
2. Expansion not bounded by matter.
3. Nor duration by motion.
4. Why men more easily admit infinite duration than infinite expansion.
5. Time to duration is as place to expansion.
6. Time and place are taken for so much of either as are set out by the existence and motion of bodies.
7. Sometimes for so much of either as we design by measure taken from the bulk or motion of bodies.
8. They belong to all beings.
9. All the parts of extension are extension ; and all the parts of duration are duration.
10. Their parts inseparable.
11. Duration is as a line, expansion as a solid.
12. Duration has never two parts together, expansion all together.

CHAPTER XVI.

OF NUMBER.

SECT.

1. Number, the simplest and most universal idea.
2. Its modes made by addition.
3. Each mode distinct.
4. Therefore demonstrations in numbers the most precise.
- 5, 6. Names necessary to numbers.
7. Why children number not earlier.
8. Number measures all measurables.

CHAPTER XVII.

OF INFINITY.

SECT.

1. Infinity in its original intentions attributed to space, duration, and number.
2. The idea of finite easily got.
3. How we come by the idea of infinity.
4. Our idea of space boundless.
5. And so of duration.
6. Why other ideas are not capable of infinity.
7. Difference between infinity of space and space infinite.
8. We have no idea of infinite space.
9. Number affords us the clearest idea of infinity.

- 10, 11. Our different conception of the infinity of number, duration, and expansion.
12. Infinite divisibility.
- 13, 14. No positive idea of infinity.
- 15, 19. What is positive, what negative, in our idea of infinite.
- 16, 17. We have no positive idea of infinite duration.
18. No positive idea of infinite space.
20. Some think they have a positive idea of eternity, and not of infinite space.
21. Supposed positive idea of infinity, cause of mistakes.
22. All these ideas from sensation and reflection.

CHAPTER XVIII.

OF OTHER SIMPLE MODES.

SECT.

- 1, 2. Modes of motion.
3. Modes of sounds.
4. Modes of colours.
5. Modes of tastes and smells.
6. Some simple modes have no names.
7. Why some modes have, and others have not names.

CHAPTER XIX.

OF THE MODES OF THINKING.

SECT.

- 1, 2. Sensation, remembrance, contemplation, &c.
3. The various attention of the mind in thinking.
4. Hence it is probable that thinking is the action, not essence of the soul.

CHAPTER XX.

OF MODES OF PLEASURE AND PAIN.

SECT.

1. Pleasure and pain simple ideas.
2. Good and evil, what.
3. Our passions moved by good and evil.
4. Love.
5. Hatred.
6. Desire.
7. Joy.
8. Sorrow.
9. Hope.
10. Fear.
11. Despair.
12. Anger.
13. Envy.

- 14. What passions all men have.
- 15, 16. Pleasure and pain, what.
- 17. Shame.
- 18. These instances do show how our ideas of the passions are got from sensation and reflection.

CHAPTER XXI.

OF POWER.

SECT.

- 1. This idea how got.
- 2. Power active and passive.
- 3. Power includes relation.
- 4. The clearest idea of active power had from spirit.
- 5. Will and understanding, two powers.
- 6. Faculties.
- 7. Whence the ideas of liberty and necessity.
- 8. Liberty, what.
- 9. Supposes understanding and will.
- 10. Belongs not to volition.
- 11. Voluntary opposed to involuntary, not to necessary.
- 12. Liberty, what.
- 13. Necessity, what.
- 14—20. Liberty belongs not to the will.
 - 21. But to the agent or man.
- 22—24. In respect of willing, a man is not free.
- 25—27. The will determined by something without it.
 - 28. Volition, what.
 - 29. What determines the will.
 - 30. Will and desire must not be confounded.
 - 31. Uneasiness determines the will.
 - 32. Desire is uneasiness.
 - 33. The uneasiness of desire determines the will.
 - 34. This the spring of action.
 - 35. The greatest positive good determines not the will, but uneasiness.
- 36. Because the removal of uneasiness is the first step to happiness.
- 37. Because uneasiness alone is present.
- 38. Because all, who allow the joys of heaven possible, pursue them not. But a great uneasiness is never neglected.
- 39. Desire accompanies all uneasiness.
- 40. The most pressing uneasiness naturally determines the will.
- 41. All desire happiness.
- 42. Happiness, what.
- 43. What good is desired, what not.
- 44. Why the greatest good is not always desired.
- 45. Why, not being desired, it moves not the will.
- 46. Due consideration raises desire.

- 47. The power to suspend the prosecution of any desire, makes way for consideration.
- 48. To be determined by our own judgment is no restraint to liberty.
- 49. The freest agents are so determined.
- 50. A constant determination to a pursuit of happiness no abridgment of liberty.
- 51. The necessity of pursuing true happiness the foundation of all liberty.
- 52. The reason of it.
- 53. Government of our passions the right improvement of liberty.
- 54, 55. How men come to pursue different courses.
- 56. How men come to choose ill.
- 57. First, from bodily pains. Secondly, from wrong desires arising from wrong judgment.
- 58, 59. Our judgment of present good or evil always right.
- 60. From a wrong judgment of what makes a necessary part of their happiness.
- 61, 62. A more particular account of wrong judgments.
- 63. In comparing present and future.
- 64, 65. Causes of this.
 - 66. In considering consequences of actions.
 - 67. Causes of this.
- 68. Wrong judgment of what is necessary to our happiness.
- 69. We can change the agreeableness or disagreeableness in things.
- 70. Preference of vice to virtue, a manifest wrong judgment.
- 71—73. Recapitulation.

CHAPTER XXII.

OF MIXED MODES.

SECT.

- 1. Mixed modes, what.
- 2. Made by the mind.
- 3. Sometimes got by the explication of their names.
- 4. The name ties the parts of the mixed modes into one idea.
- 5. The cause of making mixed modes.
- 6. Why words in one language have none answering in another.
- 7. And languages change.
- 8. Mixed modes, where they exist.
- 9. How we get the ideas of mixed modes.
- 10. Motion, thinking, and power have been most modified.
- 11. Several words seeming to signify action, signify but the effect.
- 12. Mixed modes made also of other ideas.

OF
HUMAN UNDERSTANDING.

BOOK I.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

§ 1. SINCE it is the understanding, that sets man above the rest of sensible beings, and gives him all the advantage and dominion which he has over them; it is certainly a subject, even for its nobleness, worth our labour to inquire into. The understanding, like the eye, whilst it makes us see and perceive all other things, takes no notice of itself; and it requires art and pains to set it at a distance, and make it its own object. But, whatever be the difficulties that lie in the way of this inquiry; whatever it be, that keeps us so much in the dark to ourselves; sure I am, that all the light we can let in upon our own minds, all the acquaintance we can make with our own understandings, will not only be very pleasant, but bring us great advantage in directing our thoughts in the search of other things.

An inquiry into the understanding, pleasant and useful.

§ 2. This, therefore, being my purpose; to inquire into the original, certainty, and extent of human knowledge, together with the grounds and degrees of belief, opinion, and assent— I shall not at present meddle with the physical consideration of the mind, or trouble myself to examine,

Design.

wherein its essence consists, or by what motions of our 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 or no. These are speculations, which, however curious and entertaining, I shall decline, as lying out of my way in the design I am now upon. It shall suffice to my present purpose, to consider the discerning faculties of a man, as they are employed about the objects which they have to do with: and I shall imagine I have not wholly misemployed myself in the thoughts I shall have on this occasion, if, in this historical, plain method, I can give any account of the ways whereby our understandings come to attain those notions of things we have, and can set down any measures of the certainty of our knowledge, or the grounds of those persuasions, which are to be found amongst men, so various, different, and wholly contradictory; and yet asserted, somewhere or other, with such assurance and confidence, that he that shall take a view of the opinions of mankind, observe their opposition, and at the same time consider the fondness and devotion wherewith they are embraced, the resolution and eagerness wherewith they are maintained—may perhaps have reason to suspect, that either there is no such thing as truth at all, or that mankind hath no sufficient means to attain a certain knowledge of it.

Method. § 3. It is, therefore, worth while to search out the bounds between opinion and knowledge; and examine by what measures, in things whereof we have no certain knowledge, we ought to regulate our assent, and moderate our persuasions. In order whereunto, I shall pursue this following method.

First, I shall inquire into the original of those ideas, notions, or whatever else you please to call them, which a man observes, and is conscious to him-

self he has in his mind, and the ways whereby the understanding comes to be furnished with them.

Secondly, I shall endeavour to show what knowledge the understanding hath by those ideas; and the certainty, evidence, and extent of it.

Thirdly, I shall make some inquiry into the nature and grounds of faith, or opinion; whereby I mean that assent which we give to any proposition as true, of whose truth yet we have no certain knowledge: and here we shall have occasion to examine the reasons and degrees of assent.

§ 4. If, by this inquiry into the nature of the understanding, I can discover the powers thereof, how far they reach, to what things they are in any degree proportionate, and where they fail us; I suppose it may be of use to prevail with the busy mind of man, to be more cautious in meddling with things exceeding its comprehension; to stop when it is at the utmost extent of its tether; and to sit down in a quiet ignorance of those things which, upon examination, are found to be beyond the reach of our capacities. We should not then perhaps be so forward, out of an affectation of an universal knowledge, to raise questions, and perplex ourselves and others with disputes about things to which our understandings are not suited, and of which we cannot frame in our minds any clear or distinct perceptions, or whereof (as it has perhaps too often happened) we have not any notions at all. If we can find out how far the understanding can extend its view, how far it has faculties to attain certainty, and in what cases it can only judge and guess, we may learn to content ourselves with what is attainable by us in this state.

§ 5. For, though the comprehension of our understandings comes exceeding short of the vast extent of things; yet we shall have cause enough to magnify the bountiful Author of our being, for that proportion and de-

Useful to know the extent of our comprehension.

Our capacity suited to our state and concerns.

gree of knowledge he has bestowed on us, so far above all the rest of the inhabitants of this our mansion. Men have reason to be well satisfied with what God hath thought fit for them, since he hath given them (as St. Peter says) *παντα προς ζωην και ευσεβειαν*, whatsoever is necessary for the conveniences of life and information of virtue; and has put within the reach of their discovery the comfortable provision for this life, and the way that leads to a better. How short soever their knowledge may come of an universal or perfect comprehension of whatsoever is, it yet secures their great concernments, that they have light enough to lead them to the knowledge of their Maker, and the sight of their own duties. Men may find matter sufficient to busy their heads, and employ their hands with variety, delight, and satisfaction, if they will not boldly quarrel with their own constitution, and throw away the blessings their hands are filled with, because they are not big enough to grasp every thing. We shall not have much reason to complain of the narrowness of our minds, if we will but employ them about what may be of use to us; for of that they are very capable: and it will be an unpardonable, as well as childish peevishness, if we undervalue the advantages of our knowledge, and neglect to improve it to the ends for which it was given us, because there are some things that are set out of the reach of it. It will be no excuse to an idle and untoward servant, who would not attend his business by candle-light, to plead that he had not broad sun-shine. The candle that is set up in us, shines bright enough for all our purposes. The discoveries we can make with this, ought to satisfy us: and we shall then use our understandings right, when we entertain all objects in that way and proportion that they are suited to our faculties, and upon those grounds they are capable of being proposed to us; and not peremptorily or intemperately require demonstration, and demand certainty, where probability only is to be had, and which

is sufficient to govern all our concernments. If we will disbelieve every thing, because we cannot certainly know all things, we shall do much what as wisely as he, who would not use his legs, but sit still and perish, because he had no wings to fly.

§ 6. When we know our own strength, we shall the better know what to undertake with hopes of success; and when we have well surveyed the powers of our own minds, and made some estimate what we may expect from them, we shall not be inclined either to sit still, and not set our thoughts on work at all, in despair of knowing any thing; or, on the other side, question every thing, and disclaim all knowledge, because some things are not to be understood. It is of great use to the sailor, to know the length of his line, though he cannot with it fathom all the depths of the ocean. It is well he knows, that it is long enough to reach the bottom, at such places as are necessary to direct his voyage, and caution him against running upon shoals that may ruin him. Our business here is not to know all things, but those which concern our conduct. If we can find out those measures, whereby a rational creature, put in that state in which man is in this world, may, and ought to govern his opinions, and actions depending thereon, we need not to be troubled that some other things escape our knowledge.

§ 7. This was that which gave the first rise to this essay concerning the understanding. For I thought that the first step towards satisfying several inquiries the mind of man was very apt to run into, was to take a survey of our own understandings, examine our own powers, and see to what things they were adapted. Till that was done, I suspected we began at the wrong end, and in vain sought for satisfaction in a quiet and sure possession of truths that most concerned us, whilst we let loose our thoughts into the vast ocean of being; as if all that boundless extent were the natural and un-

Knowledge of our capacity, a cure of scepticism and idleness.

Occasion of this essay.

doubted possession of our understandings, wherein there was nothing exempt from its decisions, or that escaped its comprehension. Thus men extending their inquiries beyond their capacities, and letting their thoughts wander into those depths, where they can find no sure footing; it is no wonder, that they raise questions, and multiply disputes, which, never coming to any clear resolution, are proper only to continue and increase their doubts, and to confirm them at last in perfect scepticism. Whereas, were the capacities of our understandings well considered, the extent of our knowledge once discovered, and the horizon found, which sets the bounds between the enlightened and dark parts of things, between what is and what is not comprehensible by us—men would perhaps with less scruple acquiesce in the avowed ignorance of the one, and employ their thoughts and discourse with more advantage and satisfaction in the other.

