From

Salutaris Satiricus

to

Calderwater's Library

1st April 1826

A

CAREFUL AND STRICT

ENQUIRY

INTO THE

MODERN PREVAILING NOTIONS

OF THAT

FREEDOM OF THE WILL,

WHICH IS SUPPOSED TO BE ESSENTIAL

TO

Moral Agency,

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

BY THE LATE REV. JONATHAN EDWARDS,

PRESIDENT OF THE COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY.

"It is not of him that willeth."—ROM. ix. 16.

Edinburgh:

PRINTED FOR OGLE, ALLARDICE, AND THOMSON,

PARLIAMENT SQUARE.

1818.

PREFACE.

MANY find much fault with the calling professing Christians, that differ one from another in some matters of opinion, by distinct *names;* especially calling them by the names of particular men who have distinguished themselves as maintainers and promoters of those opinions; as the calling some professing Christians *Arminians* from *Arminus;* others *Arians*, from *Arius;* others *Socinians*, from *Socinus;* and the like. They think it unjust in itself; as it seems to suppose and suggest, that the persons marked out by these names, received those doctrines which they entertain, out of regard *to* and reliance *on* those men after whom they are named; as though they made them their rule; in the same manner as the followers of CHRIST are called *Christians*, after his name, whom they regard and depend upon, as their great Head and Rule. Whereas, this is an unjust and groundless imputation on those that go under the forementioned denominations. Thus (say they) there is not the least ground to suppose, that the chief Divines, who embrace the scheme of doctrine which is, by many, called *Arminianism*, believe it the more, because *Arminius* believed it; and that there is no reason to think any other, than that they sincerely and impartially study the holy Scriptures, and enquire after the mind of Christ, with as much judgment and sincerity, as any of those that call them by

these names; that they seek after truth, and are not careful whether they think exactly as *Arminius* did; yea, that, in some things, they actually differ from him. This practice is also esteemed actually injurious on this account, that it is supposed naturally to lead the multitude to imagine the difference between persons thus named and others, to be greater than it is; yea, as though it were so great, that they must be, as it were, another species of beings. And they object against it as arising from an uncharitable, narrow, contracted spirit: which, they say, commonly inclines persons to confine all that is good to themselves, and their own party, and to make a wide distinction between themselves and others, and stigmatize those that differ from them with odious names. They say, moreover, that the keeping up such a distinction of names has a direct tendency to uphold distance and disaffection, and keep alive mutual hatred among Christians, who ought all to be united in friendship and charity; however, they cannot, in all things, think alike.

I confess, these things are very plausible; and I will not deny, that there are some unhappy consequences of this distinction of names, and that men's infirmities and evil dispositions often make an ill improvement of it. But yet, I humbly conceive, those objections are carried far beyond reason. The generality of mankind are disposed enough, and a great deal too much, to uncharitableness, and to be censorious and bitter towards those that differ from them in religious opinions; which evil temper of mind

will take occasion to exert itself from many things in themselves innocent, useful, and necessary. But yet, there is no necessity to suppose, that the thus distinguishing persons of different opinions by different names, arises mainly from an uncharitable spirit. It may arise from the disposition there is in mankind (whom God has distinguished with an ability and inclination for speech) to improve the benefit of language, in the proper use and design of names, given to things which they have often occasion to speak of, or signify their minds about; which is to enable them to express their ideas with ease and expedition, without being incumbered with an obscure and difficult circumlocution. And the thus distinguishing of persons of different opinions in religious matters may not imply, nor infer, any more than that there is a difference, and that the difference is such as we find we have often occasion to take notice of, and make mention of. That which we have frequent occasion to speak of (whatever it be, that gives the occasion) this wants a name; and it is always a defect in language in such cases, to be obliged to make use of a description, instead of a name. Thus we have often occasion to speak of those who are the descendants of the ancient inhabitants of *France*, who are subjects or heads of the government of that land, and spake the language peculiar to it; in distinction from the descendants of the inhabitants of *Spain*, who belonged to that community, and spake the language of that country. And therefore we find the great need

of distinct names to signify these different sorts of people, and the great convenience of those distinguishing words, *French* and *Spaniards*; by which the signification of our minds is quick and easy, and our speech is delivered from the burden of a continual reiteration of diffuse descriptions, with which it must otherwise be embarrassed.

That the difference of the opinions of those, who in their general scheme of divinity agree with these two noted men, *Calvin* and *Arminius*, is a thing there is often occasion to speak of, is what the practice of the latter itself confesses; who are often, in their discourses and writings taking notice of the supposed absurd and pernicious opinions of the former sort. And therefore the making use of different names in this case cannot reasonably be objected against, or condemned, as a thing which must come from so bad a cause as they assign. It is easy to be accounted for, without supposing it to arise from any other source, than the exigence and natural tendency of the state of things; considering the faculty and disposition God has given to mankind, to express things which they have frequent occasion to mention, by certain distinguishing names. It is an effect that is similar to what we see arise, in innumerable cases which are parallel, where the cause is not at all blame-worthy.

Nevertheless, at first, I had thoughts of carefully avoiding the use of the appellation *Arminian* in this Treatise. But I soon found I should be put to great difficulty by it; and that

my Discourse would be so incumbered with an often repeated circumlocution, instead of a name which would express the thing intended, as well and better, that I altered my purpose. And, therefore, I must ask the excuse of such as are apt to be offended with things of this nature, that I have so freely used the term *Arminian* in the following Discourse. I profess it to be without any design to stigmatize persons of any sort with a name of reproach, or at all to make them appear more odious. If, when I had occasion to speak of those Divines who are commonly called by this name, I had instead of styling them *Arminians*, called them *these men*, as Dr. *Whitby* does *Calvinistic* Divines: it probably would not have been taken any better, or thought to shew a better temper, or more good manners. I have done as I would be done by, in this matter. However, the term *Calvinistic* is, in these days, among most, a term of greater reproach than the term *Arminian;* yet I should not take it at all amiss, to be called a *Calvinist*, for distinction's sake: I utterly disclaim a dependence on *Calvin*, or believing the doctrines which I hold, because he believed and taught them; and cannot justly be charged with believing in every thing just as he taught.

But, lest I should really be an occasion of injury to some person, I would here give notice, that though I generally speak of that doctrine concerning Free Will and Moral Agency, which I oppose, as an *Arminian* doctrine; yet, I would not be understood, as asserting, that every Divine or Author, whom I have occasion to men-

tion as maintaining that doctrine, was properly an *Arminian*, or one of that sort which is commonly called by that name. Some of them went far beyond *Arminians*; and I would by no means charge *Arminians* in general with all the corrupt doctrine which these maintained.—Thus, for instance, it would be very injurious if I should rank *Arminian* Divines, in general, with such Authors as Mr *Chubb*. I doubt not many of them have some of his doctrines in abhorrence; though he agrees, for the most part, with *Arminians*, in his notion of the Freedom of the Will. And, on the other hand, though I suppose this notion to be a leading article in the *Arminian* scheme, that which, if pursued in its consequences, will truly infer, or naturally lead to all the rest; yet I do not charge all that have held this doctrine, with being *Arminians*. For whatever may be the consequences of the doctrine really, yet some that hold this doctrine, may not own nor see these consequences; and it would be unjust, in many instances, to charge every Author with believing and maintaining all the real consequences of his avowed doctrines. And I desire it may be particularly noted, that though I have occasion, in the following Discourse, often to mention the Author of the book, entitled, *An Essay on the Freedom of the Will, in God and the Creature*, as holding that notion of Freedom of Will, which I oppose, yet I do not mean to call him an *Arminian*, however, in that doctrine he agrees with *Arminians*, and departs from the current and general opinion of *Calvinists*. If the Author of that

Essay be the same as it is commonly ascribed to, he doubtless was not one that ought to bear that name. But however good a Divine he was in many respects, yet that particular *Arminian* doctrine which he maintained, is never the better for being held by such an one; nor is there less need of opposing it on that account; but rather is there the more need of it; as it will be likely to have the more pernicious influence, for being taught by a Divine of his name and character; supposing the doctrine to be wrong, and in itself to be of an ill tendency.

I have nothing further to say by way of Preface, but only to bespeak the Reader's candour and calm attention to what I have written. The subject is of such importance as to *demand* attention, and the most thorough consideration. Of all kinds of knowledge that we can ever obtain, knowledge of God, and the knowledge of ourselves, are the most important. As religion is the great business for which we are created, and on which our happiness depends; and as religion consists in an intercourse between ourselves and our Maker; and so has its foundation in God's nature and ours, and in the relation that God and we stand in to each other; therefore a true knowledge of both must be needful, in order to true religion. But the knowledge of ourselves consists chiefly in right apprehensions concerning those two chief faculties of our nature, the *understanding* and *will*. Both are very important; yet the science of the latter must be confessed to be of greatest moment; inasmuch as all virtue and religion have their

seat more immediately in the will, consisting more especially in right acts and habits of this faculty; and the grand question about the Freedom of the Will, is the main point that belongs to the science of the Will. Therefore, I say, the importance of the subject greatly *demands* the attention of Christians, and especially of Divines. But as to my manner of handling the subject, I will be far from presuming to say, that it is such as *demands* the attention of the Reader to what I have written. I am ready to own, that in this matter I depend on the Reader's *courtesy*. But only thus far I may have some colour for putting in a *claim:* that if the Reader be disposed to pass his censure on what I have written, I may be fully and patiently heard, and well attended to, before I am condemned. However, this is what I would humbly *ask* of my Readers, together with the prayers of all sincere lovers of truth, that I may have much of that spirit which Christ promised his disciples, which guides into all truth; and that the blessed and powerful influences of this spirit would make truth victorious in the world!

CONTENTS.

PART FIRST.

Wherein are explained various terms and things belonging to the subject of the ensuing discourse.

PART SECOND.

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

PART THIRD.

Wherein is enquired, Whether any such Liberty of Will as Arminians hold, be necessary to Moral Agency, Virtue and Vice, Praise and Dispraise, &c.

PART FOURTH.

Wherein the chief grounds of the reasonings of Arminians, in support and defence of their notions of Liberty, Moral Ageney, &c. and against the opposite doctrine, are considered.

CONCLUSION

ENQUIRY

INTO THE

FREEDOM OF THE WILL,

&c. &c.

PART I.

Wherein are Explained and Stated various *Terms* and *Things* belonging to the subject of the ensuing Discourse.

SECTION I.

Concerning the Nature of the Will.

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

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

If any think it is a more perfect definition of the Will to say, that it is that by which the soul either *chooses* or *refuses;* I am content with it; though I think that it is enough to say, it is that by which the soul chooses:

for in every act of Will whatsoever, the mind chooses one thing rather than another; it chooses something rather than the contrary, or rather than the want or non-existence of that thing. So in every act of refusal, the mind chooses the absence of the thing refused; the positive and the negative are set before the mind for its choice, and it chooses the negative; and the mind's taking its choice in that case is properly the act of the Will: the Will's determining between the two is a voluntary determining: but that is the same thing as making a choice. So that whatever names we call the act of the Will by, *choosing*, *refusing*, *approving*, *disapproving*, *liking*, *disliking*, *embracing*, *rejecting*, *determining*, *directing*, *commanding*, *forbidding*, *inclining*, or being *averse*, a *being pleased* or *displeased with*; all may be reduced to this of *choosing*. For the soul to act *voluntarily*, is evermore to act *electively*.

Mr Locke * says, "The Will signifies nothing but a power or ability to *prefer* or *choose*." And in the foregoing page says, "The word *preferring* seems best to express the act of volition;" but adds, that "it does not precisely; for (says he) though a man would prefer flying to walking, yet who can say he ever wills it?"—But the instance he mentions does not prove that there is any thing else in *willing*, but merely *preferring*: for it should be considered what is the next and immediate object of the Will, with respect to a man's walking, or any other external action: which is not being removed from one place to another; on the earth or through the air; these are remoter objects of preference; but such or such an immediate exertion of himself. The thing nextly chosen or preferred when a man wills to walk, is not his being removed to such a place where he would be, but such an exertion and motion of his legs and feet, &c. in order to it. And his willing such an alteration in his body in the present moment, is nothing else but his choosing or preferring such an alteration in his body

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

at such a moment, or his liking it better than the forbearance of it. And God has so made and established the human nature, the soul being united to a body in proper state, that the soul preferring or choosing such an immediate exertion or alteration of the body, such an alteration instantaneously follows. There is nothing else in the actions of my mind, that I am conscious of while I walk, but only my preferring or choosing, through successive moments, that there should be such alterations of my external sensations and motions; together with a concurring habitual expectation that it will be so; having ever found by experience, that on such an immediate preference such sensations and motions do actually, instantaneously, and constantly arise. But it is not so in the case of flying: though a man may be said remotely to choose or prefer flying, yet does he not choose or prefer, incline to, or desire, under circumstances in view, any immediate exertion of the members of his body in order to it; because he has no expectation that he should obtain the desired end by any such exertion; and he does not prefer or incline to any bodily exertion or effort under this apprehended circumstance, of its being wholly in vain. So that if we carefully distinguish the proper objects of the several acts of the Will, it will not appear by this, and such like instances, that there is any difference between *volition* and *preference;* or that a man's choosing, liking best, or being best pleased with a thing, are not the same with his willing that thing; as they seem to be according to those general and more natural notions of men, according to which language is formed. Thus an act of the Will is commonly expressed by *its pleasing a man* to do thus or thus; and a man doing as he *will*, and doing as he *pleases*, are the same thing in common speech.

Mr Locke * says, "The Will is perfectly distinguished from Desire; which in the very same action may have a quite contrary tendency from that which our Wills set

* Human Understanding, vol. i. p. 203, 204.

us upon. A man (says he) whom I cannot deny, may oblige me to use persuasions to another, which at the same time I am speaking, I may wish may not prevail on him. In this case it is plain the Will and Desire run counter." I do not suppose that *Will* and *Desire* are words of precisely the same signification; *Will* seems to be a word of a more general signification, extending to things present and absent. *Desire* respects something absent. I may prefer my present situation and posture, suppose sitting still, or having my eyes open, and so may will it. But yet I cannot think they are so entirely distinct, that they can ever be properly said to run counter. A man never, in any instance, wills any thing contrary to his desire, or desires any thing contrary to his will.—The forementioned instance, which Mr Locke produces, does not prove that he ever does. He may, on some consideration or other, will to utter speeches which have a tendency to persuade another, and still may desire that they may not persuade him: but yet his Will and Desire do not run counter at all: the thing which he wills, the very same he desires; and he does not will a thing and desire the contrary in any particular. In this instance, it is not carefully observed, what is the thing willed, and what is the thing desired: if it were, it would be found that Will and Desire do not clash in the least. The thing willed, on some consideration, is to utter such words; and certainly the same consideration so influences him, that he does not desire the contrary; all things considered, he chooses to utter such words, and does not desire not to utter them. And so as to the thing which Mr Locke speaks of as desired, *viz.* That the words, though they tend to persuade, should not be effectual to that end, his Will is not contrary to this; he does not will that they should be effectual, but rather wills that he should not, as he desires. In order to prove that the Will and Desire may run counter, it should be shewn that they may be contrary one to the other in the same thing, or with respect to the very same object of Will or Desire: but here the objects are two;

and in each, taken by themselves, the Will and Desire agree. And it is no wonder that they should not agree in different things, however little distinguished they are in their nature. The Will may not agree with the Will, nor Desire agree with Desire, in different things. As in this very instance which Mr Locke mentions, a person may, on some consideration, desire to use persuasions, and at the same time may desire they may not prevail; but yet nobody will say that *Desire* runs counter to *Desire*; or that this proves that *Desire* is perfectly a distinct thing from *Desire*.—The like may be observed of the other instance Mr Locke produces, of a man's desiring to be eased of pain, &c.

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

SECTION II.

Concerning the Determination of the Will.

BY *Determining the Will*, if the phrase be used with any meaning, must be intended, *causing that the Act of the Will or Choice should be thus, and not*

otherwise: and the Will is said to be determined, when, in consequence of some action, or influence, its choice is directed to, and fixed upon a particular object. As when we speak of the Determination of motion, we mean causing the motion of the body to be such a way, or in such a direction rather than another.

To talk of the determination of the Will, supposes an effect, which must have a cause. If the Will be determined, there is a determiner. This must be supposed to be intended, even by them that say, the Will determines itself. If it be so, the Will is both determiner and determined; it is a cause that acts and produces effects upon itself, and is the object of its own influence and action.

With respect to that grand inquiry, *What determines the Will?* it would be very tedious and unnecessary at present to enumerate and examine all the various opinions which have been advanced concerning this matter, nor is it needful that I should enter into a particular disquisition of all points debated in disputes upon that question, *Whether the Will always follows the last dictate of the understanding.* It is sufficient to my present purpose to say: *It is that motive, which as it stands in the view of the mind, is the strongest, that determines the Will*—but it may be necessary that I should a little explain my meaning in this.

By *Motive*, I mean the whole of that which moves, excites, or invites the mind to volition, whether that be one thing singly, or many things conjunctly. Many particular things may concur and unite their strength to induce the mind; and when it is so, all together are as it were one complex motive. And when I speak of the *strongest motive*, I have respect to the strength of the whole that operates, to induce to a particular act of volition, whether that be the strength of one thing alone, or of many together.

Whatever is a motive in this sense, must be something that is *extant in the view or apprehension of the understanding*, or perceiving faculty. Nothing can induce or

invite the mind to will or act any thing, any further than it is perceived, or is some way or other in the mind's view; for what is wholly unperceived, and perfectly out of the mind's view, cannot affect the mind at all. It is most evident, that nothing is in the mind, or reaches to it, or takes any hold of it, any otherwise than as it is perceived or thought of.

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

Things that exist in the view of the mind have their strength, tendency, or advantage to move or excite its Will, from many things appertaining to the nature and circumstances of the *thing viewed*, the nature and circumstances of the *mind that views*, and the degree and manner of its *view*; which it would perhaps be hard to make a perfect enumeration of. But so much I think, may be determined in general, without room for controversy, that whatever is perceived or apprehended by an intelligent and voluntary agent, which has the nature and influence of a motive to volition or choice, is considered or viewed *as good*; nor has it any tendency to invite or engage the election of the soul in any further degree than it appears such. For to say otherwise, would be to say, that things that appear have a tendency by the appearance they make, to engage the mind to elect them,

some other way than by their appearing eligible to it; which is absurd. And therefore it must be true, in some sense, that *the Will always is as the greatest apparent good is.* But only, for the right understanding of this, two things must be well and distinctly observed.

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

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

2. When I say, the Will is as the greatest apparent good is, or (as I have explained it) that volition has always for its object the thing which appears most agreeable; it must be carefully observed, to avoid confusion and needless objection, that I speak of the *direct* and *immediate* object of the act of volition; and not some

object that the act of Will has not an immediate, but only an indirect and remote respect to. Many acts of volition, have some remote relation to an object that is different from the thing most immediately willed and chosen. Thus, when a drunkard has his liquor before him, and he has to choose whether to drink it or no; the proper and immediate objects, about which his present volition is conversant, and between which his choice now decides, are his own acts in drinking the liquor, or letting it alone; and this will certainly be done according to what, in the present view of his mind, taken in the whole of it, is most agreeable to him. If he chooses or wills to drink it, and not to let it alone; then this action, as it stands in the view of his mind, with all that belongs to its appearance there, is more agreeable and pleasing than letting it alone.

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

agreeable, and suits him best. And so still the present volition is as the greatest apparent good at present is.

I have rather chosen to express myself thus, *that the Will always is as the greatest apparent good*, or *as what appears most agreeable, is*, than to say that the Will *is determined by* the greatest apparent good, or by what seems most agreeable; and because an appearing most agreeable or pleasing to the mind, and the mind's preferring and choosing, seem hardly to be properly and perfectly distinct. If strict propriety of speech be insisted on, it may more properly be said, that the *voluntary action*, which is the immediate consequence and fruit of the mind's volition or choice is *determined* by that which appears most agreeable, than the preference or choice itself; but that the act of volition itself is always determined by that in or about the mind's view of the object, which *causes it to appear* most agreeable, I say, *in or about the mind's view* of the object, because what has influence to render an object in view agreeable, is not only what appears *in* the object viewed, but also *the manner* of the view, and *the state and circumstances* of the mind that views.—Particularly to enumerate all things pertaining to the mind's view of the objects of volition, which have influence in their appearing agreeable to the mind, would be a matter of no small difficulty, and might require a treatise by itself, and is not necessary to my present purpose. I shall therefore only mention some things in general.

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

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

2. The apparent degree of pleasure or trouble *attending* the object or the *consequence* of it. Such concomitants and consequents being viewed as circumstances of

the objects, are to be considered as belonging to it, and as it were, parts of it; as it stands in the mind's view, as a proposed object of choice.

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

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

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

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

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

mind has, of that good; because all together concur to constitute the degree in which the object appears at present agreeable; and accordingly volition will be determined.

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

But possibly it is needless and improper, to mention the frame and state of the mind, as a distinct ground of the agreeableness of objects from the other two mentioned before; *viz.* The apparent nature and circumstances of the objects viewed, and the manner of the view; perhaps if we strictly consider the matter, the different temper and state of the mind makes no alteration as to the agreeableness of objects, any other way, than as it makes the objects themselves appear differently beautiful or deformed, having apparent pleasure or pain attending them; and as it occasions the manner of the view to be different, causes the idea of beauty or deformity, pleasure or uneasiness to be more or less lively.

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

It appears from these things, that in some sense, *the Will always follows the last dictate of the understanding.* But then the *understanding* must be taken in a large sense, as including the whole faculty of perception or apprehension, and not merely what is called *reason* or *judgment.* If by the dictate of the understanding is meant what reason declares to be best or most for the person's happiness, taking in the whole of its duration, it is not true, that the Will always follows the last dictate of the understanding. Such a dictate of reason is quite a different matter from things appearing now most *agreeable;* all things being put together which pertain to the mind's present perceptions, apprehensions or ideas, in any respect. Although that dictate of reason when it takes place, is one thing that is put into

the scales, and is to be considered as a thing that has concern in the compound influence which moves and induces the Will; and is one thing that is to be considered in estimating the degree of that appearance of good which the Will always follows; either as having its influence added to other things, or subducted from them. When it concurs with other things, then its weight is added to them, as put into the same scale; but when it is against them, it is as a weight in the opposite scale, where it resists the influence of other things; yet its resistance is often overcome by their greater weight, and so the act of the Will is determined in opposition to it.

The things which I have said, may, I hope, serve, in some measure to illustrate and confirm the position I laid down in the beginning of this section; *viz.* That *the Will is always determined by the strongest motive*, or by that view of the mind which has the greatest degree of *previous* tendency to excite volition. But whether I have been so happy as rightly to explain the thing wherein consists the strength of motives, or not, yet my failing in this will not overthrow the position itself; which carries much of its own evidence with it, and is the thing of chief importance to the purpose of the ensuing discourse: and the truth of it, I hope, will appear with great clearness, before I have finished what I have to say on the subject of human liberty.

SECTION III.

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

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

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

The word *necessary*, as used in common speech, is a relative term; and relates to some supposed opposition made to the existence of the thing spoken of, which is overcome, or proves in vain to hinder or alter it. That is necessary, in the original and proper sense of the word, which is, or will be, notwithstanding all supposable opposition. To say, that a thing is necessary, is the same thing as to say, that it is impossible, it should not be; but the word *impossible* is manifestly a relative term, and has reference to supposed power exerted to bring a thing to pass, which is insufficient for the effect; as the word *unable* is relative, and has relation to ability or endeavour which is insufficient; and as the word *irresistable* is relative, and has always reference to resistance which is made, or may be made to some force or power tending to an effect, and is sufficient to withstand the power, or hinder the effect. The common notion of Necessity and Impossibility implies something that frustrates endeavour or desire.

Here several things are to be noted.

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

2. These terms *necessary*, *impossible*, *irresistible*, *&c.* do especially belong to controversy about liberty and

moral agency, as used in the latter of the two senses now mentioned; viz. as necessary or impossible *to us*, and with relation to any supposable opposition or endeavour *of ours*.