§ 8. Thus much I thought necessary to say concerning the occasion of this inquiry into human understanding. But, before I proceed on to what I have thought on this subject, I must here in the entrance beg pardon of my reader for the frequent use of the word “idea,” which he will find in the following treatise. It being that term, which, I think, serves best to stand for whatsoever is the object of the understanding when a man thinks; I have used it to express whatever is meant by phantasm, notion, species, or whatever it is which the mind can be employed about in thinking; and I could not avoid frequently using it (1).

I presume it will be easily granted me, that there are such ideas in men’s minds: every one is conscious of them in himself, and men’s words and actions will satisfy him that they are in others.

Our first inquiry then shall be, how they come into the mind.

¹ This modest apology of our author could not procure him the free use of the word *idea*: but great offence has been taken at it, and it has been censured as of dangerous consequence: to which you may here see

what he answers. ‘The world,’ saith the* bishop of Worcester, ‘hath been strangely amused with *ideas* of late, and we have been told, that strange things might be done by the help of *ideas*; and yet these *ideas*, at last, come to be only common notions of things, which we must make use of in our reasoning. You (*i. e.* the author of the *Essay concerning Human Understanding*) say in that chapter about the existence of God, you thought it most proper to express yourself in the most usual and familiar way, by common words and expressions. I would you had done so quite through your book; for then you had never given that occasion to the enemies of our faith, to take up your new way of *ideas*, as an effectual battery (as they imagined) against the mysteries of the Christian faith. But you might have enjoyed the satisfaction of your *ideas* long enough before I had taken notice of them, unless I had found them employed about doing mischief.’

To which our author† replies, It is plain, that that which your lordship apprehends, in my book, may be of dangerous consequence to the article which your lordship has endeavoured to defend, is my introducing *new terms*; and that which your lordship instances in, is that of *ideas*. And the reason your lordship gives in every of these places, why your lordship has such an apprehension of *ideas*, that they may be of dangerous consequence to that article of faith which your lordship has endeavoured to defend, is because they have been applied to such purposes. And I might (your lordship says) have enjoyed the satisfaction of my *ideas* long enough before you had taken notice of them, unless your lordship had found them employed in doing mischief. Which, at last, as I humbly conceive, amounts to thus much, and no more; *viz.* That your lordship fears *ideas*, *i. e.* the term *ideas*, may, some time or other, prove of very dangerous consequence to what your lordship has endeavoured to defend, because they have been made use of in arguing against it. For I am sure your lordship does not mean, that you apprehend the things, signified by *ideas*, may be of dangerous consequence to the article of faith your lordship endeavours to defend, because they have been made use of against it: for (besides that your lordship mentions *terms*) that would be to expect that those who oppose that article, should oppose it without any thoughts; for the things signified by *ideas*, are nothing but the immediate objects of our minds in thinking: so that unless any one can oppose the article your lordship defends, without thinking on something, he must use the things signified by *ideas*; for he that thinks, must have some immediate object of his mind in thinking, *i. e.* must have *ideas*.

But whether it be the name, or the thing; *ideas* in sound, or *ideas* in signification, that your lordship apprehends may be of dangerous consequence to that article of faith which your lordship endeavours to defend—it seems to me, I will not say a *new way of reasoning* (for that belongs to me); but were it not your lordship’s, I should think it a very extraordinary way of reasoning, to write against a book, wherein your lordship acknowledges they are not used to bad purposes, nor employed to do mischief, only because you find that *ideas* are, by those who oppose your lordship, employed to do mischief; and so apprehend, they may be of dangerous consequence to the article your lordship has engaged in the defence of. For whether *ideas* as *terms*, or *ideas* as the immediate objects of the mind signified by those *terms*, may be, in your lordship’s apprehension, of dangerous

* Answer to Mr. Locke’s First Letter.

† In his Second Letter to the Bishop of Worcester.

consequence to that article—I do not see how your lordship's writing against the notion of ideas, as stated in my book, will at all hinder your opposers from employing them in doing mischief, as before.

However, be that as it will, so it is, that your lordship apprehends these new terms, these ideas, with which the world hath, of late, been so strangely amused, (though at last they come to be only common notions of things, as your lordship owns) may be of dangerous consequence to that article.

My lord, if any, in answer to your lordship's sermons, and in other pamphlets, wherein your lordship complains they have talked so much of ideas, have been troublesome to your lordship with that term, it is not strange that your lordship should be tired with that sound: but how natural soever it be to our weak constitutions to be offended with any sound wherewith an importunate din hath been made about our ears; yet, my lord, I know your lordship has a better opinion of the articles of our faith, than to think any of them can be overturned, or so much as shaken, with a breath, formed into any sound or term whatsoever.

Names are but the arbitrary marks of conceptions; and so they be sufficiently appropriated to them in their use, I know no other difference any of them have in particular, but as they are of easy or difficult pronunciation, and of a more or less pleasant sound; and what particular antipathies there may be in men to some of them, upon that account, is not easy to be foreseen. This I am sure, no term whatsoever in itself bears, one more than another, any opposition to truth of any kind; they are only propositions that do or can oppose the truth of any article or doctrine; and thus no term is privileged for being set in opposition to truth.

There is no word to be found, which may not be brought into a proposition, wherein the most sacred and most evident truths may be opposed; but that is not a fault in the term, but him that uses it. And therefore I cannot easily persuade myself (whatever your lordship hath said in the heat of your concern) that you have bestowed so much pains upon my book, because the word *idea* is so much used there. For though upon my saying, in my chapter about the existence of God, 'That I scarce used the word *idea* in that whole chapter, your lordship wishes, that I had done so quite through my book; yet I must rather look upon that as a compliment to me, wherein your lordship wished that my book had been all through suited to vulgar readers, not used to that and the like terms, than that your lordship has such an apprehension of the word *idea*; or that there is any such harm in the use of it, instead of the word *notion* (with which your lordship seems to take it to agree in signification), that your lordship would think it worth your while to spend any part of your valuable time and thoughts about my book, for having the word *idea* so often in it; for this would be to make your lordship to write only against an impr propriety of speech. I own to your lordship, it is a great condescension in your lordship to have done it, if that word have such a share in what your lordship has writ against my book, as some expressions would persuade one; and I would, for the satisfaction of your lordship, change the term of *idea* for a better, if your lordship, or any one, could help me to it; for, that *notion* will not so well stand for every immediate object of the mind in thinking, as *idea* does, I have (as I guess) somewhere given a reason in my book, by showing that the term *notion* is more peculiarly appropriated to a certain sort of those objects, which I call mixed modes: and, I think, it would not sound altogether so well, to say, the *notion of red*, and the *notion of a horse*; as the *idea of red*, and the *idea of a horse*. But if any one thinks it will, I contend not; for I have no fondness for, nor an antipathy to, any particular articulate sounds; nor do I think there is any spell or fascination in any of them.

But be the word *idea* proper or improper, I do not see how it is the better or the worse, because *ill men* have made use of it, or because it has been made use of to *bad purposes*; for if that be a reason to condemn, or lay it by, we must lay by the terms, *scripture*, *reason*, *perception*, *distinct*, *clear*, &c. Nay, the name of God himself will not escape; for I do not think any one of these, or any other term, can be produced, which hath not been made use of by such men, and to such purposes. And therefore, if the unitarians, in their late pamphlets, have talked very much of, and strangely amused the world with ideas, I cannot believe your lordship will think that word one jot the worse, or the more dangerous, because they use it; any more than, for their use of them, you will think *reason* or *scripture* terms ill or dangerous. And therefore what your lordship says, that I might have enjoyed the satisfaction of my ideas long enough before your lordship had taken notice of them, unless you had found them employed in doing mischief; will, I presume, when your lordship has considered again of this matter, prevail with your lordship, to let me enjoy still the satisfaction I take in my ideas, i. e. as much satisfaction as I can take in so small a matter, as is the using of a proper term, notwithstanding it should be employed by others in doing mischief.

For, my lord, if I should leave it wholly out of my book, and substitute the word *notion* every where in the room of it, and every body else do so too, (though your lordship does not, I suppose, suspect that I have the vanity to think they would follow my example) my book would, it seems, be the more to your lordship's liking; but I do not see how this would one jot abate the mischief your lordship complains of. For the unitarians might as much employ *notions*, as they do now *ideas*, to do mischief; unless they are such fools to think they can conjure with this notable word *idea*, and that the force of what they say, lies in the sound, and not in the signification of their terms.

This I am sure of, that the truths of the Christian religion can be no more battered by one word than another; nor can they be beaten down or endangered by any sound whatsoever. And I am apt to flatter myself, that your lordship is satisfied that there is no harm in the word *ideas*, because you say, you should not have taken any notice of my *ideas*, if the enemies of our faith had not taken up my new way of ideas, as an effectual battery against the mysteries of the Christian faith. In which place, by new way of ideas, nothing, I think, can be construed to be meant, but my expressing myself by that of *ideas*; and not by other more common words, and of ancients standing in the English language.

As to the objection, of the author's way by *ideas* being a new way, he thus answers: my new way by ideas, or my way by ideas, which often occurs in your lordship's letter, is, I confess, a very large and doubtful expression, and may, in the full latitude, comprehend my whole *essay*; because treating in it of the *understanding*, which is nothing but the faculty of thinking, I could not well treat of that faculty of the mind, which consists in thinking, without considering the immediate objects of the mind in thinking, which I call *ideas*: and therefore in treating of the *understanding*, I guess it will not be thought strange, that the greatest part of my book has been taken up, in considering what these objects of the mind, in thinking, are; whence they come; what use the mind makes of them, in its several ways of thinking; and what are the outward marks whereby it signifies them to others, or records them for its own use. And this, in short, is my way by ideas, that which your lordship calls my new way by ideas; which, my lord, if it be new, it is but a new history of an old thing. For I think it will not be doubted, that men always performed the actions of *thinking*, *reasoning*, *believing*, and *knowing*, just after the same manner they do now; though whether the same account has herc-

tofore been given of the way how they performed these actions, or wherein they consisted, I do not know. Were I as well read as your lordship, I should have been safe from that gentle reprimand of your lordship's, for thinking *my way of ideas* NEW, *for want of looking into other men's thoughts, which appear in their books.*

Your lordship's words, as an acknowledgment of your instructions in the case, and as a warning to others, who will be so bold, adventurers as to *spin any thing barely out of their own thoughts*, I shall set down at large. And they run thus: *Whether you took this way of ideas from the modern philosopher mentioned by you, is not at all material; but I intended no reflection upon you in it (for that you mean, by my commending you as a scholar of so great a master); I never meant to take from you the honour of your own inventions: and I do believe you when you say, That you wrote from your own thoughts, and the ideas you had there. But many things may seem new to one, who converses only with his own thoughts, which really are not so; as he may find, when he looks into the thoughts of other men, which appear in their books. And therefore, although I have a just esteem for the invention of such who can spin volumes barely out of their own thoughts; yet I am apt to think, they would oblige the world more, if, after they have thought so much themselves, they would examine what thoughts others have had before them concerning the same things; that so those may not be thought their own inventions which are common to themselves and others. If a man should try all the magnetical experiments himself, and publish them as his own thoughts, he might take himself to be the inventor of them; but he that examines and compares with them what Gilbert and others have done before him, will not diminish the praise of his diligence, but may wish he had compared his thoughts with other men's; by which the world would receive greater advantage, although he had lost the honour of being an original.*

To alleviate my fault herein, I agree with your lordship, that *many things may seem NEW to one that converses only with his own thoughts, which really are not so*: but I must crave leave to suggest to your lordship, that if in the spinning them out of his own thoughts, they seem new to him, he is certainly the inventor of them; and they may as justly be thought his own *invention*, as any one's; and he is as certainly the inventor of them, as any one who thought on them before him: the distinction of invention, or not invention, lying not in thinking first, or not first, but in borrowing, or not borrowing, our thoughts from another: and he to whom, spinning them out of his own thoughts, they *seem new*, could not certainly borrow them from another. So he truly invented *printing* in *Europe*, who, without any communication with the *Chinese*, spun it out of his own thoughts; though it were ever so true, that the *Chinese* had the use of *printing*, nay, of *printing* in the very same way, among them, many ages before him. So that he that spins any thing out of his own thoughts, that *seems new to him*, cannot cease to think it his own invention, should he examine ever so far, *what thoughts others have had before him concerning the same thing*, and should find, by examining, that they had the same thoughts too.

But what great *obligation this would be to the world, or weighty cause of turning over and looking into books*, I confess I do not see. The great end to me, in conversing with my own or other men's thoughts, in matters of speculation, is to find truth, without being much concerned whether my own spinning of it out of mine, or their spinning of it out of their own thoughts, helps me to it. And how little I affect the *honour of an original*, may be seen at that place of my book, where, if any where, that itch of vain-glory was likeliest to have shown itself, had I been so

over-run with it, as to need a cure: it is where I speak of certainty, in these following words, taken notice of by your lordship, in another place: 'I think I have shown wherein it is that certainty, real certainty, consists; which, whatever it was to others, was, I confess, to me, here-tofore, one of those *desiderata* which I found great want of.'

Here, my lord, however *new this seemed to me*, (and the more so because possibly I had in vain hunted for it in the *books of others*) yet I spoke of it as *new*, only to myself; leaving others in the undisturbed possession of what either by invention, or reading, was theirs before, without assuming to myself any other honour, but that of my own ignorance, till that time, if others before had shown wherein certainty lay. And yet, my lord, if I had, upon this occasion, been forward to assume to myself the *honour of an original*, I think I had been pretty safe in it; since I should have had your lordship for my guarantee and *vindicator* in that point, who are pleased to call it *new*, and, as such, to write against it.

And truly, my lord, in this respect, my book has had very unlucky stars, since it hath had the misfortune to displease your lordship, with many things in it, for their novelty; as *new way of reasoning, new hypothesis about reason, new sort of certainty, new terms, new way of ideas, new method of certainty, &c.* And yet, in other places, your lordship seems to think it worthy in me of your lordship's reflection, for saying but what others have said before: as where I say, 'In the different make of men's tempers, and application of their thoughts, some arguments prevail more on one, and some on another, for the confirmation of the same truth.' Your lordship asks, *What is this different from what all men of understanding have said?* Again, I take it, your lordship meant not these words for a commendation of my book, where you say, *But if no more be meant by 'The simple ideas that come in by sensation, or reflection, and their being the foundation of our knowledge,' but that our notions of things come in, either from our senses or the exercise of our minds; as there is nothing extraordinary in the discovery, so your lordship is far enough from opposing that, wherein you think all mankind are agreed.*

And again, *But what need all this great noise about ideas and certainty, true and real certainty by ideas, if, after all, it comes only to this; that our ideas only represent to us such things, from whence we bring arguments to prove the truth of things?*

But *the world hath been strangely amused with ideas of late; and we have been told, that strange things might be done by the help of ideas; and get these ideas, at last, come to be, only common notions of things, which we must make use of in our reasoning.* And to the like purpose in other places.

Whether, therefore, at last, your lordship will resolve that it is *new* or no, or more faulty by its being *new*, must be left to your lordship. This I find by it, that my book cannot avoid being condemned on the one side or the other, nor do I see a possibility to help it. If there be readers that like only *new thoughts*; or, on the other side, others that can bear nothing but what can be justified by received authorities in print—I must desire them to make themselves amends in that part which they like, for the displeasure they receive in the other; but if any should be so exact, as to find fault with both, truly I know not well what to say to them. The case is a plain case, the book is all over naught, and there is not a sentence in it, that is not, either for its antiquity or novelty, to be condemned; and so there is a short end of it. From your lordship, indeed, in particular, I can hope for something better; for your lordship thinks the *general design of it so good*, that that, I flatter myself, would prevail on your lordship to preserve it from the fire.

But as to the way, your lordship thinks, I should have taken to prevent the *having it thought my invention, when it was common to me with others*, it unluckily so fell out, in the subject of my *Essay of Human Understanding*, that I could not look into the thoughts of other men to inform myself: for my design being, as well as I could, to copy nature, and to give an account of the operations of the mind in thinking; I could look into nobody's understanding but my own, to see how it wrought; nor have a prospect into other men's minds, to view their thoughts there, and observe what steps and motions they took, and by what gradations they proceeded in their acquainting themselves with truth, and their advance in knowledge: what we find of their thoughts in books, is but the result of this, and not the progress and working of their minds, in coming to the opinions or conclusions they set down and published.

All therefore, that I can say of my book, is, that it is a copy of my own mind, in its several ways of operation: and all that I can say for the publishing of it is, that I think the intellectual faculties are made, and operate alike in most men; and that some, that I showed it to before I published it, liked it so well, that I was confirmed in that opinion. And therefore, if it should happen, that it should not be so, but that some men should have ways of thinking, reasoning, or arriving at certainty, different from others, and above those that I find my mind to use and acquiesce in, I do not see of what use my book can be to them. I can only make it my humble request, in my own name, and in the name of those that are of my size, who find their minds work, reason, and know in the same low way that mine does, that those men of a more happy genius would show us the way of their nobler flights; and particularly would discover to us their shorter or surer way to certainty, than by *ideas*, and the observing their agreement or disagreement.

Your lordship adds, *But, now, it seems, nothing is intelligible but what suits with the new way of ideas*. My lord, *The new way of ideas*, and the old way of speaking *intelligibly*,* was always and ever will be the same; and if I may take the liberty to declare my sense of it, herein it consists: 1. That a man use no words, but such as he makes the signs of certain determined objects of his mind in thinking, which he can make known to another. 2. Next, That he use the same word steadily for the sign of the same immediate object of his mind in thinking. 3. That he join those words together in propositions, according to the grammatical rules of that language he speaks in. 4. That he unite those sentences in a coherent discourse. Thus, and thus only, I humbly conceive, any one may preserve himself from the confines and suspicion of jargon, whether he pleases to call those immediate objects of his mind, which his words do, or should stand for, *ideas*, or no.

* Mr. Locke's Third Letter to the Bishop of Worcester.

CHAPTER II.

No Innate Principles in the Mind.

§ 1. It is an established opinion amongst some men, that there are in the understanding certain innate principles, some primary notions, *κοιναι εννοιαι*; characters, as it were, stamped upon the mind of man, which the soul receives in its very first being, and brings into the world with it. The way shown how we come by any knowledge, sufficient to prove it not innate.

It would be sufficient to convince unprejudiced readers of the falseness of this supposition, if I should only show (as I hope I shall in the following parts of this discourse) how men, barely by the use of their natural faculties, may attain to all the knowledge they have, without the help of any innate impressions; and may arrive at certainty, without any such original notions or principles. For I imagine any one will easily grant, that it would be impertinent to suppose the ideas of colours innate in a creature, to whom God hath given sight, and a power to receive them by the eyes, from external objects; and no less unreasonable would it be to attribute several truths to the impressions of nature, and innate characters, when we may observe in ourselves faculties, fit to attain as easy and certain knowledge of them, as if they were originally imprinted on the mind.

But because a man is not permitted without censure to follow his own thoughts in the search of truth, when they lead him ever so little out of the common road; I shall set down the reasons that made me doubt of the truth of that opinion, as an excuse for my mistake, if I be in one; which I leave to be considered by those, who, with me, dispose themselves to embrace truth wherever they find it.

General assent the great argument.

§ 2. There is nothing more commonly taken for granted, than that there are certain principles, both speculative and practical (for they speak of both), universally agreed upon by all mankind; which therefore, they argue, must needs be constant impressions, which the souls of men receive in their first beings, and which they bring into the world with them as necessarily and really as they do any of their inherent faculties.

Universal consent proves nothing innate.

§ 3. This argument, drawn from universal consent, has this misfortune in it; that if it were true in matter of fact, that there were certain truths, wherein all mankind agreed, it would not prove them innate, if there can be any other way shown, how men may come to that universal agreement in the things they do consent in; which I presume may be done.

“What is, is,” and “it is impossible for the same thing to be, and not to be,” not universally assented to.

§ 4. But, which is worse, this argument of universal consent, which is made use of to prove innate principles, seems to me a demonstration that there are none such; because there are none to which all mankind give an universal assent. I shall begin with the speculative, and instance in those magnified principles of demonstration; “whatsoever is, is;” and, “it is impossible for the same thing to be, and not to be;” which, of all others, I think have the most allowed title to innate. These have so settled a reputation of maxims universally received, that it will, no doubt, be thought strange, if any one should seem to question it. But yet I take liberty to say, that these propositions are so far from having an universal assent, that there are great part of mankind to whom they are not so much as known.

Not on the mind natu-

§ 5. For, first, it is evident, that all children and idiots have not the least ap-

prehension or thought of them; and the want of that is enough to destroy that universal assent, which must needs be the necessary concomitant of all innate truths: it seeming to me near a contradiction, to say, that there are truths imprinted on the soul, which it perceives or understands not; imprinting, if it signify any thing, being nothing else, but the making certain truths to be perceived. For to imprint any thing on the mind, without the mind's perceiving it, seems to me hardly intelligible. If therefore children and idiots have souls, have minds, with those impressions upon them, they must unavoidably perceive them, and necessarily know and assent to these truths; which, since they do not, it is evident that there are no such impressions: for if they are not notions naturally imprinted, how can they be innate? and if they are notions imprinted, how can they be unknown? To say a notion is imprinted on the mind, and yet at the same time to say, that the mind is ignorant of it, and never yet took notice of it, is to make this impression nothing. No proposition can be said to be in the mind, which it never yet knew, which it was never yet conscious of: for if any one may, then, by the same reason, all propositions that are true, and the mind is capable of ever assenting to, may be said to be in the mind, and to be imprinted: since, if any one can be said to be in the mind, which it never yet knew, it must be only, because it is capable of knowing it; and so the mind is of all truths it ever shall know. Nay, thus truths may be imprinted on the mind, which it never did, nor ever shall know: for a man may live long, and die at last in ignorance of many truths, which his mind was capable of knowing, and that with certainty. So that if the capacity of knowing be the natural impression contended for, all the truths a man ever comes to know, will, by this account, be every one of them innate; and this great point will

rally imprinted, because not known to children, idiots, &c.

amount to no more, but only to a very improper way of speaking; which, whilst it pretends to assert the contrary, says nothing different from those who deny innate principles: for nobody, I think, ever denied that the mind was capable of knowing several truths. The capacity, they say, is innate, the knowledge acquired. But then to what end such contest for certain innate maxims? If truths can be imprinted on the understanding without being perceived, I can see no difference there can be between any truths the mind is capable of knowing, in respect of their original: they must all be innate, or all adventitious: in vain shall a man go about to distinguish them. He, therefore, that talks of innate notions in the understanding, cannot (if he intend thereby any distinct sort of truths) mean such truths to be in the understanding, as it never perceived, and is yet wholly ignorant of: for if these words (to be in the understanding) have any propriety, they signify to be understood: so that, to be in the understanding, and not to be understood—to be in the mind, and never to be perceived—is all one, as to say, any thing is, and is not, in the mind or understanding. If therefore these two propositions, “whatsoever is, is,” and “it is impossible for the same thing to be, and not to be,” are by nature imprinted, children cannot be ignorant of them; infants, and all that have souls, must necessarily have them in their understandings, know the truth of them, and assent to it.

That men know them when they come to the use of reason, answered.

§ 6. To avoid this, it is usually answered, That all men know and assent to them, when they come to the use of reason, and this is enough to prove them innate. I answer,

§ 7. 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 to apply this answer with any tolerable sense to our present purpose, it must signify one of these two things: either, that,

as soon as men come to the use of reason, these supposed native inscriptions come to be known and observed by them; or else, that the use and exercise of men's reason assists them in the discovery of these principles, and certainly makes them known to them.

§ 8. If they mean, that by the use of reason men may discover these principles, and that this is sufficient to prove them innate; their way of arguing will stand thus: viz. that whatever truths reason can certainly discover to us, and make us firmly assent to, those are all naturally imprinted on the mind; since that universal assent, which is made the mark of them, amounts to no more but this; that by the use of reason we are capable to come to a certain knowledge of, and assent to them; and, by this means, there will be no difference between the maxims of the mathematicians, and theorems they deduce from them: all must be equally allowed innate; they being all discoveries made by the use of reason, and truths that a rational creature may certainly come to know, if he apply his thoughts rightly that way.

If reason discovered them, that would not prove them innate.

§ 9. But how can these men think the use of reason necessary to discover principles that are supposed innate, when reason (if we may believe them) is nothing else but the faculty of deducing unknown truths from principles, or propositions, that are already known? That certainly can never be thought innate, which we have need of reason to discover; unless, as I have said, we will have all the certain truths that reason ever teaches us, to be innate. We may as well think the use of reason necessary to make our eyes discover visible objects, as that there should be need of reason, or the exercise thereof, to make the understanding see what is originally engraven on it, and cannot be in the understanding before it be perceived by it. So that to make reason discover those truths thus imprinted, is to say, that the use of reason discovers to a man what

It is false that reason discovers them.

he knew before; and if men have those innate impressed truths originally, and before the use of reason, and yet are always ignorant of them, till they come to the use of reason; it is in effect to say, that men know, and know them not, at the same time.

§ 10. It will here perhaps be said, that mathematical demonstrations, and other truths that are not innate, are not assented to as soon as proposed, wherein they are distinguished from these maxims, and other innate truths. I shall have occasion to speak of assent upon the first proposing, more particularly, by and by. I shall here only, and that very readily, allow, that these maxims and mathematical demonstrations are in this different; that the one have need of reason, using of proofs, to make them out, and to gain our assent; but the other, as soon as understood, are, without any the least reasoning, embraced and assented to. But I withal beg leave to observe, that it lays open the weakness of this subterfuge, which requires the use of reason for the discovery of these general truths; since it must be confessed, that in their discovery there is no use made of reasoning at all. And I think those who give this answer will not be forward to affirm, that the knowledge of this maxim, "That it is impossible for the same thing to be, and not to be," is a deduction of our reason: for this would be to destroy that bounty of nature they seem so fond of, whilst they make the knowledge of those principles to depend on the labour of our thoughts. For all reasoning is search, and casting about, and requires pains and application; and how can it, with any tolerable sense, be supposed, that what was imprinted by nature, as the foundation and guide of our reason, should need the use of reason to discover it?

§ 11. Those who will take the pains to reflect with a little attention on the operations of the understanding, will find, that this ready assent of the mind to some truths, depends not either on native inscription, or the use of reason; but on a faculty of the mind

quite distinct from both of them, as we shall see hereafter. Reason, therefore, having nothing to do in procuring our assent to these maxims, if, by saying that men know and assent to them when they come to the use of reason, be meant, that the use of reason assists us in the knowledge of these maxims, it is utterly false; and were it true, would prove them not to be innate.