3. As the word *Necessity*, in its vulgar and common use, is relative, and has always reference to some supposable and sufficient opposition; so when we speak of any thing as necessary *to us*, it is with relation to some supposable opposition of *our Wills*, or some voluntary exertion or effort of ours to the contrary. For we do not properly make opposition to an event, any otherwise than as we *voluntarily* oppose it. Things are said to be what must be, or *necessarily* are, *as to us*, when they are, or will be, though we desire or endeavour the contrary, or try to prevent or remove their existence; but such opposition of ours always either consists in, or implies opposition of, our wills.

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

We are accustomed in the common use of language, to apply and understand these phrases in this sense: we grow up with such a habit; which by the daily use of these terms, in such a sense, from our childhood, becomes fixed and settled; so that the idea of a relation to a supposed will, desire and endeavour of ours, is strongly connected with these terms, and naturally excited in our minds, whenever we hear the words used. Such ideas, and these words, are so united and associated,

that they unavoidably go together; one suggests the other, and carries the other with it, and never can be separated as long as we live. And if we use the words, as terms of art, in another sense, yet, unless we are exceeding circumspect and wary, we shall insensibly slide into the vulgar use of them, and so apply the words in a very inconsistent manner; this habitual connection of ideas will deceive and confound us in our reasonings and discourses, wherein we pretend to use these terms in that manner, as terms of art.

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

5. It appears from what has been said, that these

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

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

What is sometimes given as the definition of philosophical Necessity; namely, *That by which a thing cannot but be*, or *whereby it cannot be otherwise*, fails of being a proper explanation of it, on two accounts; *First*, The words *can*, or *cannot*, need explanation as much as the word *Necessity:* and the former may as well be explained by the latter, as the latter by the former.—Thus, if any one asked us what we mean, when we say, a thing *cannot but be*, we might explain ourselves by saying, we mean, it must necessarily be so; as well as explain Necessity, by saying, it is that by which a thing cannot but be. And, *Secondly*, this definition is liable to the forementioned great inconvenience: the words *cannot* or *unable*, are properly relative, and have relation to power exerted, or that may be exerted, in order to the thing spoken of; to which, as I have now observed, the word *Necessity*, as used by philosophers has no reference.

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

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

(1.) They may have a full and perfect connection *in and of themselves;* because it may imply a contradiction, or gross absurdity, to suppose them not connected — Thus many things are necessary in their own nature.— So the eternal existence of being generally considered, is necessary *in itself*, because it would be in itself the greatest absurdity to deny the existence of being in general, or to say there was absolute and universal nothing; and is as it were the sum of all contradictions; as might be shewn, if this were a proper place for it.— So God's infinity, and other attributes are necessary.— So it is necessary *in its own nature*, that two and two should be four; and it is necessary, that all right lines drawn from the centre of a circle to the circumference should be equal. It is necessary, fit, and suitable, that men should do to others, as they would that they should do to them. So innumerable metaphysical and mathematical truths are necessary *in themselves:* the subject and predicate of the proposition which affirms them, are perfectly connected *of themselves.*

(2.) The connection of the subject and predicate of a

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

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

And here it may be observed, that all things which are future, or which will hereafter begin to be, which can be said to be necessary, are necessary only in this last way. Their existence is not necessary in itself; for if so, they always would have existed. Nor is their existence become necessary by being made sure, by being already come to pass. Therefore, the only way that any thing that is to come to pass, hereafter, is or can be necessary, is by a connection with something that is necessary in its own nature, or something that already is, or has been; so that the one being supposed, the other certainly follows. And this also is the only way

that all things past, excepting those which were from eternity, could be necessary *before they came to pass*, or could come to pass necessarily; and therefore the only way in which any effect or event, or any thing whatsoever that ever has had, or will have a beginning, has come into being necessarily, or will hereafter necessarily exist. And therefore *this* is the Necessity which especially belongs to controversies about the acts of the will.

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

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

time; as they prevent all acts of the will about the affair.—I shall have occasion to apply this observation to particular instances in the following discourse. Whether the same things that are necessary with a *particular* Necessity, be not also necessary with a *general* Necessity, may be a matter of future consideration. Let that be as it will, it alters not the case, as to the use of this distinction of the kinds of Necessity.

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

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

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

As the words *necessary*, *impossible*, *unable*, &c. are used by polemic writers, in a sense diverse from their common signification, the like has happened to the term *contingent*. Any thing is said to be contingent, or to

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

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

SECTION IV.

Of the Distinction of Natural and Moral Necessity and Inability.

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

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

The phrase, *Moral Necessity*, is used variously; sometimes it is used for a necessity of moral obligation. So we say, a man is under Necessity, when he is under bonds of duty and conscience, which he cannot be discharged from. So the word *Necessity* is often used for

great obligation in point of interest. Sometimes by Moral Necessity is meant that apparent connection of things, which is the ground of *moral evidence;* and so is distinguished from *absolute Necessity*, or that sure connection of things, that is a foundation for *infallible certainty*. In this sense, Moral Necessity, signifies much the same as that high degree of probability, which is ordinarily sufficient to satisfy, and be relied upon by mankind, in their conduct and behaviour in the world, as they would consult their own safety and interest, and treat others properly as members of society. And sometimes by Moral Necessity is meant that Necessity of connection and consequence, which arises from such *moral causes*, as the strength of inclination, or motives, and the connection which there is in many cases between these, and such certain volitions and actions. And it is in this sense, that I use the phrase, *Moral Necessity*, in the following discourse.

By *Natural Necessity*, as applied to men, I mean such Necessity as men are under through the force of natural causes; as distinguished from what are called moral causes, such as habits and dispositions of the heart, and moral motives and inducements. Thus men placed in certain circumstances, are the subjects of particular sensations by Necessity; they feel pain when their bodies are wounded; they see the objects presented before them in a clear light, when their eyes are opened: so they assent to the truth of certain propositions, as soon as the terms are understood; as that two and two make four, that black is not white, that two parallel lines can never cross one another; so by a natural Necessity mens' bodies move downwards, when there is nothing to support them.

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

1. Moral Necessity may be as absolute, as natural Necessity. That is, the effect may be as perfectly connected with its moral cause, as a natural necessary effect is with its natural cause. Whether the Will in every

case is necessarily determined by the strongest motive, or whether the Will ever makes any resistance to such a motive, or can ever oppose the strongest present inclination, or not; if that matter should be controverted, yet I suppose none will deny, but that, in some cases, a previous bias and inclination, or the motive presented, may be so powerful, that the act of the Will may be certainly and indissolubly connected therewith. When motives or previous bias are very strong, all will allow that there is some difficulty in going against them. And if they were yet stronger, the difficulty would be still greater. And therefore, if more were still added to their strength, to a certain degree, it would make the difficulty so great, that it would be wholly impossible to surmount it; for this plain reason, because whatever power men may be supposed to have to surmount difficulties, yet that power is not infinite; and so goes not beyond certain limits. If a man can surmount ten degrees of difficulty of this kind with twenty degrees of strength, because the degrees of strength are beyond the degrees of difficulty: yet if the difficulty be increased to thirty, or an hundred or a thousand degrees, and his strength not also encreased, his strength will be wholly insufficient to surmount the difficulty. As therefore it must be allowed, that there may be such a thing as a *sure* and *perfect* connection between moral causes and effects; so this only is what I call by the name of *Moral Necessity.*

2. When I use this distinction of *moral* and *natural Necessity*, I would not be understood to suppose, that if any thing comes to pass by the former kind of Necessity, the *nature* of things is not concerned in it, as well as in the latter. I do not mean to determine, that when a *moral* habit or motive is so strong, that the act of the Will infallibly follows, this is not owing to the *nature of things.* But these are the names that these two kinds of Necessity have usually been called by; and they must be distinguished by some names or other; for there is a distinction or difference between them that is very im

portant in its consequences. Which difference does not lie so much in the nature of the *connection*, as in the two terms *connected*. The cause with which the effect is connected, is a particular kind; *viz.* that which is of a moral nature; either some previous habitual disposition, or some motive exhibited to the understanding. And the effect is also of a particular kind; being likewise of a moral nature; consisting in some inclination or volition of the soul or voluntary action.

I suppose that necessity which is called *natural*, in distinction from *moral* necessity, is so called, because *mere nature*, as the word is vulgarly used, is concerned, without any thing of *choice*. The word *nature* is often used in opposition to *choice*; not because nature has indeed never any hand in our choice; but this probably comes to pass by means that we first get our notion of nature from that discernible and obvious course of events, which we observe in many things that our choice has no concern in; and especially in the material world; which, in very many parts of it, we easily perceive to be in a settled course; the stated order and manner of succession being very apparent. But where we do not readily discern the rule and connection, (though there be a connection, according to an established law, truly taking place) we signify the manner of event by some other name. Even in many things which are seen in the material and inanimate world, which do not discernibly and obviously come to pass according to any settled course, men do not call the manner of the event by the name of *nature*, but by such names as *accident*, *chance*, *contingent*, &c. So men make a distinction between nature and choice: as though they were completely and universally distinct. Whereas, I suppose none will deny but that choice, *in many cases*, arises from nature, as truly as other events. But the dependance and connection between acts of volition or choice, and their causes according to established laws, is not so sensible and obvious. And we observe that choice is as it were a new principle of motion and action, different from that established law and

order of things which is most obvious, that is seen especially in corporeal and sensible things; and also the choice often interposes, interrupts and alters the chain of events in these external objects, and causes them to proceed otherwise than they would do, if let alone, and left to go on according to the laws of motion among themselves. Hence it is spoken of as if it were a principle of motion entirely distinct from nature, and properly set in opposition to it. Names being commonly given to things, according to what is most obvious, and is suggested by what appears to the senses without reflection and research.

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

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

the want of inclination; or the strength of a contrary inclination; or the want of sufficient motives in view, to induce and excite the act of the will, or the strength of apparent motives to the contrary. Or both these may be resolved into one; and it may be said in one word, that moral Inability consists in the opposition nor want of inclination. For, when a person is unable to will or choose such a thing, through a defect of motives, or prevalence of contrary motives, it is the same thing as his being unable through the want of an inclination, or the prevalence of a contrary inclination, in such circumstances, and under the influence of such views.

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

Here it may be of use to observe this distinction of moral Inability; *viz.* of that which is *general and habitual*, and that which is *particular and occasional*. By a *general and habitual* moral Inability, I mean an Inability in the heart to all exercises or acts of will of that na-

ture or kind, through a fixed and habitual inclination, or an habitual and stated defect, or want of a certain kind of inclination. Thus a very ill-natured man may be unable to exert such acts of benevolence, as another, who is full of good nature, commonly exerts, and a man, whose heart is habitually void of gratitude, may be unable to exert such and such grateful acts, through that stated defect of a grateful inclination. *By particular and occasional* moral Inability, I mean an Inability of the will or heart to a particular act, through the strength or defect of present motives, or of inducements presented to the view of the understanding, *on this occasion.*——If it be so, that the will is always determined by the strongest motive, then it must always have an Inability, in this latter sense, to act otherwise than it does; it not being possible, in any case, that the will should, at present, go against the motive which has now, all things considered, the greatest strength and advantage to excite and induce it.——The former of these kinds of moral Inability, consisting in that which is stated, habitual and general, is most commonly called by the name of Inability; because the word *Inability*, in its most proper and original signification, has respect to some *stated defect*. And this especially obtains the name of *Inability* also upon another account:—I before observed, that the word Inability, in its original and most common use, is a relative term; and has respect to will and endeavour, as supposable in the case, and as insufficient to bring to pass the thing desired and endeavoured. Now, there may be more of an appearance and shadow of this, with respect to the acts which arise from a fixed and strong habit, than others that arise only from transient occasions and causes. Indeed, will and endeavour against, or diverse from, present acts of the will, are in no case supposable, whether those acts be occasional or habitual; for that would be to suppose the will, at present, to be otherwise than, at present, it is. But yet there may be will and endeavour against *future* acts of the will, or volitions that are likely to take place, as

viewed at a distance. It is no contradiction, to suppose that the acts of the will at one time, may be against the acts of the will at another time; and there may be desires and endeavours to prevent or excite future acts of the will; but such desires and endeavours are, in many cases, rendered insufficient and vain, through fixedness of habit; when the occasion returns, the strength of habit overcomes and baffles all such opposition. In this respect, a man may be in miserable slavery and bondage to a strong habit. But it may be comparatively easy to make an alteration with respect to such future acts, as are only occasional and transient; because the occasion or transient cause, if foreseen, may often easily be prevented or avoided. On this account, the moral Inability that attends fixed habits, especially obtains the name of Inability. And then, as the will may remotely and indirectly resist itself, and do it in vain, in the case of strong habits; so reason may resist present acts of the will, and its resistance be insufficient; and this is more commonly the case also, when the acts arise from strong habit.