§ 12. If by knowing and assenting to them, when we come to the use of reason, be meant, that this is the time when they come to be taken notice of by the mind; and that, as soon as children come to the use of reason, they come also to know and assent to these maxims; this also is false and frivolous. First, it is false; because it is evident these maxims are not in the mind so early as the use of reason, and therefore the coming to the use of reason is falsely assigned as the time of their discovery. How many instances of the use of reason may we observe in children, a long time before they have any knowledge of this maxim, "That it is impossible for the same thing to be, and not to be?" And a great part of illiterate people, and savages, pass many years, even of their rational age, without ever thinking on this, and the like general propositions. I grant, men come not to the knowledge of these general and more abstract truths, which are thought innate, till they come to the use of reason; and I add, nor then neither: which is so, because, till after they come to the use of reason, those general abstract ideas are not framed in the mind, about which those general maxims are, which are mistaken for innate principles; but are indeed discoveries made, and verities introduced and brought into the mind by the same way, and discovered by the same steps, as several other propositions, which nobody was ever so extravagant as to suppose innate. This I hope to make plain in the sequel of this discourse. I allow

therefore a necessity that men should come to the use of reason before they get the knowledge of those general truths, but deny that men's coming to the use of reason is the time of their discovery.

By this they are not distinguished from other knowable truths. § 13. In the mean time it is observable, that this saying, That men know and assent to these maxims when they come to the use of reason, amounts, in reality of fact, to no more but this, That they are never known, nor taken notice of, before the use of reason, but may possibly be assented to, some time after, during a man's life, but when, is uncertain; and so may all other knowable truths, as well as these; which therefore have no advantage nor distinction from others, by this note of being known when we come to the use of reason, nor are thereby proved to be innate, but quite the contrary.

If coming to the use of reason were the time of their discovery, it would not prove them innate. § 14. But, secondly, were it true that the precise time of their being known and assented to were when men come to the use of reason, neither would that prove them innate. This way of arguing is as frivolous as the supposition of itself is false. For by what kind of logic will it appear, that any notion is originally by nature imprinted in the mind in its first constitution, because it comes first to be observed and assented to, when a faculty of the mind, which has quite a distinct province, begins to exert itself? And therefore, the coming to the use of speech, if it were supposed the time that these maxims are first assented to, (which it may be with as much truth as the time when men come to the use of reason) would be as good a proof that they were innate, as to say, they are innate, because men assent to them when they come to the use of reason. I agree then with these men of innate principles, that there is no knowledge of these general and self-evident maxims in the mind, till it comes to the exercise of reason; but I deny that the coming to the use of

reason is the precise time when they are first taken notice of; and if that were the precise time, I deny that it would prove them innate. All that can, with any truth, be meant by this proposition, that men assent to them when they come to the use of reason, is no more but this; that the making of general abstract ideas, and the understanding of general names, being a concomitant of the rational faculty, and growing up with it, children commonly get not those general ideas, nor learn the names that stand for them, till, having for a good while exercised their reason about familiar and more particular ideas, they are, by their ordinary discourse and actions with others, acknowledged to be capable of rational conversation. If assenting to these maxims, when men come to the use of reason, can be true in any other sense, I desire it may be shown, or at least, how in this, or any other sense, it proves them innate.

§ 15. The senses at first let in particular ideas, and furnish the yet empty cabinet; and the mind by degrees growing familiar with some of them, they are lodged in the memory, and names got to them: afterwards, the mind, proceeding farther, abstracts them, and by degrees learns the use of general names. In this manner the mind comes to be furnished with ideas and language, the materials about which to exercise its discursive faculty; and the use of reason becomes daily more visible, as these materials, that give it employment, increase. But though the having of general ideas, and the use of general words and reason, usually grow together, yet, I see not how this any way proves them innate. The knowledge of some truths, I confess, is very early in the mind, but in a way that shows them not to be innate. For, if we will observe, we shall find it still to be about ideas, not innate, but acquired; it being about those first which are imprinted by external things, with which infants have earliest to do, which make the most frequent

The steps by which the mind attains several truths.

impressions on their senses. In ideas thus got, the mind discovers that some agree and others differ, probably as soon as it has any use of memory; as soon as it is able to retain and perceive distinct ideas. But whether it be then, or no, this is certain; it does so long before it has the use of words, or comes to that, which we commonly call "the use of reason." For a child knows as certainly, before it can speak, the difference between the ideas of sweet and bitter, (*i. e.* that sweet is not bitter) as it knows afterwards (when it comes to speak) that wormwood and sugar-plums are not the same thing.

§ 16. A child knows not that three and four are equal to seven, till he comes to be able to count seven, and has got the name and idea of equality; and then, upon explaining those words, he presently assents to, or rather perceives the truth of that proposition. But neither does he then readily assent, because it is an innate truth, nor was his assent wanting till then, because he wanted the use of reason; but the truth of it appears to him, as soon as he has settled in his mind the clear and distinct ideas that these names stand for; and then he knows the truth of that proposition, upon the same grounds, and by the same means, that he knew before that a rod and a cherry are not the same thing; and upon the same grounds also, that he may come to know afterwards, "that it is impossible for the same thing to be, and not to be," as shall be more fully shown hereafter. So that the later it is before any one comes to have those general ideas, about which those maxims are; or to know the signification of those general terms that stand for them; or to put together in his mind the ideas they stand for; the later also will it be before he comes to assent to those maxims, whose terms, with the ideas they stand for, being no more innate than those of a cat or a weasel, he must stay till time and observation have acquainted him with them; and then he will be in a capacity to know the truth of these maxims, upon the first oc-

casión that shall make him put together those ideas in his mind, and observe whether they agree or disagree, according as is expressed in those propositions. And therefore it is, that a man knows that eighteen and nineteen are equal to thirty-seven, by the same self-evidence that he knows one and two to be equal to three: yet a child knows this not so soon as the other, not for want of the use of reason, but because the ideas the words eighteen, nineteen, and thirty-seven stand for, are not so soon got, as those which are signified by one, two, and three.

§ 17. This evasion therefore of general assent, when men come to the use of reason, failing as it does, and leaving no difference between those supposed innate, and other truths that are afterwards acquired and learnt, men have endeavoured to secure an universal assent to those they call maxims, by saying, they are generally assented to as soon as proposed, and the terms they are proposed in, understood: seeing all men, even children, as soon as they hear and understand the terms, assent to these propositions, they think it is sufficient to prove them innate. For since men never fail, after they have once understood the words, to acknowledge them for undoubted truths, they would infer, that certainly these propositions were first lodged in the understanding, which, without any teaching, the mind, at the very first proposal, immediately closes with, and assents to, and after that never doubts again.

§ 18. In answer to this, I demand "whether ready assent given to a proposition upon first hearing, and understanding the terms, be a certain mark of an innate principle?" If it be not, such a general assent is in vain urged as a proof of them: if it be said, that it is a mark of innate, they must then allow all such propositions to be innate which are generally

Assenting as soon as proposed and understood, proves them not innate.

If such an assent be a mark of innate, then "that one and two are equal to three, that sweetness is not bitterness," and a

thousand the like, must be innate. assented to as soon as heard, whereby they will find themselves plentifully stored with innate principles. For upon the same ground, viz. of assent at first hearing and understanding the terms, that men would have those maxims pass for innate, they must also admit several propositions about numbers to be innate; and thus, that one and two are equal to three; that two and two are equal to four; and a multitude of other the like propositions in numbers, that every body assents to at first hearing and understanding the terms, must have a place amongst these innate axioms. Nor is this the prerogative of numbers alone, and propositions made about several of them; but even natural philosophy, and all the other sciences, afford propositions which are sure to meet with assent as soon as they are understood. That two bodies cannot be in the same place, is a truth that nobody any more sticks at, than at these maxims, that it is impossible for the same thing to be, and not to be; that white is not black; that a square is not a circle; that yellowness is not sweetness:” these, and a million of other such propositions, (as many at least as we have distinct ideas of) every man in his wits, at first hearing, and knowing what the names stand for, must necessarily assent to. If these men will be true to their own rule, and have assent at first hearing and understanding the terms to be a mark of innate, they must allow, not only as many innate propositions as men have distinct ideas, but as many as men can make propositions, wherein different ideas are denied one of another. Since every proposition, wherein one different idea is denied of another, will as certainly find assent at first hearing and understanding the terms, as this general one, “it is impossible for the same thing to be, and not to be;” or that which is the foundation of it, and is the easier understood of the two, “the same is not different:” by which account they will have legions of innate propositions of this one sort, without mentioning any other.

But since no proposition can be innate, unless the ideas, about which it is, be innate; this will be, to suppose all our ideas of colours, sounds, taste, figure, &c. innate, than which there cannot be any thing more opposite to reason and experience. Universal and ready assent, upon hearing and understanding the terms, is (I grant) a mark of self-evidence; but self-evidence, depending not on innate impressions, but on something else (as we shall show hereafter), belongs to several propositions, which nobody was yet so extravagant as to pretend to be innate.

§ 19. Nor let it be said, that those more particular self-evident propositions, which are assented to at first hearing, as, that one and two are equal to three; that green is not red, &c.; are received as the consequences of those more universal propositions, which are looked on as innate principles; since any one, who will but take the pains to observe what passes in the understanding, will certainly find, that these, and the like less general propositions, are certainly known, and firmly assented to, by those who are utterly ignorant of those more general maxims; and so, being earlier in the mind than those (as they are called) first principles, cannot owe to them the assent wherewith they are received at first hearing.

§ 20. If it be said, that “these propositions, viz. two and two are equal to four; red is not blue, &c.; are not general maxims, nor of any great use;” I answer, that makes nothing to the argument of universal assent, upon hearing and understanding: for, if that be the certain mark of innate, whatever proposition can be found that receives general assent as soon as heard and understood, that must be admitted for an innate proposition, as well as this maxim, “that it is impossible for the same thing to be, and not to be;” they being upon this ground equal. And as to the difference of being more general, that

Such less general propositions known before these universal maxims.

One and one equal to two, &c. not general nor useful, answered.

makes this maxim more remote from being innate; those general and abstract ideas being more strangers to our first apprehensions, than those of more particular self-evident propositions, and therefore it is longer before they are admitted and assented to by the growing understanding. And as to the usefulness of these magnified maxims, that perhaps will not be found so great as is generally conceived, when it comes in its due place to be more fully considered.

These maxims not being known sometimes till proposed, proves them not innate. § 21. But we have not yet done with assenting to propositions at first hearing and understanding their terms; it is fit we first take notice, that this, instead of being a mark that they are innate, is a proof of the contrary; since it supposes that several, who understand and know other things, are ignorant of these principles, till they are proposed to them; and that one may be unacquainted with these truths, till he hears them from others. For if they were innate, what need they be proposed in order to gaining assent; when, by being in the understanding, by a natural and original impression, (if there were any such) they could not but be known before? Or doth the proposing them print them clearer in the mind than nature did? If so, then the consequence will be, that a man knows them better after he has been thus taught them than he did before. Whence it will follow, that these principles may be made more evident to us by others teaching, than nature has made them by impression; which will ill agree with the opinion of innate principles, and give but little authority to them; but, on the contrary, makes them unfit to be the foundations of all our other knowledge, as they are pretended to be. This cannot be denied; that men grow first acquainted with many of these self-evident truths, upon their being proposed: but it is clear, that whosoever does so, finds in himself that he then begins to know a proposition which he knew not before, and which, from thenceforth, he never questions; not be-

cause it was innate, but because the consideration of the nature of the things contained in those words, would not suffer him to think otherwise, how or whensoever he is brought to reflect on them; and if whatever is assented to, at first hearing and understanding the terms, must pass for an innate principle, every well-grounded observation, drawn from particulars into a general rule, must be innate; when yet it is certain, that not all, but only sagacious heads, light at first on these observations, and reduce them into general propositions, not innate, but collected from a preceding acquaintance, and reflection on particular instances. These, when observing men have made them, unobserving men, when they are proposed to them, cannot refuse their assent to.

§ 22. If it be said, "the understanding hath an implicit knowledge of these principles, but not an explicit, before this first hearing," (as they must, who will say, "that they are in the understanding before they are known") it will be hard to conceive what is meant by a principle imprinted on the understanding implicitly, unless it be this; that the mind is capable of understanding and assenting firmly to such propositions. And thus all mathematical demonstrations, as well as first principles, must be received as native impressions on the mind; which I fear they will scarce allow them to be, who find it harder to demonstrate a proposition, than assent to it when demonstrated. And few mathematicians will be forward to believe, that all the diagrams they have drawn were but copies of those innate characters which nature had engraven upon their minds.

§ 23. There is, I fear, this farther weakness in the foregoing argument, which would persuade us, that therefore those maxims are to be thought innate which men admit at first hearing, because they

Implicitly known before proposing, signifies, that the mind is capable of understanding them, or else signifies nothing.

The argument of assenting on first hearing, is upon a false supposition

of no precedent teaching. assent to propositions, which they are not taught, nor do receive from the force of any argument or demonstration, but a bare explication or understanding of the terms. Under which, there seems to me to lie this fallacy; that men are supposed not to be taught, nor to learn any thing *de novo*; when, in truth, they are taught, and do learn something they were ignorant of before. For first, it is evident, that they have learned the terms and their signification, neither of which was born with them. But this is not all the acquired knowledge in the case: the ideas themselves, about which the proposition is, are not born with them, no more than their names, but got afterwards. So that in all propositions that are assented to at first hearing, the terms of the proposition, their standing for such ideas, and the ideas themselves that they stand for, being neither of them innate, I would fain know what there is remaining in such propositions that is innate. For I would gladly have any one name that proposition, whose terms or ideas were either of them innate. We by degrees get ideas and names, and learn their appropriated connexion one with another; and then to propositions made in such terms, whose signification we have learnt, and wherein the agreement or disagreement we can perceive in our ideas, when put together, is expressed, we at first hearing assent; though to other propositions, in themselves as certain and evident, but which are concerning ideas not so soon or so easily got, we are at the same time no way capable of assenting. For though a child quickly assents to this proposition, "that an apple is not fire," when, by familiar acquaintance, he has got the ideas of those two different things distinctly imprinted on his mind, and has learnt that the names apple and fire stand for them; yet, it will be some years after, perhaps, before the same child will assent to this proposition, "that 'tis impossible for the same thing to be, and not to be;" because, that though, perhaps, the words are as easy

to be learnt, yet the signification of them being more large, comprehensive, and abstract, than of the names annexed to those sensible things the child hath to do with, it is longer before he learns their precise meaning, and it requires more time plainly to form in his mind those general ideas they stand for. Till that be done, you will in vain endeavour to make any child assent to a proposition made up of such general terms: but as soon as ever he has got those ideas, and learned their names, he forwardly closes with the one as well as the other of the forementioned propositions, and with both for the same reason; viz. because he finds the ideas he has in his mind to agree or disagree, according as the words standing for them are affirmed or denied one of another in the proposition. But if propositions be brought to him in words, which stand for ideas he has not yet in his mind; to such propositions, however evidently true or false in themselves, he affords neither assent nor dissent, but is ignorant: for words being but empty sounds, any farther than they are signs of our ideas, we cannot but assent to them, as they correspond to those ideas we have, but no farther than that. But the showing by what steps and ways knowledge comes into our minds, and the grounds of several degrees of assent, being the business of the following discourse, it may suffice to have only touched on it here, as one reason that made me doubt of those innate principles.

§ 24. To conclude this argument of universal consent, I agree, with these defenders of innate principles, that if they are innate, they must needs have universal assent; for that a truth should be innate, and yet not assented to, is to me as unintelligible, as for a man to know a truth, and be ignorant of it, at the same time. But then, by these men's own confession, they cannot be innate; since they are not assented to by those who understand not the terms, nor by a great part of those who do understand them, but have yet

Not innate,
because not
universally
assented to.

never heard nor thought of those propositions; which, I think, is at least one half of mankind. But were the number far less, it would be enough to destroy universal assent, and thereby show these propositions not to be innate, if children alone were ignorant of them.

These maxims not the first known. § 25. But that I may not be accused to argue from the thoughts of infants, which are unknown to us, and to conclude from what passes in their understandings before they express it; I say next, that these two general propositions are not the truths that first possess the minds of children, nor are antecedent to all acquired and adventitious notions; which, if they were innate, they must needs be. Whether we can determine it or no, it matters not; there is certainly a time when children begin to think, and their words and actions do assure us that they do so. When therefore they are capable of thought, of knowledge, of assent, can it rationally be supposed they can be ignorant of those notions that nature has imprinted, were there any such? Can it be imagined, with any appearance of reason, that they perceive the impressions from things without, and be at the same time ignorant of those characters which nature itself has taken care to stamp within? Can they receive and assent to adventitious notions, and be ignorant of those which are supposed woven into the very principles of their being, and imprinted there in indelible characters, to be the foundation and guide of all their acquired knowledge and future reasonings? This would be to make nature take pains to no purpose, or, at least, to write very ill; since its characters could not be read by those eyes which saw other things very well; and those are very ill supposed the clearest parts of truth, and the foundations of all our knowledge, which are not first known, and without which the undoubted knowledge of several other things may be had. The child certainly knows that the nurse that feeds it is neither the cat it plays

with, nor the blackmoor it is afraid of; that the wormseed or mustard it refuses is not the apple or sugar it cries for; this it is certainly and undoubtedly assured of: but will any one say, it is by virtue of this principle, "that it is impossible for the same thing to be, and not to be," that it so firmly assents to these, and other parts of its knowledge; or that the child has any notion or apprehension of that proposition, at an age, wherein yet, it is plain, it knows a great many other truths? He that will say, children join these general abstract speculations with their sucking bottles and their rattles, may, perhaps, with justice, be thought to have more passion and zeal for his opinion, but less sincerity and truth, than one of that age.

§ 26. Though therefore there be several general propositions that meet with constant and ready assent, as soon as proposed to men grown up, who have attained the use of more general and abstract ideas, and names standing for them; yet they not being to be found in those of tender years, who nevertheless know other things, they cannot pretend to universal assent of intelligent persons, and so by no means can be supposed innate; it being impossible, that any truth which is innate (if there were any such) should be unknown, at least to any one who knows any thing else: since, if there are innate truths, they must be innate thoughts; there being nothing a truth in the mind that it has never thought on. Whereby it is evident, if there be any innate truths in the mind, they must necessarily be the first of any thought on; the first that appear there.

§ 27. That the general maxims we are discoursing of are not known to children, idiots, and a great part of mankind, we have already sufficiently proved; whereby it is evident, they have not an universal assent, nor are general impressions. But there is this farther argument in it against their being innate; that these characters, if they were

Not innate, because they appear least, where what is innate shows itself clearest.

native and original impressions, should appear fairest and clearest in those persons in whom yet we find no footsteps of them: and it is, in my opinion, a strong presumption that they are not innate, since they are least known to those, in whom, if they were innate, they must needs exert themselves with most force and vigour. For children, idiots, savages, and illiterate people, being of all others the least corrupted by custom or borrowed opinions, learning and education having not cast their native thoughts into new moulds, nor, by superinducing foreign and studied doctrines, confounded those fair characters nature had written there; one might reasonably imagine, that in their minds, these innate notions should lie open fairly to every one's view, as it is certain the thoughts of children do. It might very well be expected, that these principles should be perfectly known to naturals, which being stamped immediately on the soul, (as these men suppose) can have no dependence on the constitutions or organs of the body, the only confessed difference between them and others. One would think, according to these men's principles, that all these native beams of light (were there any such) should in those, who have no reserves, no arts of concealment, shine out in their full lustre, and leave us in no more doubt of there being there, than we are of their love of pleasure and abhorrence of pain. But, alas! amongst children, idiots, savages, and the grossly illiterate, what general maxims are to be found? what universal principles of knowledge? Their notions are few and narrow, borrowed only from those objects they have had most to do with, and which have made upon their senses the frequentest and strongest impressions. A child knows his nurse and his cradle, and, by degrees, the play-things of a little more advanced age; and a young savage has, perhaps, his head filled with love and hunting, according to the fashion of his tribe. But he that from a child untaught, or a wild inhabitant of the woods, would expect these abstract maxims

and reputed principles of sciences, will, I fear, find himself mistaken. Such kind of general propositions are seldom mentioned in the huts of Indians, much less are they to be found in the thoughts of children, or any impressions of them on the minds of naturals. They are the language and business of the schools and academies of learned nations, accustomed to that sort of conversation or learning, where disputes are frequent; these maxims being suited to artificial argumentation, and useful for conviction, but not much conducing to the discovery of truth or advancement of knowledge. But of their small use for the improvement of knowledge, I shall have occasion to speak more at large, *l. 4. c. 7.*

§ 28. I know not how absurd this may seem to the masters of demonstration: and Recapitulation. probably it will hardly down with any body at first hearing. I must therefore beg a little truce with prejudice, and the forbearance of censure, till I have been heard out in the sequel of this discourse, being very willing to submit to better judgments. And since I impartially search after truth, I shall not be sorry to be convinced that I have been too fond of my own notions; which I confess we are all apt to be, when application and study have warmed our heads with them.

Upon the whole matter, I cannot see any ground to think these two speculative maxims innate, since they are not universally assented to; and the assent they so generally find is no other than what several propositions, not allowed to be innate, equally partake in with them; and since the assent that is given them is produced another way, and comes not from natural inscription, as I doubt not but to make appear in the following discourse. And if these first principles of knowledge and science are found not to be innate, no other speculative maxims can (I suppose) with better right pretend to be so.

CHAPTER III.

No Innate Practical Principles.

No moral principles so clear, and so generally received, as the forementioned speculative maxims.

§ 1. IF those speculative maxims, whereof we discoursed in the foregoing chapter, have not an actual universal assent from all mankind, as we there proved, it is much more visible concerning practical principles, that they come short of an universal reception: and I think it will be hard to instance any one moral rule which can pretend to so general and ready an assent as, "what is, is;" or to be so manifest a truth as this, "that it is impossible for the same thing to be, and not to be." Whereby it is evident, that they are farther removed from a title to be innate; and the doubt of their being native impressions on the mind is stronger against those moral principles than the other. Not that it brings their truth at all in question: they are equally true, though not equally evident. Those speculative maxims carry their own evidence with them: but moral principles require reasoning and discourse, and some exercise of the mind, to discover the certainty of their truth. They lie not open as natural characters engraven on the mind; which, if any such were, they must needs be visible by themselves, and by their own light be certain and known to every body. But this is no derogation to their truth and certainty, no more than it is to the truth or certainty of the three angles of a triangle being equal to two right ones; because it is not so evident, as "the whole is bigger than a part;" nor so apt to be assented to at first hearing. It may suffice, that these moral rules are capable of demonstration; and therefore it is our own fault if we come not to a certain knowledge of them. But the ignorance wherein many men are of them, and the slowness of assent wherewith others receive them, are manifest

proofs that they are not innate, and such as offer themselves to their view without searching.

§ 2. Whether there be any such moral principles, wherein all men do agree, I appeal to any, who have been but moderately conversant in the history of mankind, and looked abroad beyond the smoke of their own chimneys. Where is that practical truth, that is universally received without doubt or question, as it must be, if innate? Justice, and keeping of contracts, is that which most men seem to agree in. This is a principle which is thought to extend itself to the dens of thieves, and the confederacies of the greatest villains; and they who have gone farthest towards the putting off of humanity itself, keep faith and rules of justice one with another. I grant that outlaws themselves do this one amongst another; but it is without receiving these as the innate laws of nature. They practise them as rules of convenience within their own communities: but it is impossible to conceive, that he embraces justice as a practical principle, who acts fairly with his fellow-highwayman, and at the same time plunders or kills the next honest man he meets with. Justice and truth are the common ties of society; and, therefore, even outlaws and robbers, who break with all the world besides, must keep faith and rules of equity amongst themselves, or else they cannot hold together. But will any one say, that those that live by fraud or rapine have innate principles of truth and justice which they allow and assent to?

§ 3. Perhaps it will be urged, that the tacit assent of their minds agrees to what their practice contradicts. I answer, first, I have always thought the actions of men the best interpreters of their thoughts. But since it is certain, that most men's practices, and some men's open professions, have either questioned or denied these principles, it is impossible to establish an universal

Faith and justice not owned as principles by all men.

Objection. Though men deny them in their practice, yet they admit them in their thoughts, answered.

consent (though we should look for it only amongst grown men), without which it is impossible to conclude them innate. Secondly, it is very strange and unreasonable, to suppose innate practical principles that terminate only in contemplation. Practical principles derived from nature are there for operation, and must produce conformity of action, not barely speculative assent to their truth, or else they are in vain distinguished from speculative maxims. Nature, I confess, has put into man a desire of happiness, and an aversion to misery: these indeed are innate practical principles, which (as practical principles ought) do continue constantly to operate and influence all our actions without ceasing: these may be observed, in all persons and all ages, steady and universal; but these are inclinations of the appetite to good, not impressions of truth on the understanding. I deny not that there are natural tendencies imprinted on the minds of men; and that, from the very first instances of sense and perception, there are some things that are grateful, and others unwelcome to them; some things that they incline to, and others that they fly: but this makes nothing for innate characters on the mind, which are to be the principles of knowledge, regulating our practice. Such natural impressions on the understanding are so far from being confirmed hereby, that this is an argument against them; since, if there were certain characters imprinted by nature on the understanding, as the principles of knowledge, we could not but perceive them constantly operate in us, and influence our knowledge, as we do those others on the will and appetite; which never cease to be the constant springs and motives of all our actions, to which we perpetually feel them strongly impelling us.

Moral rules need a proof, ergo not innate.

§ 4. Another reason that makes me doubt of any innate practical principles, is, that I think there cannot any one moral rule be proposed, whereof a man may not

justly demand a reason: which would be perfectly ridiculous and absurd, if they were innate, or so much as self-evident; which every innate principle must needs be, and not need any proof to ascertain its truth, nor want any reason to gain it approbation. He would be thought void of common sense, who asked on the one side, or on the other side went to give, a reason, why it is impossible for the same thing to be, and not to be. It carries its own light and evidence with it, and needs no other proof: he that understands the terms, assents to it for its own sake, or else nothing will ever be able to prevail with him to do it. But should that most unshaken rule of morality, and foundation of all social virtue, "that one should do as he would be done unto," be proposed to one who never heard it before, but yet is of capacity to understand its meaning, might he not without any absurdity ask a reason why? And were not he that proposed it bound to make out the truth and reasonableness of it to him? which plainly shows it not to be innate; for if it were, it could neither want nor receive any proof, but must needs (at least, as soon as heard and understood) be received and assented to as an unquestionable truth, which a man can by no means doubt of. So that the truth of all these moral rules plainly depends upon some other antecedent to them, and from which they must be deduced; which could not be, if either they were innate, or so much as self-evident.

§ 5. That men should keep their com- Instance in
pacts is certainly a great and undeniable keeping
rule in morality. But yet, if a Christian, compacts.
who has the view of happiness and misery in another life, be asked why a man must keep his word, he will give this as a reason; because God, who has the power of eternal life and death, requires it of us. But if an Hobbist be asked why, he will answer, because the public requires it, and the Leviathan will punish you, if you do not. And if one of the old philosophers had been asked, he would have answered, because it was

dishonest, below the dignity of a man, and opposite to virtue, the highest perfection of human nature, to do otherwise.

Virtue generally approved, not because innate, but because profitable.