But it must be observed concerning moral Inability, in each kind of it, that the word *Inability* is used in a sense very diverse from its original import. The word signifies only a natural Inability, in the proper use of it; and is applied to such cases only wherein a present will or inclination to the thing, with respect to which a person is said to be unable, is supposable. It cannot be truly said, according to the ordinary use of language, that a malicious man, let him be never so malicious, cannot hold his hand from striking, or that he is not able to shew his neighbour kindness; or that a drunkard, let his appetite be never so strong, cannot keep the cup from his mouth. In the strictest propriety of speech, a man has a thing in his power, if he has it in his choice, or at his election: and a man cannot be truly said to be unable to do a thing, when he can do it if he will. It is improperly said, that a person cannot perform those external actions, which are dependent on the act of the

will, and which would be easily performed, if the act of the will were present. And if it be improperly said, that he cannot perform those external voluntary actions, which depend on the will, it is in some respect more improperly said, that he is unable to exert the acts of the will themselves; because it is more evidently false, with respect to these, that he cannot if he will: for to say so, is a downright contradiction: it is easy to say he *cannot* will, if he *does* will. And in this case, not only is it true, that it is easy for a man to do the thing if he will, but the very willing is the doing; when once he was willed, the thing is performed; and nothing else remains to be done. Therefore, in these things to ascribe a non-performance to the want of power or ability, is not just; because the thing wanting is not a being *able*, but a being *willing*. There are faculties of mind, and capacity of nature, and every thing else, sufficient, but a disposition; nothing is wanting but a will.

SECTION V.

Concerning the Notion of Liberty, and of Moral Agency.

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

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

If this which I have mentioned be the meaning of the word Liberty, in the ordinary use of language; as I trust that none has ever learned to talk, and is unprejudiced, will deny: then it will follow, that in propriety of speech, neither Liberty, nor its contrary, can properly be ascribed to any being or thing, but that which has such a faculty, power or property, as is called will. For that which is possessed of no such thing as *will*, cannot have any *power* or *opportunity* of doing *according to its will*, nor be necessitated to act *contrary to its will*, nor be restrained from acting agreeable to it. And therefore to talk of Liberty, or the contrary, as belonging to the *very will itself*, is not to speak good sense; if we judge of sense, and nonsense, by the original and proper signification of the words. For the *will itself* is not an Agent that *has a will:* the power of choosing, itself, has not a power of choosing. That which has the power of volition or choice is the man or the soul, and not the power of volition itself. And he that has the liberty of doing according to his will, is the agent or doer who is possessed of the will; and not the will which he is possessed of. We say with propriety, that a bird let loose has power and liberty to fly: but not that the bird's power of flying has a power and liberty of flying. To be free is the property of an agent, who is possessed of powers and faculties, as much as to be cunning, valiant, bountiful, or zealous. But these qualities are the properties of men or persons; and not the properties of properties.

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

But one thing more I would observe concerning what is vulgarly called *Liberty*; namely, that power and opportunity for one to do and conduct as he will, or according to his choice, in all that is meant by it; without taking into the meaning of the word, any thing of the cause or original of that choice; or at all considering how the person came to have such a volition; whether it was caused by some external motive, or internal habitual bias; whether it was determined by some internal antecedent volition, or whether it happened without a cause; whether it was necessarily connected with something foregoing, or not connected. Let the person come by his volition or choice how he will, yet, if he is able, and there is nothing in the way to hinder his pursuing and executing his will, the man is fully and perfectly free, according to the primary and common notion of freedom.

What has been said may be sufficient to shew what is meant by *Liberty*, according to the common notions of mankind, and in the usual and primary acceptation of the word: but the word, as used by *Arminians*, *Pelagians*, and others who oppose the *Calvinists*, has an entirely different signification. These several things belong to their notion of liberty. 1. That it consists in a *self-determining power* in the will, or a certain sovereignty the will has over itself, and its own acts, whereby it determines its own volitions; so as not to be dependent in its determination, on any cause without itself, nor determined by any thing prior to its own acts. 2. *Indifference* belongs to Liberty in their notion of it, or that the mind, previous to the act of volition be, *in equilibrio*. 3. *Contingence* is another thing that belongs and is essential to it; not in the common acceptation of the word, as that has been already explained, but as opposed to all *necessity*, or any fixed and certain connection with some previous ground or reason of its existence. They suppose the essence of Liberty so much to consist in these things, that unless the will of man be free in this sense, he has no real freedom, how much soever he may be at liberty to act according to his will.

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

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

Here it may be noted, that there is a circumstantial difference between the moral Agency of a *ruler* and a *subject*. I call it *circumstantial*, because it lies only in the difference of moral inducements they are capable of being influenced by, arising from the difference of *circumstances*. A *ruler* acting in that capacity only, is not capable of being influenced by a moral law, and its sanctions of threatenings and promises, rewards and punishments, as the *subject* is; though both may be influenced by a knowledge of moral good and evil. And therefore

the moral Agency of the Supreme Being, who acts only in the capacity of a *ruler* towards his creatures, and never as a *subject*, differs in that respect from the moral Agency of created intelligent beings. God's actions, and particularly those which he exerts as a moral governor, have moral qualifications, are morally good in the highest degree. They are most perfectly holy and righteous; and we must conceive of Him as influenced in the highest degree, by that which, above all others, is properly a moral inducement; *viz.* the moral good which he sees in such and such things: and therefore He is, in the most proper sense, a moral Agent, the source of moral ability and Agency, the fountain and rule of all virtue and moral good; though by reason of his being supreme over all, it is not possible He should be under the influence of law or command, promises or threatenings, rewards or punishments, counsels or warnings. The essential qualities of a moral Agent are in God, in the greatest possible perfection; such an understanding, to perceive the difference between moral good and evil; a capacity of discerning that moral worthiness and demerit, by which some things are praise-worthy, others deserving of blame and punishment; and also a capacity of choice, and choice guided by understanding, and power of acting according to his choice or pleasure, and being capable of doing those things which are in the highest sense praise-worthy. And herein does very much consist that image of God wherein he made man, (which we read of *Gen.* i. 26, 27. and *chap.* ix. 6.) by which God distinguished man from the beasts; *viz.* in those faculties and principles of nature, whereby He is capable of moral Agency. Herein very much consists the *natural* image of God; as his *spiritual* and *moral* image, wherein man was made at first, consisted in that moral excellency, that he was endowed with.

PART II.

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

SECTION I.

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

HAVING taken notice of those things which may be necessary to be observed, concerning the meaning of the principal terms and phrases made use of in controversies concerning Human Liberty, and particularly observed what *Liberty* is according to the common language and general apprehension of mankind, and what it is as understood and maintained by *Arminians*; I proceed to consider the *Arminian* notion of the *Freedom of the Will*, and the supposed necessity of it in order to Moral Agency, or in order to any one's being capable of virtue or vice, and properly the subject of command or counsel, praise or blame, promises or threatenings, rewards or punishments; or whether that which has been described, as the thing meant by liberty in common speech, be not sufficient and the only liberty, which makes, or can make any one a moral agent, and so properly the subject of these things. In *this Part*, I shall consider whether any such thing be possible or conceiveable, as that Freedom of Will which *Arminians* insist on; and shall enquire, whether any such sort of Liberty be necessary to moral agency, *&c.* in the *next* Part.

And first of all, I shall consider the notion of *a self-determining Power* in the Will: wherein, according to

the *Arminians*, does most essentially consist in the Will's Freedom; and shall particularly enquire, whether it be not plainly absurd, and a manifest inconsistence, to suppose that *the will itself determines all the free acts of the Will.*

Here I shall not insist on the great impropriety of such phrases, and ways of speaking, as *the Will's determining itself;* because actions are to be ascribed to agents, and not properly to the power of agents; which improper way of speaking leads to many mistakes and much confusion, as Mr Locke observes. But I shall suppose that the *Arminians*, when they speak of the Will's determining itself, do by the *Will* mean the *soul willing*. I shall take it for granted, that when they speak of the Will, as the determiner, they mean *the soul in the exercise of a power of willing*, or acting voluntarily. I shall suppose this to be their meaning, because nothing else can be meant, without the grossest and plainest absurdity. In all cases when we speak of the powers or principles of acting, as doing such things, we mean that the agents which have these Powers of acting, do them, in the exercise of those Powers. So when we say, valour fights courageously, we mean, the man who is under the influence of valour fights courageously. When we say, love seeks the object loved, we mean the person loving seeks that object. When we say, the understanding discerns, we mean the soul in the exercise of that faculty. So when it is said, the will decides or determines, the meaning must be, that the person in the exercise of a Power of willing and choosing, or the soul acting voluntarily, determines.

Therefore, if the Will determines all its own free acts, the soul determines all the free acts of the will in the exercise of a Power of willing and choosing; or, which is the same thing, it determines them of choice; it determines its own acts by choosing its own acts. If the Will determines the Will, then choice orders and determines the choice: and acts of choice are subject to the decision, and follow the conduct

of other acts of choice. And therefore if the Will determines all its own free acts, then every free act of choice is determined by a preceding act of choice, choosing that act. And if that preceding act of the Will or choice be also a free act, then by these principles, in this act too, the Will is self-determined: that is, this, in like manner, is an act that the soul voluntarily chooses; or, which is the same thing, it is an act determined still by a preceding act of the Will, choosing that. And the like may again be observed of the last mentioned act. Which brings us directly to a contradiction: for it supposes an act of the Will preceding the first act in the whole train, directing and determining the rest; or a free act of the Will, before the first free act of the Will. Or else we must come at last to an act of the Will, determining the consequent acts, wherein the Will is not self-determined, and so is not a free act, in this notion of freedom: but if the first act in the train, determining and fixing the rest, be not free, none of them all can be free: as is manifest at first view, but shall be demonstrated presently.

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

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

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

SECTION II.

Several supposed Ways of evading the foregoing Reasoning considered.

IF to evade the force of what has been observed, it should be said, that when the *Arminians* speak of

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

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

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

Thirdly. To say, the faculty, or the soul, determines its own volition, but not by any act, is a contradiction. Because for the soul to *direct*, *decide*, or *determine* any thing, is to act; and this is supposed; for the soul is here spoken of as being a cause in this affair, bringing something to pass, or doing something; or, which is the same thing, exerting itself in order to an effect, which

effect is the determination of volition, or the particular kind and manner of an act of will. But certainly this exertion or action is not the same with the effect, in order to the production of which it is exerted; but must be something prior to it.

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

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

If it should be said, That although it be true, if the soul determines its own volitions, it must be active in so doing, and the determination itself must be an act; yet there is no need of supposing this act to be prior to the

volition determined: but the will or soul determines the act of the will *in willing;* it determines its own volition, *in* the very act of volition; it directs and limits the act of the will, causing it to be so and not otherwise, *in* exerting the act, without any preceding act to exert that. If any should say after this manner, they must mean one of these three things; Either, (1.) That the determining act, though it be before the act determined in the order of nature, yet it is not before it in order of time. Or, (2.) That the determining act is not before the act determined, either in the order of time or nature, nor is truly distinct from it; but that the soul's determining the act of volition is the same thing with its exerting the act of volition: the mind's exerting such a particular act, is its causing and determining the act.—Or, (3.) That volition has no cause, and is no effect; but comes into existence, with such a particular determination, without any ground or reason of its existence and determination. I shall consider these distinctly.

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

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

(2.) If any should say, that the determining act is not before the determined act, either in the order of time, or of nature, nor is distinct from it; but that the *exertion* of the act is the *determination* of the act; that for the soul to exert a particular volition, is for it to cause and determine that act of volition: I would on this observe, that the thing in question seems to be forgotten, or kept out of sight, in a darkness and unintelligibleness of speech; unless such an objector would mean to contradict himself.—The very act of volition itself is doubtless a determination of mind; *i. e.* it is the mind's drawing up a conclusion, or coming to a choice between two things, or more, proposed to it. But determining among external *objects* of choice, is not the same with determining the *act* of choice itself, among various possible acts of choice. The question is, What influences, directs, or determines the mind or will to come to such a conclusion or choice as it does? Or what is the cause, ground, or reason, why it concludes thus, and not otherwise? Now it must be answered, according to the *Arminian* notion of freedom, that the will influences, orders, and determines itself thus to act. And if it does, I say, it must be by some antecedent act. To say, it is caused, influenced, and determined by something, and yet not determined by any thing antecedent, either in order of time or nature, is a contradiction. For

that is what is meant by a thing's being prior in the order of nature, that it is some way the cause or reason of the other thing, with respect to which it is said to be prior.

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

(5.) If the meaning be, that the soul's exertion of such a particular act of will, is a thing that comes to pass *of itself*, without any cause; and that there is absolutely no ground or reason of the soul's being determined to exert such a volition, and make such a choice, rather than another; I say, if this be the meaning of *Arminians*, when they contend so earnestly for the will's determining its own acts, and for liberty of will, consisting in self-determining power; they do nothing but confound themselves and others with words without a meaning. In the question, *What determines the will?* and in their answer, that *The will determines itself*, and in all the dispute about it, it seems to be taken for granted, that something determines the will; and the controversy on this head is not, whether any thing at all determines it, or whether its determination has any cause or foundation at all; but where the foundation of it is, whether in the will itself, or somewhere else. But if the thing intended be what is above-mentioned, then all comes to this, that nothing at all determines the will; volition

having absolutely no cause or foundation of its existence, either within, or without. There is a great noise made about self-determining power, as the source of all free acts of the will; but when the matter comes to be explained, the meaning is, that no power at all is the source of these acts, neither self-determining power, nor any other, but they arise from nothing; no cause, no power, no influence, being at all concerned in the matter.

However, this very thing, even that the free acts of the will are events which come to pass without a cause, is certainly implied in the *Arminian* notion of liberty of will; though it be very inconsistent with many other things in their scheme, and repugnant to some things implied in their notion of liberty. Their opinion implies, that the particular determination of volition is without any cause; because they hold the free acts of the will to be *contingent* events; and contingence is essential to freedom in their notion of it. But certainly, those things which have a prior ground and reason of their particular existence, a cause which antecedently determines them to be, and determines them to be just as they are, do not happen contingently. If something foregoing, by a casual influence and connection, determines and fixes precisely their coming to pass, and the manner of it, then it does not remain a contingent thing whether they shall come to pass or no.

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

SECTION III.

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

BEFORE I enter on any argument on this subject, I would explain how I would be understood, when I use the word *Cause* in this discourse: since, for want of a better word, I shall have occasion to use it in a sense which is more extensive than that in which it is sometimes used. The word is often used in so restrained a sense as to signify only that which has a *positive efficiency* or influence *to produce* a thing, or bring it to pass. But there are many things which have no such positive productive influence; which yet are causes in that respect, that they have truly the nature of a ground or reason why some things are, rather than others; or why they are as they are, rather than otherwise. Thus the absence of the sun in the night, is not the Cause of the falling of the dew at that time, in the same manner as its beams are the Cause of the ascending of the vapours in the day-time, and its withdrawment in the winter, is not in the same manner the Cause of the freezing of the waters, as its approach in the spring is the cause of their thawing. But yet the withdrawment or absence of the sun is an antecedent, with which these effects in the night and winter are connected, and on which they depend; and is one thing that belongs to the ground and reason why they come to pass at that time, rather than at any other times; though the absence of the sun is nothing positive, nor has any positive influence.

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

Therefore, I sometimes use the word *Cause* in this enquiry, to signify any *antecedent*, either natural or moral, positive or negative, on which an event, either a thing, or the manner and circumstance of a thing, so depends, that it is the ground and reason, either in whole or in part, why it is, rather than not; or why it is as it is, rather than otherwise, or, in other words, any antecedent with which a consequent event is so connected, that it truly belongs to the reason why the proposition which affirms that Event, is true; whether it has any positive influence, or not. And in an agreeableness to this, I sometimes use the word *Effect* for the consequence of another thing, which is perhaps rather an occasion than a Cause, most properly speaking.

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

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

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

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

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

Indeed, I will not affirm, that there is in the nature of things no foundation for the knowledge of the Being of God, without any evidence of it from His works. I do suppose there is a great absurdity, in the nature of things simply considered, in supposing that there should be no God, or in denying Being in general, and supposing an eternal, absolute, universal nothing: and therefore that here would be foundation of intuitive evidence that it cannot be, and that eternal infinite most perfect Being must be; if we had strength and comprehension of mind sufficient, to have a clear idea of general and universal Being, or, which is the same thing, of the infinite, eternal, most perfect Divine Nature and Essence. But then we should not properly come to the knowledge of the Being of God by arguing; but our evidence would be intuitive: we should see it, as we see other things that are necessary in themselves, the contraries of which

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

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

which leads us to determine, that there cannot be any thing coming to pass without a Cause, leads us to determine that there cannot be more in the effect than in the Cause.

Yea, if once it should be allowed, that things may come to pass without a cause, we should not only have no proof of the Being of God, but we should be without evidence of the existence of any thing whatsoever, but our own immediately present ideas and consciousness. For we have no way to prove any thing else, but by arguing from effects to Causes: from the ideas now immediately in view, we argue other things not immediately in view; from sensations now excited in us, we infer the existence of things without us, as the Causes of these sensations: and from the existence of these things, we argue other things, which they depend on, as effects on Causes. We infer the past existence of ourselves, or any thing else, by memory; only as we argue, that the ideas, which are now in our minds, are the consequences of past ideas and sensations. We immediately perceive nothing else but the ideas which are this moment extant in our minds. We perceive or know other things only *by means* of these, as necessarily connected with others, and dependent on them. But if things may be without Causes, all this necessary connection and dependence is dissolved, and so all means of our knowledge is gone. If there be no absurdity or difficulty in supposing one thing to start out of non-existence, into being, of itself without a Cause; then there is no absurdity or difficulty in supposing the same of millions of millions. For nothing, or no difficulty multiplied, still is nothing, or no difficulty: nothing multiplied by nothing, does not increase the sum.

And indeed, according to the hypothesis I am opposing, of the acts of the will coming to pass without a Cause, it is the case in fact, that millions of millions of events are continually coming into existence *contingently* without any cause or reason why they do so, all over the world, every day and hour, through all ages. So it

is in a constant succession, in every moral agent. This contingency, this efficient nothing, this effectual No-Cause, is always ready at hand, to produce this sort of effects, as long as the agent exists, and as often as he has occasion.

If it were so, that things only of one kind : *viz.* acts of the will, seemed to come to pass of themselves ; but those of this sort in general came into being thus ; and it were an event that was continual, and that happened in a course, wherever there were capable subjects of such events ; this very thing would demonstrate that there was some Cause of them, which made such a difference between this event and others, and that they did not really happen contingently. For contingence is blind, and does not pick and choose for a particular sort of Events. Nothing has no choice. This No-Cause, which causes no existence, cannot cause the existence which comes to pass, to be of one particular sort only, distinguished from all others. Thus, that only one sort of matter drops out of the heavens, even water, and that this comes so often, so constantly and plentifully, all over the world, in all ages, shews that there is some Cause or Reason of the falling of water out of the heavens ; and that something besides mere contingence has a hand in the matter.

If we should suppose Non-entity to be about to bring forth ; and things were coming into existence, without any Cause or Antecedent, on which the existence, or kind, or manner of existence depends ; or which could at all determine whether the things should be ; stones, or stars, or beasts, or angels, or human bodies, or souls, or only some new motion or figure in natural bodies, or some new sensations in animals, or new ideas in the human understanding, or new volitions in the will ; or any thing else of all the infinite number of possibles ; then certainly it would not be expected, although many millions of millions of things are coming into existence in this manner, all over the face of the earth, that they should all be only of one particular kind, and that it should be

thus in all ages, and that this sort of existences should never fail to come to pass where there is room for them, or a subject capable of them, and that constantly, whenever there is occasion for them.

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

So that it is indeed as repugnant to reason, to suppose that an act of the will should come into existence without a cause, as to suppose the human soul, or an angel, or the globe of the earth, or the whole universe, should come into existence without a cause. And if once we

allow, that such a sort of effect as a Volition may come to pass without a Cause, how do we know but that many other sorts of effects may do so too? It is not the particular kind of effect that makes the absurdity of supposing it has been without a Cause, but something which is common to all things that ever begin to be; *viz.* That they are not self-existent, or necessary in the nature of things.

SECTION IV.

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

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

1. The objection or difficulty proposed by this author, seems to be forgotten in his answer or solution. The very difficulty, as he himself proposes it, is this; How an event can *come to pass without a sufficient reason why*

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

2. The question is not so much, How a spirit endowed with activity comes to act, as why it exerts such an act, and not another; or why it acts with such a particular determination? If activity of nature be the Cause why a spirit (the soul of man for instance) acts, and does not lie still; yet that alone is not the Cause why its action is thus and thus limited, directed and determined. Active nature is a *general* thing; it is an ability or tendency of nature to action generally taken: which may be a Cause why the soul acts as occasion or reason is given; but this alone cannot be a sufficient Cause why the soul exerts such a *particular* act, at such a time, rather than others. In order to this, there must be something besides a *general* tendency to action; there must also be a *particular* tendency to that individual action.—If it should be asked, why the soul of man uses

its activity in such a manner as it does; and it should be answered, that the soul uses its activity thus, rather than otherwise, because it has activity; would such an answer satisfy a rational man? Would it not rather be looked upon as a very impertinent one?

3. An active being can bring no effects to pass by his activity, but what are consequent upon his acting: he produces nothing by his activity, any other way, than by the exercise of his activity, and so nothing but the fruits of its exercise: he brings nothing to pass by a dormant activity. But the exercise of his activity is action; and so his action, or exercise of his activity, must be prior to the effects of his activity. If an active being produces an effect in another being, about which his activity is conversant, the effect being the fruit of his activity, his activity must be first exercised or exerted, and the effect of it must follow. So it must be, with equal reason, if the active being is his own object, and his activity is conversant about himself, to produce and determine some effect in himself; still the exercise of his activity must go before the effect, which he brings to pass and determines by it. And therefore his activity cannot be the Cause of the determination of the first action, or exercise of activity itself, whence the effects of activity arise; for that would imply a contradiction; it would be to say, the first exercise of activity is before the first exercise of activity, and is the cause of it.

4. That the soul, though an active substance, cannot *diversify* its own acts, but by first acting; or be a determining Cause of *different* acts, or any different effects, sometimes of one kind, and sometimes of another; any other way than in consequence of its own diverse acts, is manifest by this: that if so, then the *same* Cause, the *same* causal Power, Force or Influence, *without variation in any respect*, would produce *different* effects at different times. For the same substance of the soul before it acts, and the same active nature of the soul before it is exerted (*i. e.* before in the order of nature) would be the Cause of different effects; *viz.* different Volitions

at different times. But the substance of the soul before it acts, and its active nature before it is exerted, are the same without variation. For it is some act that makes the first variation in the Cause, as to any causal exertion, force or influence, but if it be so, that the soul has no different causality, or diverse causal force or influence, in producing these diverse effects; then it is evident, that the soul has no influence, no hand in the diversity of the effect; and that the difference of the effect cannot be owing to any thing in the soul; or, which is the same thing, the soul does not determine the diversity of the effect; which is contrary to the supposition.—It is true, the substance of the soul before it acts, and before there is any difference in that respect, may be in a different state and circumstances; but those whom I oppose, will not allow the different circumstances of the soul to be the determining Causes of the acts of the will, as being contrary to their notion of self-determination and self-motion.

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

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

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

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

SECTION V.