§ 6. Hence naturally flows the great variety of opinions concerning moral rules which are to be found among men, according to the different sorts of happiness they have a prospect of, or propose to themselves: which could not be if practical principles were innate, and imprinted in our minds immediately by the hand of God. I grant the existence of God is so many ways manifest, and the obedience we owe him so congruous to the light of reason, that a great part of mankind give testimony to the law of nature; but yet I think it must be allowed, that several moral rules may receive from mankind a very general approbation, without either knowing or admitting the true ground of morality; which can only be the will and law of a God, who sees men in the dark, has in his hand rewards and punishments, and power enough to call to account the proudest offender: for God having, by an inseparable connexion, joined virtue and public happiness together, and made the practice thereof necessary to the preservation of society, and visibly beneficial to all with whom the virtuous man has to do, it is no wonder that every one should not only allow, but recommend and magnify, those rules to others, from whose observance of them he is sure to reap advantage to himself. He may, out of interest as well as conviction, cry up that for sacred, which, if once trampled on and profaned, he himself cannot be safe nor secure. This, though it takes nothing from the moral and eternal obligation which these rules evidently have, yet it shows that the outward acknowledgment men pay to them in their words, proves not that they are innate principles; nay, it proves not so much as that men assent to them inwardly in their own minds, as the inviolable rules of their own practice: since we find that self-interest, and

the conveniences of this life, make many men own an outward profession and approbation of them, whose actions sufficiently prove that they very little consider the law-giver that prescribed these rules, nor the hell that he has ordained for the punishment of those that transgress them.

§ 7. For if we will not in civility allow too much sincerity to the professions of most men, but think their actions to be the interpreters of their thoughts, we shall find that they have no such internal veneration for these rules, nor so full a persuasion of their certainty and obligation. The great principle of morality, "to do as one would be done to," is more commended than practised. But the breach of this rule cannot be a greater vice than to teach others that it is no moral rule, nor obligatory, would be thought madness, and contrary to that interest men sacrifice to, when they break it themselves. Perhaps conscience will be urged as checking us for such breaches, and so the internal obligation and establishment of the rule be preserved.

Men's actions convince us that the rule of virtue is not their internal principle.

§ 8. To which I answer, that I doubt not but, without being written on their hearts, many men may, by the same way that they come to the knowledge of other things, come to assent to several moral rules, and be convinced of their obligation. Others also may come to be of the same mind, from their education, company, and customs of their country; which persuasion, however got, will serve to set conscience on work, which is nothing else but our own opinion or judgment of the moral rectitude or pravity of our own actions. And if conscience be a proof of innate principles, contraries may be innate principles; since some men, with the same bent of conscience, prosecute what others avoid.

Conscience no proof of any innate moral rule.

§ 9. But I cannot see how any men should ever transgress those moral rules,

Instances of enormities

practised without remorse. with confidence and serenity, were they innate, and stamped upon their minds. View but an army at the sacking of a town, and see what observation or sense of moral principles, or what touch of conscience for all the outrages they do. Robberies, murders, rapes, are the sports of men set at liberty from punishment and censure. Have there not been whole nations, and those of the most civilised people, amongst whom the exposing their children, and leaving them in the fields to perish by want or wild beasts, has been the practice, as little condemned or scrupled as the begetting them? Do they not still, in some countries, put them into the same graves with their mothers, if they die in childbirth; or despatch them, if a pretended astrologer declares them to have unhappy stars? And are there not places where, at a certain age, they kill or expose their parents without any remorse at all? In a part of Asia, the sick, when their case comes to be thought desperate, are carried out and laid on the earth, before they are dead; and left there, exposed to wind and weather, to perish without assistance or pity (*a*). It is familiar among the Mingrelians, a people professing christianity, to bury their children alive without scruple (*b*). There are places where they eat their own children (*c*). The Caribbees were wont to geld their children, on purpose to fat and eat them (*d*). And Garcilasso de la Vega tells us of a people in Peru which were wont to fat and eat the children they got on their female captives, whom they kept as concubines for that purpose; and when they were past breeding, the mothers themselves were killed too and eaten (*e*). The virtues whereby the Tououpinambos believed they merited paradise were revenge, and eating abundance of their enemies. They have not

(*a*) Gruber apud Thevenot, part 4, p. 13. (*b*) Lambert apud Thevenot, p. 38.
 (*c*) Vossius de Nili Origine, c. 18, 19.
 (*d*) P. Mart. Dec. 1. (*e*) Hist. des Incas, l. 1. c. 12.

so much as a name for God (*f*), and have no religion, no worship. The saints who are canonised amongst the Turks lead lives which one cannot with modesty relate. A remarkable passage to this purpose, out of the voyage of Baumgarten, which is a book not every day to be met with, I shall set down at large in the language it is published in. *Ibi (sc. prope Belbes in Ægypto) vidimus sanctum unum Saracenicum inter arenarum cumulos, ita ut ex utero matris produit, nudum sedentem. Mos est, ut didicimus, Mahometistis, ut eos, qui amentes et sine ratione sunt, pro sanctis colant et venerentur. Insuper et eos, qui cum diu vitam egerint inquinatissimam, voluntariam demum pœnitentiam et paupertatem, sanctitate venerandos deputant. Ejusmodi verò genus hominum libertatem quandam effrænem habent, domos quas volunt intrandi, edendi, bibendi, et quod majus est, concumbendi; ex quo concubitu si proles secuta fuerit, sancta similiter habetur. His ergo hominibus dum vivunt, magnos exhibent honores; mortuis verò vel templa vel monumenta extruunt amplissima, eosque contingere ac sepelire maximæ fortunæ ducunt loco. Audivimus hæc dicta et dicenda per interpretem à Mucrelo nostro. Insuper sanctum illum, quem eo loco vidimus, publicitus apprimè commendari, eum esse hominem sanctum, divinum ac integritate præcipuum; eo quod, nec feminarum unquam esset, nec puerorum, sed tantummodo asellarum concubitor atque mularum.—* Peregr. Baumgarten, l. 2. c. 1. p. 73. More of the same kind, concerning these precious saints amongst the Turks, may be seen in Pietro della Valle, in his letter of the 25th of January, 1616. Where then are those innate principles of justice, piety, gratitude, equity, chastity? Or, where is that universal consent, that assures us there are such inbred rules? Murders in duels, when fashion has made them honourable, are committed without remorse of conscience; nay, in many places, innocence in this case is the greatest ig-

(*f*) Lery, c. 16. 216. 231.

nominy. And if we look abroad, to take a view of men as they are, we shall find that they have remorse in one place for doing or omitting that, which others, in another place, think they merit by.

Men have contrary practical principles. § 10. He that will carefully peruse the history of mankind, and look abroad into the several tribes of men, and with indifference survey their actions, will be able to satisfy himself that there is scarce that principle of morality to be named, or rule of virtue to be thought on (those only excepted that are absolutely necessary to hold society together, which commonly, too, are neglected betwixt distinct societies), which is not, somewhere or other, slighted and condemned by the general fashion of whole societies of men, governed by practical opinions and rules of living quite opposite to others.

Whole nations reject several moral rules. § 11. Here, perhaps, it will be objected, that it is no argument that the rule is not known, because it is broken. I grant the objection good where men, though they transgress, yet disown not the law; where fear of shame, censure, or punishment, carries the mark of some awe it has upon them. But it is impossible to conceive that a whole nation of men should all publicly reject and renounce what every one of them, certainly and infallibly, knew to be a law; for so they must, who have it naturally imprinted on their minds. It is possible men may sometimes own rules of morality which, in their private thoughts, they do not believe to be true, only to keep themselves in reputation and esteem amongst those who are persuaded of their obligation. But it is not to be imagined that a whole society of men should publicly and professedly disown and cast off a rule, which they could not, in their own minds, but be infallibly certain was a law; nor be ignorant that all men they should have to do with knew it to be such: and therefore must every one of them apprehend from others all the

contempt and abhorrence due to one who professes himself void of humanity; and one, who, confounding the known and natural measures of right and wrong, cannot but be looked on as the professed enemy of their peace and happiness. Whatever practical principle is innate cannot but be known to every one to be just and good. It is therefore little less than a contradiction to suppose that whole nations of men should, both in their professions and practice, unanimously and universally give the lie to what, by the most invincible evidence, every one of them knew to be true, right, and good. This is enough to satisfy us that no practical rule, which is any where universally, and with public approbation or allowance, transgressed, can be supposed innate. But I have something further to add, in answer to this objection.

§ 12. The breaking of a rule, say you, is no argument that it is unknown. I grant it: but the generally allowed breach of it any where, I say, is a proof that it is not innate. For example: let us take any of these rules, which being the most obvious deductions of human reason, and conformable to the natural inclination of the greatest part of men, fewest people have had the impudence to deny, or inconsideration to doubt of. If any can be thought to be naturally imprinted, none, I think, can have a fairer pretence to be innate than this; "parents, preserve and cherish your children." When therefore you say that this is an innate rule, what do you mean? Either that it is an innate principle, which upon all occasions excites and directs the actions of all men; or else that it is a truth, which all men have imprinted on their minds, and which therefore they know and assent to. But in neither of these senses is it innate. First, that it is not a principle which influences all men's actions, is what I have proved by the examples before cited: nor need we seek so far as Mingrelia or Peru to find instances of such as neglect, abuse, nay, and destroy their children; or look on it only as the more than

brutality of some savage and barbarous nations, when we remember that it was a familiar and uncondemned practice amongst the Greeks and Romans to expose, without pity or remorse, their innocent infants. Secondly, that it is an innate truth, known to all men, is also false. For, "parents, preserve your children," is so far from an innate truth, that it is no truth at all; it being a command, and not a proposition, and so not capable of truth or falsehood. To make it capable of being assented to as true, it must be reduced to some such proposition as this: "it is the duty of parents to preserve their children." But what duty is cannot be understood without a law; nor a law be known, or supposed, without a law-maker, or without reward and punishment: so that it is impossible that this, or any other practical principle, should be innate, *i. e.* be imprinted on the mind as a duty, without supposing the ideas of God, of law, of obligation, of punishment, of a life after this, innate: for that punishment follows not, in this life, the breach of this rule, and consequently, that it has not the force of a law in countries where the generally allowed practice runs counter to it, is in itself evident. But these ideas (which must be all of them innate, if any thing as a duty be so) are so far from being innate, that it is not every studious or thinking man, much less every one that is born, in whom they are to be found clear and distinct: and that one of them, which of all others seems most likely to be innate, is not so (I mean the idea of God) I think, in the next chapter, will appear very evident to any considering man.

§ 13. From what has been said, I think we may safely conclude, that whatever practical rule is, in any place, generally and with allowance broken, cannot be supposed innate; it being impossible that men should, without shame or fear, confidently and serenely break a rule, which they could not but evidently know that God had set up, and would certainly

punish the breach of (which they must, if it were innate) to a degree to make it a very ill bargain to the transgressor. Without such a knowledge as this a man can never be certain that any thing is his duty. Ignorance, or doubt of the law, hopes to escape the knowledge or power of the law-maker, or the like, may make men give way to a present appetite; but let any one see the fault, and the rod by it, and with the transgression a fire ready to punish it; a pleasure tempting, and the hand of the Almighty visibly held up, and prepared to take vengeance (for this must be the case, where any duty is imprinted on the mind); and then tell me whether it be possible for people, with such a prospect, such a certain knowledge as this, wantonly, and without scruple, to offend against a law, which they carry about them in indelible characters, and that stares them in the face whilst they are breaking it? Whether men, at the same time that they feel in themselves the imprinted edicts of an omnipotent law-maker, can with assurance and gaiety slight and trample under foot his most sacred injunctions? And, lastly, whether it be possible, that whilst a man thus openly bids defiance to this innate law and supreme law-giver, all the bystanders, yea, even the governors and rulers of the people, full of the same sense both of the law and law-maker, should silently connive, without testifying their dislike, or laying the least blame on it? Principles of actions indeed there are lodged in men's appetites, but these are so far from being innate moral principles, that, if they were left to their full swing, they would carry men to the overturning, of all morality. Moral laws are set as a curb and restraint to these exorbitant desires, which they cannot be but by rewards and punishments, that will overbalance the satisfaction any one shall propose to himself in the breach of the law. If therefore any thing be imprinted on the minds of all men as a law, all men must have a certain and unavoidable knowledge that

certain and unavoidable punishment will attend the breach of it. For if men can be ignorant or doubtful of what is innate, innate principles are insisted on and urged to no purpose; truth and certainty (the things pretended) are not at all secured by them; but men are in the same uncertain, floating estate with, as without them. An evident indubitable knowledge of unavoidable punishment, great enough to make the transgression very uneligible, must accompany an innate law; unless, with an innate law, they can suppose an innate gospel too. I would not here be mistaken, as if, because I deny an innate law, I thought there were none but positive laws. There is a great deal of difference between an innate law, and a law of nature; between something imprinted on our minds in their very original, and something that we being ignorant of may attain to the knowledge of by the use and due application of our natural faculties. And I think they equally forsake the truth, who, running into contrary extremes, either affirm an innate law, or deny that there is a law knowable by the light of nature, *i. e.* without the help of positive revelation.

Those who maintain innate practical principles tell us not what they are.