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

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

So that if *Arminian* liberty of will, consisting in the

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

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

So, that let *Arminians* turn which way they please with their notion of liberty, consisting in the will's determining its own acts, their notion destroys itself. If they hold every free act of will to be determined by the soul's own free choice, or foregoing free act of will; *foregoing*, either in the order of time, or nature; it implies that gross contradiction, that the first free act belonging to the affair, is determined by a free act which is before it. Or if they say that the free acts of the will are determined by some *other act* of the soul, and not an act of will or choice; this also destroys the notion of liberty consisting in the acts of the will being determined by the *will itself;* or if they hold that the acts of the will are determined by *nothing at all* that is prior to

them, but that they are contingent in that sense, that they are determined and fixed by no cause at all; this also destroys their notion of liberty, consisting in the will's determining its own acts.

This being the true state of the *Arminian* notion of liberty, it hence comes to pass, that the writers that defend it are forced into gross inconsistences, in what they say upon this subject. To instance in Dr *Whitby;* he, in his discourse on the freedom of the will *, opposes the opinion of the *Calvinists*, who place man's liberty *only in a power of doing what he will*, as that wherein they plainly agree with Mr *Hobbes*. And yet he himself mentions the very same notion of liberty, as the dictate of *the sense and common reason of mankind, and a rule laid down by the light of nature;* viz. that *liberty is a power of acting from ourselves, or DOING WHAT WE WILL* †. This is indeed, as he says, a thing agreeable to *the sense and common reason of mankind;* and therefore it is not so much to be wondered at, that he unawares acknowledges it against himself: for, if liberty does not consist in this, what else can be devised that it should consist in? If it be said, as Dr *Whitby* elsewhere insists, that it does not only consist in liberty of *doing what we will*, but also a liberty of willing, without necessity; still the question returns, What does that liberty of willing, without necessity consist in, but in a power of willing *as we please*, without being impeded by a contrary necessity; or, in other words, a liberty for the soul in its willing to act *according to its own choice?* Yea, this very thing the same author seems to allow and suppose again and again, in the use he makes of sayings of the Fathers, whom he quotes as his vouchers. Thus he cites the words of *Origen*, which he produces as a testimony on his side ‡; *The soul acts by HER OWN CHOICE, and it is free for her to incline to whatever*

---

* In his Book on the five Points. Second Edit. p. 350, 351, 352.
† Ibid. 325, 326.
‡ In his Book on the five Points. Second Edit. p. 342.

part SHE WILL. And those words of *Justin Martyr**: *The doctrine of the Christians is this, that nothing is done or suffered according to fate, but that every man doth good or evil ACCORDING TO HIS OWN FREE CHOICE.* And from *Eusebius*, these words †: *If fate be established, philosophy and piety are overthrown; all these things depending upon the necessity introduced by the stars, and not upon meditation and exercise PROCEEDING FROM OUR OWN FREE CHOICE.* And again, the words of *Maccarius* ‡: *God, to preserve the liberty of mens will, suffered their bodies to die, that it might be IN THEIR CHOICE to turn to good or evil. They who are acted by the Holy Spirit, are not held under any necessity, but have liberty to turn themselves, and DO WHAT THEY WILL in this life.*

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

---

* Ibid. p. 360. † Ibid. 360. ‡ Ibid. 369.

And, finally, let every one judge whether in the scheme of these writers there be any possibility of avoiding these absurdities.

If liberty consists, as Dr *Whitby* himself says, in a man's *doing what he will:* and a man exercises this liberty, not only in external actions, but in the acts of the will themselves; then so far as liberty is exercised in the latter, it consists in *willing what he wills:* and if any say so, one of these two things must be meant, either; 1. That a man has power to will, as he does will; because what he wills, he wills; and therefore has power to will what he has power to will. If this be their meaning, then all this mighty controversy about freedom of the will and self-determining power, comes wholly to nothing; all that is contended for being no more than this; that the mind of man does what it does, and is the subject of what it is the subject of,—or that what is, is; wherein none has any controversy with them. Or, 2. The meaning must be, that a man has power to will as he pleases or chooses to will: that is, he has power by one act of choice, to choose another: by an antecedent act of will to choose a consequent act; and therein to execute his own choice. And if this be their meaning, it is nothing but shuffling with these they dispute with, and baffling their own reason. For still the question returns, Wherein lies man's liberty in that antecedent act of will which chose the consequent act. The answer, according to the same principles, must be, that his liberty in this also lies in his willing as he would, or as he chose, or agreeable to another act of choice preceding that: and so the question returns *in infinitum*, and the like answer must be made *in infinitum*. In order to support their opinion, there must be no beginning, but free acts of will must have been chosen by foregoing free acts of will in the soul of every man, without beginning; and so before he had a being, from all eternity.

SECTION VI.

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

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

Thus the forementioned author of an *Essay on the Freedom of the Will*, &c. p. 25, 26, 27, supposes, "That there are many instances, wherein the Will is determined neither by present uneasiness, nor by the greatest apparent good, nor by the last dictate of the understanding, nor by any thing else, but merely by itself, as a sovereign self-determining power of the soul; and that the soul does not will this or that action, in some cases, by any other influence but because it will. Thus (says he) I can turn my face to the South, or the North; I can point with my finger upward or downward. And thus, in some cases, the Will determines itself in a very sovereign manner, because it will, without a reason borrowed from the understanding: and hereby it discovers its own perfect power of choice, rising from within itself, and free from all influence or restraint of any kind." And in pages 66, 70, and 73, 74, this author very expressly supposes the Will in many cases to be determined by *no motive at all, and acts altogether without motive, or ground of preference*.—Here I would observe,

1. The very supposition which is here made, directly contradicts and overthrows itself. For the thing supposed, wherein this grand argument consists, is, that among several things the Will actually chooses one before another, at the same time that it is perfectly indifferent; which is the very same thing as to say, the mind has a preference, at the same that it has no preference. What is meant cannot be, that the mind is indifferent before it comes to have a choice, or until it has a preference; or, which is the same thing, that the mind is indifferent until it comes to be not indifferent: for certainly this author did not suppose he had a controversy with any person in supposing this. And then it is nothing to his purpose, that the mind which chooses, was indifferent once; unless it chooses, remaining indifferent; for otherwise, it does not choose at all in that case of indifference, concerning which is all the question. Besides, it appears in fact, that the thing which this author supposes, is not that the Will chooses one thing before another, concerning which it is indifferent *before it chooses;* but also is indifferent *when it chooses;* and that its being otherwise than indifferent is not until afterwards, in consequence of its choice; that the chosen thing's appearing preferable and more agreeable than another, arises from its choice already made.—His words are, (p. 30.) "Where the objects which are proposed, appear equally fit or good, the Will is left without a guide or director; and therefore must take its own choice, by its own determination; it being properly a self-determining power. And in such cases the will does as it were make a good to itself by its own choice; *i. e.* creates its own pleasure or delight in this self-chosen good. Even as a man by seizing upon a spot of unoccupied land, in an uninhabited country, makes it his own possession and property, and as such rejoices in it. Where things were indifferent before, the will find nothing to make them more agreeable, considered merely in themselves; but the pleasure it feels ARISING FROM ITS OWN CHOICE, and its perseverance

therein. We love many things which we have chosen, AND PURELY BECAUSE WE CHOOSE THEM.

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

This author says, (p. 36.) "The will may be perfectly indifferent, and yet the will may determine itself to choose one or the other." And again in the same page, "I am entirely indifferent to either; and yet my Will may determine itself to choose." And again, "Which I shall choose must be determined by the mere act of my Will." If the choice is determined by a mere act of Will, then the choice is determined by a mere act of choice. And concerning this matter; *viz.* That the act of the Will itself is determined by an act of choice, this writer is express, in page 72. Speaking of the case, where there is no superior fitness in objects presented, he has these words: "There it must act by its own CHOICE, and determine itself as it PLEASES." Where it is supposed that the very *determination*, which is the ground and spring of the Will's act, is an act of *choice* and *pleasure*, wherein one act is more agreeable, and the mind better pleased in it than another; and this *preference* and *superior pleasedness* is the ground of all it does in the case. And if so, the mind is not indifferent when it determines itself, but *had rather* do one thing than another, had rather determine itself one way than another. And therefore the Will does not act at

all in indifference; not so much as in the first step it takes, or the first rise and beginning of its acting. If it be possible for the understanding to act in indifference, yet to be sure the Will never does; because the Will's beginning to act is the very same thing as its beginning to choose or prefer. And if in the very first act of the Will, the mind prefers something, then the idea of that thing preferred, does at that time preponderate, or prevail in the mind: or, which is the same thing, the idea of it has a prevailing influence on the Will. So that this wholly destroys the thing supposed, *viz.* That the mind can by a sovereign power choose one of two or more things, which in the view of the mind are, in every respect, perfectly equal, one of which does not at all preponderate, nor has any prevailing influence on the mind above another.

So that this author, in his grand argument for the ability of the Will to choose one of two, or more things, concerning which it is perfectly indifferent, does at the same time, in effect, deny the thing he supposes, and allows and asserts the point he endeavours to overthrow; even that the Will, in choosing, is subject to no prevailing influence of the idea, or view of the thing chosen. And indeed it is impossible to offer this argument without overthrowing it; the thing supposed in it being inconsistent with itself, and that which denies itself. To suppose the Will to act at all in a state of perfect indifference, either to determine itself, or to do any thing else, is to assert that the mind chooses without choosing. To say that when it is indifferent, it can do as it pleases, is to say that it can follow its pleasure, when it has no pleasure to follow. And therefore if there be any difficulty in the instances of two cakes, or two eggs, &c. which are exactly alike, one as good as another; concerning which this author supposes the mind in fact has a *choice*, and so in effect supposes that it has a *preference*; it as much concerned himself to solve the difficulty, as it does those whom he opposes. For if these instances prove any thing to his purpose, they prove that a man

chooses without choice. And yet this is not to his purpose; because if this is what he asserts, his own words are as much against him, and do as much contradict him, as the words of those he disputes against can do.

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

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

---

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

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

Accident will ever serve a man, without hindering him a moment, in such a case. It will always be so among a number of objects in view, one will prevail in the eye, or in idea beyond others. When we have our eyes open in the clear sun-shine, many objects strike the eye at once, and innumerable images may be at once painted in it by the rays of light; but the attention of the mind is not equal to several of them at once; or if it be, it does not continue so for any time. And so it is with respect to the ideas of the mind in general; several ideas are not in equal strength in the mind's view and notice at once; or at least, does not remain so for

any sensible continuance. There is nothing in the world more constantly varying, than the ideas of the mind: they do not remain precisely in the same state for the least perceivable space of time; as is evident by this. That all perceivable time is judged and perceived by the mind only by the succession or the successive changes of its own ideas. Therefore while the views or perceptions of the mind remain precisely in the same state, there is no perceivable space or length of time, because no sensible succession at all.

As the acts of the Will, in each step of the forementioned procedure, does not come to pass without a particular cause, every act is owing to a prevailing inducement; so the accident, as I have called it, or that which happens in the unsearchable course of things, to which the mind yields itself, and by which it is guided, is not any thing that comes to pass without a cause; and the mind in determining to be guided by it, is not determined by something that has no cause, any more than if it determined to be guided by a lot, or the casting of a die. For though the die's falling in such a manner be accidental to him that casts it, yet none will suppose that there is no cause why it falls as it does. The involuntary changes in the succession of our ideas, though the cause may not be observed, have as much a cause as the changeable motions of the motes that float in the air, or the continual, infinitely various, successive changes of the unevennesses on the surface of the water.

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

1. They seem to mistake the point in question, or at least not to keep it distinctly in view. The question they dispute about, is, Whether the mind be indifferent about the *objects* presented, one of which is to be taken, touched, pointed to, &c. as two eggs, two cakes, which appear equally good. Whereas the question to be con-

sidered is, Whether the person be indifferent with respect to his own *actions;* whether he does not, on some consideration or other, prefer one act with respect to these objects before another. The mind in its determination and choice, in these cases, is not most immediately and directly conversant about the *objects presented;* but *the acts to be done* concerning these objects. The objects may appear equal, and the mind may never properly make any choice between them; but the next act of the will being about the external actions to be performed, taking, touching, &c. these may not appear equal, and one action may properly be chosen before another. In each step of the mind's progress, the determination is not about the objects, unless indirectly and improperly, but about the actions, which it chooses for other reasons than any preference of the objects, and for reasons not taken at all from the objects.

There is no necessity of supposing, that the mind does ever at all properly choose one of the objects before another; either before it has taken, or afterwards. Indeed the man chooses to *take* or *touch* one rather than another; but not because he chooses the *thing taken* or *touched;* but from foreign considerations. The case may be so, that of two things offered, a man may, for certain reasons, choose and prefer the taking of that which he *undervalues*, and choose to neglect to take that which his mind *prefers*. In such a case, choosing the thing taken, and choosing to take, are diverse: and so they are in a case where the things presented are equal in the mind's esteem, and neither of them preferred. All that fact and experience makes evident, is, that the mind chooses one action rather than another. And therefore the arguments which they bring, in order to be to their purpose, ought to be to prove that the mind chooses the action in perfect indifference, with respect to *that action;* and not to prove that the mind chooses the action in perfect indifference with respect to the *object;* which is very possible, and yet the will not act at

all without prevalent inducement, and proper preponderation.

2. Another reason of confusion and difficulty in this matter, seems to be, not distinguishing between a *general* indifference, or an indifference with respect to what is to be done in a more distant and general view of it, and a *particular* indifference, or an indifference with respect to the next immediate act, viewed with its particular and present circumstances. A man may be perfectly indifferent with respect to his own *actions*, in the former respect; and yet not in the latter. Thus, in the foregoing instance of touching one of the squares of a chess-board; when it is first proposed that I should touch one of them, I may be perfectly indifferent which I touch; because as yet I view the matter remotely and generally, being but in the first step of the mind's progress in the affair. But yet, when I am actually come to the last step, and the very next thing to be determined is, which is to be touched, having already determined that I will touch that which happens to be most in my eye or mind, and my mind being now fixed on a particular one, the act of touching that, considered thus immediately, and in these particular present circumstances, is not what my mind is absolutely indifferent about.

SECTION VII.

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

WHAT has been said in the foregoing section, has a tendency in some measure to evince the absurdity of the opinion of such as place Liberty in Indifference, or in that equilibrium whereby the Will is without all antecedent determination or bias, and left hitherto free from any prepossessing inclination to one

side or the other; that the determination of the Will to either side may be entirely from itself, and that it may be owing only to its own power, and that sovereignty which it has over itself, that it goes this way rather than that *.

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

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

---

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

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

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

And here I would observe, in the *first* place, that, to make out this scheme of Liberty, the indifference must be *perfect* and *absolute*; there must be a perfect freedom from all antecedent preponderation or inclination:—because, if the Will be already inclined, before it exerts its own sovereign power on itself, then its inclination is

not wholly owing to itself: if, when two opposites are proposed to the soul for its choice, the proposal does not find the soul wholly in a state of indifference, then it is not found in a state of Liberty for mere self-determination. The least degree of an antecedent bias must be inconsistent with their notion of Liberty: for, so long as prior inclination possesses the Will, and is not removed, it binds the Will; so that it is utterly impossible that the Will should act otherwise than agreeably to it. Surely the Will cannot act or choose contrary to a remaining prevailing inclination of the Will. To suppose otherwise, would be the same thing as to suppose, that the Will is *inclined* contrary to its present prevailing *inclination*, or contrary to what it is *inclined* to. That which the Will chooses and prefers, that, all things considered, it preponderates and inclines to. It is equally impossible for the Will to choose contrary to its own remaining and present preponderating inclination, as it is to *prefer* contrary to its own present *preference*, or *choose* contrary to its own present *choice*. The Will, therefore, so long as it is under the influence of an old preponderating inclination, is not at liberty for a new free act, or any act that shall now be an act of self-determination. The act, which is a self-determined free act, must be an act which the will determines in the possession and use of such a Liberty, as consists in a freedom from every thing, which, if it were there, would make it impossible that the Will, at that time, should be otherwise than that way to which it tends.

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

to prefer at the same time, or to choose contrary to its own present choice.

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

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

to it an ability to add to itself another degree of force the same way by its self-moving power; this is just the same thing as to ascribe to it a power to give itself one degree of preponderation from a perfect equilibrium; and so much power as the scale has to give itself an overbalance from a perfect equipoise, so much self-moving, self-preponderating power it has, and no more: so that its free power this way is always to be measured from perfect equilibrium.

I need say no more to prove, that if indifference be essential to liberty, it must be perfect indifference; and that so far as the will is destitute of this, so far it is destitute of that freedom by which it is its own master, and in a capacity of being its own determiner, without being at all passive, or subject to the power and sway of something else, in its motions and determinations.

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

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

Now the question is, whether ever the soul of man puts forth an act of will, while it yet remains in a state of liberty, in that notion of a state of liberty, *viz.* as implying a state of indifference; or whether the soul ever exerts an act of choice or preference, while at that very time the will is in a perfect equilibrium, not inclining

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

sessed of, or ever uses, in any of its acts of volition, consists in indifference; and that the opinion of such as suppose, that indifference belongs to the very essence of liberty, is to the highest degree absurd and contradictory.

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

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

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

If any, to evade these things, should own, that a state of Liberty and a state of Indifference are not the same, and that the former may be without the latter; but should say, that indifference is still *essential to* the freedom of an act of will, in some sort, namely, as it is necessary to go immediately *before it*, it being essential to the freedom of an act of will that it should directly and immediately *arise out* of a state of indifference; still this will not help the cause of *Arminian* Liberty, or make it consistent with itself. For if the act springs immediately out of a state of indifference, then it does not arise from *antecedent* choice or preference. But if the act arises directly out of a state of Indifference, without any intervening

choice to choose and determine it, then the act not being determined by choice, is not determined by the will; the mind exercises no free choice in the affair, and free choice and free will have no hand in the determination of the act; which is entirely inconsistent with their notion of the freedom of Volition.

If any should suppose, that these difficulties and absurdities may be avoided, by saying, that the Liberty of the mind consists in a power to *suspend* the act of the will, and so to keep it in a state of *Indifference*, until there has been opportunity for consideration; and so shall say, that however Indifference is not essential to Liberty in such a manner, that the mind must make its choice in a state of Indifference, which is an inconsistency, or that the act of the will must spring immediately out of Indifference; yet Indifference may be essential to the liberty of acts of the will in this respect; *viz.* That Liberty consists in a Power of the mind to forbear or suspend the act of Volition, and keep the mind in a state of Indifference for the present, until there has been opportunity for proper deliberation; I say, if any one imagines that this helps the matter, it is a great mistake: it reconciles no inconsistency, and relieves no difficulty which the affair is attended with. For here the following things must be observed:

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

2. This determining to suspend acting is not only an act of the will, but it is supposed to be the only free act

f the will; because it is said, that *this is the thing wherein the Liberty of the will consists.* Now if this be o, then this is all the act of will that we have to consider in this controversy, about the Liberty of will, and n our enquiries, wherein the Liberty of man consists. And now the forementioned difficulties remain: the former question returns upon us; *viz.* Wherein consists he freedom of the will *in those acts* wherein it is free? And if this act of determining a suspension be the nly act in which the will is free, then wherein consists he will's freedom with respect to this act of suspension? And how is indifference essential to this act? The answer must be, according to what is supposed in the vasion under consideration, that the Liberty of the will n this act of suspension, consists in a Power to suspend ven this act until there has been opportunity for thorough deliberation. But this will be to plunge directly nto the grossest nonsense: for it is the act of suspension tself that we are speaking of; and there is no room for space of deliberation and suspension in order to determine whether we will suspend or no. For that supposes, that even suspension itself may be deferred: vhich is absurd; for the very deferring the determination f suspension, to consider whether we will suspend or no, will be actually suspending: for, during the space f suspension, to consider whether to suspend, the act is *ipso facto* suspended. There is no medium between suspending to act, and immediately acting; and therefore no possibility of avoiding either the one or the other one moment.

And besides, this is attended with ridiculous absurdity another way: for now it is come to that, that Liberty consists wholly in the mind's having Power to suspend its determination whether to suspend or no: that here may be time for consideration, whether it be best to suspend. And if Liberty consists in this only, then this is the Liberty under consideration: we have to enquire now, How Liberty, with respect to this act of suspending a determination of suspension, consists in Indif-

ference, or how Indifference is essential to it. Th answer, according to the hypothesis we are upon, mus be, that it consists in a Power of suspending even thi last mentioned act, to have time to consider whether t suspend that. And then the same difficulties and en quiries return over again with respect to that; and s on for ever;—which, if it would shew any thing, woul shew only that there is no such thing as a free act. I drives the exercise of freedom back *in infinitum;* an that is to drive it out of the world.

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

On the whole, it is exceeding manifest, that the Liberty of the mind does not consist in indifference, and that indifference is not essential or necessary to it, or at

all belonging to it, as the *Arminians* suppose; that opinion being full of nothing but absurdity and self-contradiction.

SECTION VIII.

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

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

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

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

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

And here it must be remembered, that it has been already shewn, that nothing can ever come to pass without a cause, or reason why it exists in this manner rather than another; and the evidence of this has been particularly applied to the acts of the will. Now if this be so, it will demonstrably follow, that the acts of the will are never contingent, or without necessity in the sense spoken of; inasmuch as those things which have a cause, or reason of their existence, must be connected with their cause. This appears by the following considerations.

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

2. If there are some events which are not necessarily connected with their causes, then it will follow, that there are some things which come to pass without any cause, contrary to the supposition. For if there be any event which was not necessarily connected with the influence of the cause under such circumstances, then it was contingent whether it would attend or follow the influence of the cause, or no; it might have followed, and it might not, when the cause was the same, its influence the same, and under the same circumstances. And if so, why did it follow, rather than not follow? There is

no cause or reason of this. Therefore here is something without any cause or reason why it is, *viz.* the following of the effect on the influence of the cause, with which it was not necessarily connected. If there be a necessary connection of the effect on any thing antecedent, then we may suppose that sometimes the event will follow the cause, and sometimes not, when the cause is the same, and in every respect in the same state and circumstances. And what can be the cause and reason of this strange phenomenon, even this diversity, that in one instance, the effect should follow, in another not? It is evident by the supposition, that this is wholly without any cause or ground. Here is something in the present manner of the existence of things, and state of the world, that is absolutely without a cause. Which is contrary to the supposition, and contrary to what has been before demonstrated.

3. To suppose there are some events which have a cause and ground of their existence, that yet are not necessarily connected with their cause, is to suppose that they have a cause which is not their cause. Thus, if the effect be not necessarily connected with the cause, with its influence, and influential circumstance; then, as I observed before, it is a thing possible and supposable, that the cause may sometimes exert the same influence, under the same circumstances, and yet the effect not follow. And if this actually happens in any instance, this instance is a proof, in fact, that the influence of the cause is not sufficient to produce the effect. For if it had been sufficient, it would have done it. And yet, by the supposition, in another instance, the same cause, with perfectly the same influence, and when all circumstances which have any influence, are the same, it *was followed* with the effect. By which it is manifest, that the effect in this last instance was not owing to the influence of the cause, but must come to pass some other way. For it was proved before, that the influence of the cause was not sufficient to produce the effect.

And if it was not sufficient to produce it, then the production of it could not be owing to that influence, but must be owing to something else, or owing to nothing. And if the effect be not owing to the influence of the cause, then it is not the cause. Which brings us to the contradiction of a cause, and no cause, that which is the ground and reason of the existence of a thing, and at the same time is not the ground and reason of its existence, nor is sufficient to be so.

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

On the whole, it is clearly manifest, that every effect has a necessary connection with its cause, or with that

which is the true ground and reason of its existence.—And therefore if there be no event without a cause, as was proved before, then no event whatsoever is contingent in the manner that *Arminians* suppose the free acts of the will to be contingent.

SECTION IX.

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

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

And it is very evident in itself, that the Acts of the will have some connection with the dictates or views of the understanding, so this is allowed by some of the chief of the *Arminian* writers: particularly by Dr *Whitby* and Dr *Samuel Clark*. Dr *Turnbull*, though a great enemy to the doctrine of Necessity, allows the same thing. In his *Christian Philosophy*, (p. 196,) he with much

approbation cites another philosopher, as of the same mind, in these words: "No man, (says an excellent philosopher) sets himself about any thing, but upon some view or other, which serves him for a reason for what he does; and whatsoever faculties he employs, the understanding, with such light as it has, well or ill-formed, constantly leads; and by that light, true or false, all her operative powers are directed. The will itself, how absolute and incontroulable soever it may be thought, never fails in its obedience to the dictates of the understanding. Temples have their sacred images; and we see what influence they have always had over a great part of mankind; but in truth, the ideas and images in mens minds are the invisible powers that constantly govern them; and to these they all pay universally a ready submission."