§ 14. The difference there is amongst men in their practical principles is so evident, that, I think, I need say no more to evince that it will be impossible to find any innate moral rules by this mark of general assent: and it is enough to make one suspect that the supposition of such innate principles is but an opinion taken up at pleasure, since those who talk so confidently of them are so sparing to tell us which they are. This might with justice be expected from those men who lay stress upon this opinion; and it gives occasion to distrust either their knowledge or charity, who declaring that God has imprinted on the minds of men the foundations of knowledge, and the rules of living, are yet so little favourable to the information of their neighbours, or

the quiet of mankind, as not to point out to them which they are in the variety men are distracted with. But, in truth, were there any such innate principles, there would be no need to teach them. Did men find such innate propositions stamped on their minds, they would easily be able to distinguish them from other truths, that they afterwards learned, and deduced from them; and there would be nothing more easy than to know what, and how many they were. There could be no more doubt about their number than there is about the number of our fingers; and it is like then every system would be ready to give them us by tale. But since nobody, that I know, has ventured yet to give a catalogue of them, they cannot blame those who doubt of these innate principles; since even they who require men to believe that there are such innate propositions, do not tell us what they are. It is easy to foresee, that if different men of different sects should go about to give us a list of those innate practical principles, they would set down only such as suited their distinct hypotheses, and were fit to support the doctrines of their particular schools or churches; a plain evidence that there are no such innate truths. Nay, a great part of men are so far from finding any such innate moral principles in themselves, that by denying freedom to mankind, and thereby making men no other than bare machines, they take away not only innate but all moral rules whatsoever, and leave not a possibility to believe any such, to those who cannot conceive how any thing can be capable of a law that is not a free agent: and, upon that ground, they must necessarily reject all principles of virtue, who cannot put morality and mechanism together; which are not very easy to be reconciled, or made consistent.

§ 15. When I had writ this, being informed that my lord Herbert had, in his book *de Veritate*, assigned these innate principles, I presently consulted him,

Lord Herbert's innate principles examined.

hoping to find, in a man of so great parts, something that might satisfy me in this point, and put an end to my inquiry. In his chapter *de Instinctu Naturali*, p. 72, edit. 1650, I met with these six marks of his *Notitiæ Communes*: 1. *Prioritas*. 2. *Independentia*. 3. *Universalitas*. 4. *Certitudo*. 5. *Necessitas*, i. e. as he explains it, *faciunt ad hominis conservationem*. 6. *Modus conformationis*, i. e. *Assensus nullâ interpositâ morâ*. And at the latter end of his little treatise, *De Religione Laici*, he says this of these innate principles: *Adeo ut non uniuscujusvis religionis confinio arcentur quæ ubique vigent veritates. Sunt enim in ipsâ mente cælitus descriptæ, nullisque traditionibus, sive scriptis, sive non scriptis, obnoxia*, p. 3. And, *Veritates nostræ catholicæ quæ tanquam indubia Dei effata in foro interiori descriptæ*. Thus having given the marks of the innate principles or common notions, and asserted their being imprinted on the minds of men by the hand of God, he proceeds to set them down; and they are these: 1. *Esse aliquod supremum numen*. 2. *Numen illud coli debere*. 3. *Virtutem cum pietate conjunctam optimam esse rationem cultûs divini*. 4. *Resipiscendum esse à peccatis*. 5. *Dari præmium vel pœnam post hanc vitam transactam*. Though I allow these to be clear truths, and such as, if rightly explained, a rational creature can hardly avoid giving his assent to; yet I think he is far from proving them innate impressions *in foro interiori descriptæ*. For I must take leave to observe,

§ 16. First, that these five propositions are either not all, or more than all, those common notions writ on our minds by the finger of God, if it were reasonable to believe any at all to be so written: since there are other propositions, which, even by his own rules, have as just a pretence to such an original, and may be as well admitted for innate principles, as at least some of these five he enumerates, viz. “do as thou wouldest be done unto;” and, perhaps, some hundreds of others, when well considered.

§ 17. Secondly, that all his marks are not to be found in each of his five propositions, viz. his first, second, and third marks agree perfectly to neither of them; and the first, second, third, fourth, and sixth marks agree but ill to his third, fourth, and fifth propositions. For besides that we are assured from history of many men, nay, whole nations, who doubt or disbelieve some or all of them, I cannot see how the third, viz. “that virtue joined with piety is the best worship of God,” can be an innate principle, when the name, or sound, virtue, is so hard to be understood; liable to so much uncertainty in its signification; and the thing it stands for so much contended about, and difficult to be known. And therefore this cannot be but a very uncertain rule of human practice, and serve but very little to the conduct of our lives, and is therefore very unfit to be assigned as an innate practical principle.

§ 18. For let us consider this proposition as to its meaning (for it is the sense, and not sound, that is and must be the principle or common notion), viz. “virtue is the best worship of God;” i. e. is most acceptable to him; which if virtue be taken, as most commonly it is, for those actions which, according to the different opinions of several countries, are accounted laudable, will be a proposition so far from being certain, that it will not be true. If virtue be taken for actions conformable to God’s will, or to the rule prescribed by God, which is the true and only measure of virtue, when virtue is used to signify what is in its own nature right and good; then this proposition, “that virtue is the best worship of God,” will be most true and certain, but of very little use in human life: since it will amount to no more but this, viz. “that God is pleased with the doing of what he commands;” which a man may certainly know to be true, without knowing what it is that God doth command; and so be as far from any rule or principle of his actions as he was before. And I think very few will take a proposition which amounts to no more than this, viz.

that God is pleased with the doing of what he himself commands, for an innate moral principle writ on the minds of all men (however true and certain it may be), since it teaches so little. Whosoever does so, will have reason to think hundreds of propositions innate principles; since there are many, which have as good a title as this to be received for such, which nobody yet ever put into that rank of innate principles.

§ 19. Nor is the fourth proposition (viz. "men must repent of their sins") much more instructive, till what those actions are, that are meant by sins, be set down. For the word *peccata*, or sins, being put, as it usually is, to signify in general ill actions, that will draw punishment upon the doers, what great principle of morality can that be, to tell us we should be sorry, and cease to do that which will bring mischief upon us, without knowing what those particular actions are, that will do so? Indeed, this is a very true proposition, and fit to be inculcated on, and received by those, who are supposed to have been taught, what actions in all kinds are sins; but neither this nor the former can be imagined to be innate principles, nor to be of any use, if they were innate, unless the particular measures and bounds of all virtues and vices were engraven in men's minds, and were innate principles also; which I think is very much to be doubted. And therefore, I imagine, it will scarce seem possible that God should engrave principles in men's minds, in words of uncertain signification, such as virtues and sins, which, amongst different men, stand for different things: nay, it cannot be supposed to be in words at all; which, being in most of these principles very general names, cannot be understood, but by knowing the particulars comprehended under them. And in the practical instances, the measures must be taken from the knowledge of the actions themselves, and the rules of them, abstracted from words, and antecedent to the knowledge of names; which rules a man must know, what language soever he chance to

learn, whether English or Japan, or if he should learn no language at all, or never should understand the use of words, as happens in the case of dumb and deaf men. When it shall be made out that men ignorant of words, or untaught by the laws and customs of their country, know that it is part of the worship of God not to kill another man; not to know more women than one; not to procure abortion; not to expose their children; not to take from another what is his, though we want it ourselves, but, on the contrary, relieve and supply his wants; and whenever we have done the contrary we ought to repent, be sorry, and resolve to do so no more: when, I say, all men shall be proved actually to know and allow all these and a thousand other such rules, all which come under these two general words made use of above, viz. "virtutes et peccata," virtues and sins, there will be more reason for admitting these and the like for common notions and practical principles. Yet, after all, universal consent (were there any in moral principles) to truths, the knowledge whereof may be attained otherwise, would scarce prove them to be innate; which is all I contend for.

§ 20. Nor will it be of much moment here to offer that very ready, but not very material answer, (viz.) that the innate principles of morality may, by education and custom, and the general opinion of those amongst whom we converse, be darkened, and at last quite worn out of the minds of men. Which assertion of theirs, if true, quite takes away the argument of universal consent, by which this opinion of innate principles is endeavoured to be proved: unless those men will think it reasonable that their private persuasions, or that of their party, should pass for universal consent: a thing not unfrequently done, when men, presuming themselves to be the only masters of right reason, cast by the votes and opinions of the rest of mankind, as not worthy the reckoning. And then

their argument stands thus: "the principles which all mankind allow for true are innate; those that men of right reason admit, are the principles allowed by all mankind; we, and those of our mind, are men of reason; therefore we agreeing, our principles are innate;" which is a very pretty way of arguing, and a short cut to infallibility. For otherwise it will be very hard to understand, how there be some principles, which all men do acknowledge and agree in; and yet there are none of those principles, which are not by depraved custom, and ill education, blotted out of the minds of many men: which is to say, that all men admit, but yet many men do deny, and dissent from them. And indeed the supposition of such first principles will serve us to very little purpose; and we shall be as much at a loss with, as without them, if they may, by any human power, such as is the will of our teachers, or opinions of our companions, be altered or lost in us: and notwithstanding all this boast of first principles and innate light, we shall be as much in the dark and uncertainty as if there were no such thing at all: it being all one, to have no rule, and one that will warp any way; or, amongst various and contrary rules, not to know which is the right. But concerning innate principles, I desire these men to say, whether they can, or cannot, by education and custom, be blurred and blotted out: if they cannot, we must find them in all mankind alike, and they must be clear in every body: and if they may suffer variation from adventitious notions, we must then find them clearest and most perspicuous, nearest the fountain, in children and illiterate people, who have received least impression from foreign opinions. Let them take which side they please, they will certainly find it inconsistent with visible matter of fact and daily observation.

Contrary principles in the world.

§ 21. I easily grant that there are great numbers of opinions, which, by men of different countries, educations, and tem-

pers, are received and embraced as first and unquestionable principles; many whereof, both for their absurdity, as well as oppositions to one another, it is impossible should be true. But yet all those propositions, how remote soever from reason, are so sacred somewhere or other, that men even of good understanding in other matters will sooner part with their lives, and whatever is dearest to them, than suffer themselves to doubt, or others to question, the truth of them.

§ 22. This, however strange it may seem, is that which every day's experience confirms; and will not, perhaps, appear so wonderful, if we consider the ways and steps by which it is brought about; and how really it may come to pass, that doctrines that have been derived from no better original than the superstition of a nurse, or the authority of an old woman, may, by length of time, and consent of neighbours, grow up to the dignity of principles in religion or morality. For such who are careful (as they call it) to principle children well (and few there be who have not a set of those principles for them, which they believe in) instil into the unwary, and as yet unprejudiced understanding (for white paper receives any characters), those doctrines they would have them retain and profess. These being taught them as soon as they have any apprehension; and still as they grow up confirmed to them, either by the open profession, or tacit consent, of all they have to do with; or at least by those, of whose wisdom, knowledge, and piety, they have an opinion, who never suffer these propositions to be otherwise mentioned, but as the basis and foundation on which they build their religion and manners; come, by these means, to have the reputation of unquestionable, self-evident, and innate truths.

How men commonly come by their principles.

§ 23. To which we may add, that when men, so instructed, are grown up, and reflect on their own minds, they cannot find any thing more ancient there than

those opinions which were taught them before their memory began to keep a register of their actions, or date the time when any new thing appeared to them; and therefore make no scruple to conclude, that those propositions, of whose knowledge they can find in themselves no original, were certainly the impress of God and nature upon their minds, and not taught them by any one else. These they entertain and submit to, as many do to their parents, with veneration; not because it is natural; nor do children do it, where they are not so taught; but because, having been always so educated, and having no remembrance of the beginning of this respect, they think it is natural.

§ 24. This will appear very likely, and almost unavoidable to come to pass, if we consider the nature of mankind, and the constitution of human affairs; wherein most men cannot live without employing their time in the daily labours of their callings; nor be at quiet in their minds without some foundation or principle to rest their thoughts on. There is scarce any one so floating and superficial in his understanding, who hath not some revered propositions, which are to him the principles on which he bottoms his reasonings; and by which he judgeth of truth and falsehood, right and wrong: which some, wanting skill and leisure, and others the inclination, and some being taught that they ought not to examine, there are few to be found who are not exposed by their ignorance, laziness, education, or precipitancy, to take them upon trust.

§ 25. This is evidently the case of all children and young folk; and custom, a greater power than nature, seldom failing to make them worship for divine what she hath inured them to bow their minds, and submit their understandings to, it is no wonder that grown men, either perplexed in the necessary affairs of life, or hot in the pursuit of pleasures, should not seriously sit down to examine their own tenets; especially when one of their principles is, that principles ought not to

be questioned. And had men leisure, parts, and will, who is there almost that dare shake the foundations of all his past thoughts and actions, and endure to bring upon himself the shame of having been a long time wholly in mistake and error? Who is there hardy enough to contend with the reproach which is every where prepared for those who dare venture to dissent from the received opinions of their country or party? And where is the man to be found that can patiently prepare himself to bear the name of whimsical, sceptical, or atheist, which he is sure to meet with, who does in the least scruple any of the common opinions? And he will be much more afraid to question those principles, when he shall think them, as most men do, the standards set up by God in his mind, to be the rule and touchstone of all other opinions. And what can hinder him from thinking them sacred, when he finds them the earliest of all his own thoughts, and the most revered by others?

§ 26. It is easy to imagine how by these means it comes to pass that men worship the idols that have been set up in their minds; grow fond of the notions they have been long acquainted with there; and stamp the characters of divinity upon absurdities and errors, become zealous votaries to bulls and monkeys; and contend too, fight, and die in defence of their opinions: "Dum solos credit habendos esse deos, quos ipse colit." For since the reasoning faculties of the soul, which are almost constantly, though not always warily nor wisely, employed, would not know how to move, for want of a foundation and footing, in most men; who through laziness or avocation do not, or for want of time, or true helps, or for other causes, cannot penetrate into the principles of knowledge, and trace truth to its fountain and original; it is natural for them, and almost unavoidable, to take up with some borrowed principles: which being reputed and presumed to be the evident proofs of other things, are thought not to need any other proof themselves. Whoever shall re-

ceive any of these into his mind, and entertain them there, with the reverence usually paid to principles, never venturing to examine them, but accustoming himself to believe them, because they are to be believed, may take up from his education, and the fashions of his country, any absurdity for innate principles; and by long poring on the same objects, so dim his sight, as to take monsters lodged in his own brain for the images of the Deity, and the workmanship of his hands.

Principles must be examined. § 27. By this progress how many there are who arrive at principles which they believe innate may be easily observed, in the variety of opposite principles held and contended for by all sorts and degrees of men. And he that shall deny this to be the method wherein most men proceed to the assurance they have of the truth and evidence of their principles, will perhaps find it a hard matter any other way to account for the contrary tenets which are firmly believed, confidently asserted, and which great numbers are ready at any time to seal with their blood. And, indeed, if it be the privilege of innate principles to be received upon their own authority, without examination, I know not what may not be believed, or how any one's principles can be questioned. If they may, and ought to be examined, and tried, I desire to know how first and innate principles can be tried; or at least it is reasonable to demand the marks and characters, whereby the genuine innate principles may be distinguished from others; that so, amidst the great variety of pretenders, I may be kept from mistakes, in so material a point as this. When this is done, I shall be ready to embrace such welcome and useful propositions; and till then I may with modesty doubt, since I fear universal consent, which is the only one produced, will scarce prove a sufficient mark to direct my choice, and assure me of any innate principles. From what has been said, I think it past doubt that there are no practical principles wherein all men agree, and therefore none innate.

CHAPTER IV.

Other Considerations concerning Innate Principles, both Speculative and Practical.

§ 1. HAD those who would persuade us that there are innate principles not taken them together in gross, but considered separately the parts out of which those propositions are made, they would not, perhaps, have been so forward to believe they were innate: since, if the ideas which made up those truths were not, it was impossible that the propositions made up of them should be innate, or the knowledge of them be born with us. For if the ideas be not innate, there was a time when the mind was without those principles; and then they will not be innate, but be derived from some other original. For where the ideas themselves are not, there can be no knowledge, no assent, no mental or verbal propositions about them.

Principles not innate, unless their ideas be innate.

§ 2. If we will attentively consider newborn children, we shall have little reason to think that they bring many ideas into the world with them. For bating perhaps some faint ideas of hunger and thirst, and warmth, and some pains which they may have felt in the womb, there is not the least appearance of any settled ideas at all in them; especially of ideas, answering the terms which make up those universal propositions, that are esteemed innate principles. One may perceive how, by degrees, afterwards, ideas come into their minds; and that they get no more, nor no other, than what experience, and the observation of things that come in their way, furnish them with: which might be enough to satisfy us that they are not original characters, stamped on the mind.

Ideas, especially those belonging to principles, not born with children.

§ 3. "It is impossible for the same thing to be, and

not to be," is certainly (if there be any such) an innate principle. But can any one think, or will any one say, that impossibility and identity are two innate ideas? Are they such as all mankind have, and bring into the world with them? And are they those which are the first in children, and antecedent to all acquired ones? If they are innate, they must needs be so. Hath a child an idea of impossibility and identity before it has of white or black, sweet or bitter? And is it from the knowledge of this principle that it concludes, that wormwood rubbed on the nipple hath not the same taste that it used to receive from thence? Is it the actual knowledge of "impossibile est idem esse, et non esse," that makes a child distinguish between its mother and a stranger? or that makes it fond of the one and fly the other? Or does the mind regulate itself and its assent by ideas that it never yet had? or the understanding draw conclusions from principles which it never yet knew or understood? The names impossibility and identity stand for two ideas, so far from being innate, or born with us, that I think it requires great care and attention to form them right in our understandings. They are so far from being brought into the world with us, so remote from the thoughts of infancy and childhood, that I believe, upon examination it will be found, that many grown men want them.

Identity, an idea not innate. § 4. If identity (to instance in that alone) be a native impression, and consequently so clear and obvious to us, that we must needs know it even from our cradles, I would gladly be resolved by one of seven, or seventy years old, whether a man, being a creature consisting of soul and body, be the same man when his body is changed, Whether Euphorbus and Pythagoras, having had the same soul, were the same men, though they lived several ages asunder? Nay, whether the cock too, which had the same soul, were not the same with both of them? Whereby, perhaps, it will appear that

our idea of sameness is not so settled and clear as to deserve to be thought innate in us. For if those innate ideas are not clear and distinct, so as to be universally known, and naturally agreed on, they cannot be subjects of universal and undoubted truths; but will be the unavoidable occasion of perpetual uncertainty. For, I suppose, every one's idea of identity will not be the same that Pythagoras and others of his followers have: And which then shall be true? Which innate? Or are there two different ideas of identity, both innate?

§ 5. Nor let any one think that the questions I have here proposed about the identity of man are bare empty speculations; which if they were, would be enough to show that there was in the understandings of men no innate idea of identity. He that shall, with a little attention, reflect on the resurrection, and consider that divine justice will bring to judgment, at the last day, the very same persons, to be happy or miserable in the other, who did well or ill in this life; will find it perhaps not easy to resolve with himself what makes the same man, or wherein identity consists: and will not be forward to think he, and every one, even children themselves, have naturally a clear idea of it.

§ 6. Let us examine that principle of mathematics, viz. "that the whole is bigger than a part." This, I take it, is reckoned amongst innate principles. I am sure it has as good a title as any to be thought so; which yet nobody can think it to be, when he considers the ideas it comprehends in it, "whole and part," are perfectly relative: but the positive ideas, to which they properly and immediately belong, are extension and number, of which alone whole and part are relations. So that if whole and part are innate ideas, extension and number must be so too; it being impossible to have an idea of a relation, without having any at all of the thing to which it belongs, and in which it is

founded. Now whether the minds of men have naturally imprinted on them the ideas of extension and number, I leave to be considered by those who are the patrons of innate principles.

Idea of wor- § 7. "That God is to be worshipped,"
ship not in- is, without doubt, as great a truth as any
nate. can enter into the mind of man, and de-
serves the first place amongst all practical principles.
But yet it can by no means be thought innate, unless
the ideas of God and worship are innate. That the
idea the term worship stands for is not in the under-
standing of children, and a character stamped on the
mind in its first original, I think, will be easily granted,
by any one that considers how few there be, amongst
grown men, who have a clear and distinct notion of it.
And, I suppose, there cannot be any thing more ridi-
culous than to say that children have this practical
principle innate, "that God is to be worshipped;"
and yet, that they know not what that worship of
God is, which is their duty. But to pass by this:

Idea of God § 8. If any idea can be imagined in-
not innate. nate, the idea of God may, of all others,
for many reasons be thought so; since it
is hard to conceive how there should be innate moral
principles without an innate idea of a Deity: without
a notion of a law-maker, it is impossible to have a
notion of a law, and an obligation to observe it. Be-
sides the atheists taken notice of amongst the ancients,
and left branded upon the records of history, hath not
navigation discovered, in these later ages, whole na-
tions, at the bay of Soldania (*a*), in Brazil (*b*), in Bo-
randay (*c*), and in the Caribbee islands, &c. amongst
whom there was to be found no notion of a God, no
religion? Nicholaus del Techo in literis, ex Paraquaria
de Caaiguarum conversione, has these words (*d*):

(*a*) Roe apud Thevenot, p. 2. (*b*) Jo. de Lery, c. 16.
(*c*) Martiniere $\frac{201}{322}$. Terry $\frac{17}{345}$ & $\frac{23}{345}$. Ovington $\frac{482}{706}$.
(*d*) Relatio triplex de rebus Indicis Caaiguarum $\frac{43}{76}$.

"Reperi eam gentem nullum nomen habere, quod
"Deum & hominis animam significet, nulla sacra ha-
"bet, nulla idola." These are instances of nations
where uncultivated nature has been left to itself, with-
out the help of letters, and discipline, and the im-
provements of arts and sciences. But there are others
to be found, who have enjoyed these in a very great
measure; who yet, for want of a due application of
their thoughts this way, want the idea and knowledge
of God. It will, I doubt not, be a surprise to others,
as it was to me, to find the Siamites of this number.
But for this, let them consult the king of France's
late envoy thither (*e*), who gives no better account of
the Chinese themselves (*f*). And if we will not be-
lieve La Loubere, the missionaries of China, even the
Jesuits themselves, the great encomiasts of the Chinese,
do all to a man agree, and will convince us that the
sect of the literati, or learned, keeping to the old reli-
gion of China, and the ruling party there, are all of
them atheists. Vid. Navarette, in the collection of
voyages, vol. the first, and Historia cultus Sinensium.
And perhaps if we should, with attention, mind the
lives and discourses of people not so far off, we should
have too much reason to fear, that many in more civi-
lised countries have no very strong and clear impres-
sions of a deity upon their minds; and that the com-
plaints of atheism, made from the pulpit, are not
without reason. And though only some proffigate
wretches own it too barefacedly now; yet perhaps
we should hear more than we do of it from others,
did not the fear of the magistrate's sword, or their
neighbour's censure, tie up people's tongues: which,
were the apprehensions of punishment or shame taken
away, would as openly proclaim their atheism, as their
lives do (*2*).

(*e*) La Loubere du Royaume de Siam, t. 1, c. 9, sect. 15, and c. 20,
sect. 22, and c. 22, sect. 6. (*f*) Ib. t. 1, c. 20, sect. 4, and c. 23
(2) On this reasoning of the author against innate ideas, grea

§ 9. But had all mankind, every where, a notion of a God (whereof yet history tells us the contrary) it would not from thence follow, that the idea of him was innate. For though no nation were to be found, without a name, and some few dark notions of him, yet that would not prove them to be natural impres-

blame hath been laid; because it seems to invalidate an argument commonly used to prove the being of a God, viz. universal consent: to which our author* answers, I think that the universal consent of mankind, as to the being of a God, amounts to thus much, that the vastly greater majority of mankind have in all ages of the world actually believed a God; that the majority of the remaining part have not actually disbelieved it; and consequently those who have actually opposed the belief of a God have truly been very few. So that comparing those that have actually disbelieved, with those who have actually believed a God, their number is so inconsiderable, that in respect of this incomparably greater majority, of those who have owned the belief of a God, it may be said to be the universal consent of mankind.

This is all the universal consent which truth or matter of fact will allow; and therefore all that can be made use of to prove a God. But if any one would extend it farther, and speak deceitfully for God; if this universality should be urged in a strict sense, not for much the majority, but for a general consent of every one, even to a man, in all ages and countries; this would make it either no argument, or a perfectly useless and unnecessary one. For if any one deny a God, such a universality of consent is destroyed; and if nobody does deny a God, what need of arguments to convince atheists?

I would crave leave to ask your lordship, were there ever in the world any atheists or no? If there were not, what need is there of raising a question about the being of a God, when nobody questions it? What need of provisional arguments against a fault, from which mankind are so wholly free, and which, by an universal consent, they may be presumed to be secure from? If you say, (as I doubt not but you will) that there have been atheists in the world, then your lordship's universal consent reduces itself to only a great majority; and then make that majority as great as you will, what I have said in the place quoted by your lordship leaves it in its full force; and I have not said one word that does in the least invalidate this argument for a God. The argument I was upon there was to show, that the idea of God was not innate; and to my purpose it was sufficient, if there were but a less number found in the world, who had no idea of God, than your lordship will allow there have been of professed atheists; for whatsoever is innate, must be universal in the

* In his third letter to the Bishop of Worcester.

sions on the mind, any more than the names of fire, or the sun, heat, or number, do prove the ideas they stand for to be innate: because the names of those things, and the ideas of them, are so universally received and known amongst mankind. Nor, on the contrary, is the want of such a name, or the absence

strictest sense. One exception is a sufficient proof against it. So that all that I said, and which was quite to another purpose, did not at all tend, nor can be made use of, to invalidate the argument for a Deity, grounded on such an universal consent, as your lordship, and all that build on it, must own; which is only a very disproportioned majority: such an universal consent my argument there neither affirms nor requires to be less than you will be pleased to allow it. Your lordship therefore might, without any prejudice to those declarations of good-will and favour you have for the author of the "Essay of Human Understanding," have spared the mentioning his quoting authors that are in print, for matters of fact to quite another purpose, "as going about to invalidate the argument for a Deity, from the universal consent of mankind;" since he leaves that universal consent as entire and as large as you yourself do, or can own, or suppose it. But here I have no reason to be sorry that your lordship has given me this occasion for the vindication of this passage of my book; if there should be any one besides your lordship, who should so far mistake it, as to think it in the least invalidates the argument for a God, from the universal consent of mankind.

But because you question the credibility of those authors I have quoted, which you say were very ill-chosen; I will crave leave to say, that he whom I relied on for his testimony concerning the Hottentots of Soldania, was no less a man than an ambassador from the king of England to the Great Mogul: of whose relation, monsieur Thevenot, no ill judge in the case, had so great an esteem, that he was at the pains to translate into French, and publish it in his (which is counted no injudicious) collection of travels. But to intercede with your lordship for a little more favourable allowance of credit to Sir Thomas Roe's relation; Coore, an inhabitant of the country, who could speak English, assured Mr. Terry*, that they of Soldania had no God. But if he too have the ill luck to find no credit with you, I hope you will be a little more favourable to a divine of the church of England, now living, and admit of his testimony in confirmation of Sir Thomas Roe's. This worthy gentleman, in the relation of his voyage to Surat, printed but two years since, speaking of the same people, has these words: † "They are sunk even below idolatry, are destitute of both priest and temple, and saving a little show of rejoicing, which is made at the full and new moon, have lost

* Terry's Voyage, p. 17, 23. † Mr. Ovington, p. 489.