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

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

"Now, it is certain, that what naturally makes the

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

Understanding to perceive, is evidence proposed, and apprehended, considered or adverted to: for nothing else can be requisite to make us come to the knowledge of the truth. Again, what makes the will choose, is something approved by the Understanding, and consequently appearing to the soul as good. And whatsoever it refuseth, is something represented by the Understanding, and so appearing to the Will, as evil. Whence all that God requires of us is and can be only this; to refuse the evil, and choose the good. Wherefore, to say that evidence proposed, apprehended and considered, is not sufficient to make the Understanding approve; or that the greatest good proposed, the greatest evil threatened, when equally believed and reflected on, is not sufficient to engage the Will to choose the good and refuse the evil, is in effect to say, *that which alone doth move the Will, to choose or to refuse*, is not sufficient to engage it so to do; which being contradictory to itself, must of necessity be false. Be it then so, that we naturally have an aversion to the truths proposed to us in the Gospel; that only can make us indisposed to attend to them, but cannot hinder our conviction, when we do apprehend them, and attend to them.—Be it, that there is in us also a renitency to the good we are to choose; that only can indispose us to believe it is, and to approve it as our chiefest good. Be it, that we are prone to the evil that we should decline; that only can render it the more difficult for us to believe it is the worst of evils. But yet, *what we do really believe to be our chiefest good, will still be chosen; and what we apprehend to be the worst of evils, will, whilst we do continue under that conviction, be refused by us.* It therefore can be only requisite, in order to these ends, that the Good Spirit should so illuminate our understandings, that we attending to, and considering what lies before us, should apprehend and be convinced of our duty; and that the blessings of the Gospel should be so propounded to us, as that we may discern them to be our chiefest good; and the miseries it threateneth, so as we

may be convinced that they are the worst of evils; that we may choose the one, and refuse the other."

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

I am sensible, the Doctor's aim in these assertions is against the *Calvinists;* to shew, in opposition to them, that there is no need of any physical operation of the Spirit of God on the Will, to change and determine that to a good choice, but that God's operation and assistance is only moral, suggesting ideas to the understanding; which he supposes to be enough, if those ideas are attended to, infallibly to obtain the end. But whatever his design was, nothing can more directly and fully prove, that every determination of the Will, in choosing and refusing, *is necessary;* directly contrary to his own notion of the liberty of the Will For if the determination of the Will, evermore, in this manner, follows the light, conviction and view of the understanding, concerning the greatest good and evil, and this be that alone which moves the Will, and it be a contradiction to sup-

pose otherwise; then it is *necessarily* so, the Will necessarily follows this light or view of the understanding, not only in some of its acts, but in every act of choosing and refusing. So that the will does not determine itself in any one of its own acts; but all its acts, every act of choice and refusal depends on, and is necessarily connected with, some antecedent cause; which cause is not the will itself, nor any act of its own, nor any thing pertaining to that faculty, but something belonging to another faculty, whose acts go before the will, in all its acts, and govern and determine them every one.

Here, if it should be replied, that although it be true, that according to the Doctor, the final determination of the will always depends upon, and is infallibly connected with, the understanding's conviction, and notice of the greatest good; yet the acts of the will are not necessary; because that conviction and notice of the understanding is first dependent on a preceding act of the will, in determining to attend to, and take notice of the evidence exhibited; by which means the mind obtains that degree of conviction, which is sufficient and effectual to determine the consequent and ultimate choice of the will; and that the will with regard to that preceding act, whereby it determines whether to attend or no, is not necessary; and that in this, the liberty of the will consists, that when God holds forth sufficient objective light, the will is at liberty whether to command the attention of the mind to it.

Nothing can be more weak and inconsiderate than such a reply as this. For that preceding act of the will, in determining to attend and consider, still is an *act of the Will* (it is so to be sure, if the *liberty of the Will* consists in it, as is supposed) and if it be an act of the will, it is an act of *choice* or *refusal*. And therefore, if what the Doctor asserts be true, it is determined by some antecedent light in the understanding concerning the greatest apparent good or evil. For he asserts, it is that light *which alone doth move the Will to choose or refuse*. And therefore the will must be moved by that

in choosing to attend to the objective light offered, in order to another consequent act of choice; so that this act is no less necessary than the other. And if we suppose another act of the will, still preceding both these mentioned, to determine both, still that also must be an act of the will, and an act of choice; and so must, by the same principles, be infallibly determined by some certain degree of light in the understanding concerning the greatest good. And let us suppose as many acts of the will, one preceding another, as we please, yet they are every one of them necessarily determined by a certain degree of light in the understanding, concerning the greatest and most eligible good in that case; and so, not one of them free according to Dr *Whitby's* notion of freedom. And if it be said, the reason why men do not attend to light held forth, is because of ill habits contracted by evil acts committed before, whereby their minds are indisposed to attend to, and consider of, the truth held forth to them by God, the difficulty is not at all avoided: still the question returns, what determined the will in those preceding evil acts? It must, by Dr *Whitby's* principles, still be the view of the understanding concerning the greatest good and evil. If this view of the understanding be *that alone which doth move the will to choose or refuse*, as the Doctor asserts, then every act of *choice or refusal*, from a man's first existence, is moved and determined by this view; and this view of the understanding exciting and governing the act, must be before the act; and therefore the will is necessarily determined, in every one of its acts, from a man's first existence, by a cause beside the will, and a cause that does not proceed from, or depend on, any act of the will at all. Which at once utterly abolishes the Doctor's whole scheme of liberty of will; and he at one stroke, has cut the sinews of all his arguments from the goodness, righteousness, faithfulness and sincerity of God, in his commands, promises, threatenings, calls, invitations, expostulations; which he makes use of, under the heads of reprobation, election, universal redemption, sufficient

and effectual grace, and the freedom of the will of man; and has enervated and made vain all those exclamations against the doctrine of the *Calvinists*, as charging God with manifest unrighteousness, unfaithfulness, hypocrisy, fallaciousness, and cruelty; which he has over and over, and over again, numberless times in his book.

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

If liberty consists in that which *Arminians* suppose, *viz.* in the will's determining its own acts, having free opportunity, and being without all necessity; this is the same as to say, that liberty consists in the soul's having power and opportunity to have what determinations of the will it pleases or chooses. And if the determinations of the will, and the last dictates of the understanding be the same thing, then liberty consists in the mind's having power to have, what dictates of the un-

* Edit. VI. p. 93.

derstanding it pleases, having opportunity to choose its own dictates of understanding. But this is absurd; for it is to make the determination of choice prior to the dictate of understanding, and the ground of it; which cannot consist with the dictate of understanding's being the determination of choice itself.

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

Besides, if the dictate of the understanding, and determination of the will be the same, this confounds the understanding and will, and makes them the same. Whether they be the same or no, I will not now dispute; but only would observe, that if it be so, and the *Arminian* notion of liberty consists in a self-determining power in the understanding, free of all necessity; being independent, undetermined by any thing prior to its own acts and determinations; and the more the understanding is thus independent, and sovereign over its own determinations the more free. By this therefore the freedom of the soul, as a moral agent, must consist in the independence of the understanding on any evidence or

appearance of things, or any thing whatsoever, that stands forth to the view of the mind, prior to the understanding's determination. And what a sort of liberty is that! consisting in an ability, freedom, and easiness of judging, either according to evidence, or against it; having a sovereign command over itself at all times, to judge, either agreeably or disagreeably to what is plainly exhibited to its own view. Certainly, it is no liberty that renders persons the proper subjects of persuasive reasoning, arguments, expostulations, and such-like moral means and inducements. The use of which with mankind is a main argument of the *Arminians*, to defend their notion of liberty without all necessity. For according to this, the more free men are, the less they are under the government of such means, less subject to the power of evidence and reason, and more independent on their influence, in their determinations.

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

SECTION X.

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

THAT every act of the will has some cause, and consequently (by what has been already proved) has a necessary connection with its cause, and so is necessary by a necessity of connection and consequence, is evident by this, that every act of the will whatsoever is excited by some motive; which is manifest, because, if the will or mind, in willing and choosing after the manner that it does, is excited so to do by no motive or inducement, then it has no end which it proposes to itself, or pursues in so doing; it aims at nothing, and seeks nothing, and if it seeks nothing, then it does not go after any thing, or exert any inclination or preference towards any thing. Which brings the matter to a contradiction; because for the mind to will something, and for it to go after something by an act of preference and inclination, are the same thing

But if every act of the will is excited by a motive, then that motive is the cause of the act of the will. If the acts of the will are excited by motives, then motives are the causes of their being excited; or, which is the same thing, the cause of their being put forth into act and existence. And if so, the existence of the acts of the will is properly the effect of their motives. Motives do nothing as motives or inducements, but by their influence; and so much as is done by their influence is the effect of them. For that is the notion of an effect, something that is brought to pass by the influence of another thing.

And if volitions are properly the effects of their Motives, then they are necessarily connected with their Motives. Every effect and event being as was proved

before necessarily connected with that, which is the proper ground and reason of its existence. Thus it is manifest, that volition is necessary, and is not from any self-determining power in the will: the volition which is caused by previous Motive and inducement, is not caused by the will exercising a sovereign power over itself, to determine, cause and excite volitions in itself. This is not consistent with the will's acting in a state of indifference and equilibrium, to determine itself to a preference; for the way in which motives operate, is by biassing the will, and giving it a certain inclination or preponderation one way.

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

1. He is abundant in asserting, that the will, in all its acts, is influenced by Motive and excitement; and that this is the *previous ground and reason* of all its acts, and that it is never otherwise in any instance. He says, (p. 262.) *No action can take place without some Motive to excite it.* And in p. 363. *Volition cannot take place without some PREVIOUS reason or Motive to induce it.* And in page 310. *Action would not take place without some reason or Motive to induce it; it being absurd to suppose that the active faculty would be exerted without some PREVIOUS reason to dispose the mind to action.* So also p. 257. And he speaks of these things, as what we may be absolutely certain of, and which are the foundation, the only foundation we have of a certainty of the moral perfections of God, p. 252, 253, 254, 255, 261, 262 263, 264.

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

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

Now, how can these things hang together? How can the mind first act, and by its act of *volition* and *choice* determine, what Motives shall be the ground and reason of its *volition* and *choice?* For this supposes the choice is already made, before the Motive has its effect; and that the volition is already exerted, before the motive prevails, so as actually to be the ground of the volition; and makes the prevailing of the motive, the consequence of the volition, which yet it is the ground of. If the mind has already chosen to comply with a motive, and to yield to its excitement, it does not need to yield to it after this: for the thing is effected already, that the motive would excite to, and the will is beforehand with the excitement; and the excitement comes in too late, and is needless and in vain afterwards. If the mind has already chosen to yield to a motive which *invites* to a thing, that implies, and in fact is a choosing the thing *invited too;* and the very act of choice is be-

fore the influence of the motive which induces, and is the ground of the choice; the son is beforehand with the father that begets him: the choice is supposed to be the ground of that influence of the motive, which very influence is supposed to be the ground of the choice. And so *vice versa*, the choice is supposed to be the consequence of the influence of the motive, which influence of the motive is the consequence of that very choice.

And besides, if the will acts first towards the motive before it falls under its influence, and the prevailing of the motive upon it to induce it to act and choose, be the fruit and consequence of its act and choice, then how is the motive *a PREVIOUS ground and reason of the act and choice*, so that *in the nature of the things, volition cannot take place without some PREVIOUS reason and motive to induce it;* and that this act is consequent upon, and follows the motive? Which things Mr *Chubb* often asserts, as of certain and undoubted truth. So that the very same motive is both *previous* and *consequent*, both before and after, both the ground and fruit of the very same thing.

II. Agreeable to the forementioned inconsistent notion of the will's first acting towards the motive, choosing whether it will comply with it, in order to its becoming a ground of the will's acting, before any act of volition can take place, Mr *Chubb* frequently calls motives and excitements to the action of the will, *the passive ground or reason of that action:* which is a remarkable phrase, than which I presume there is none more unintelligible, and void of distinct and consistent meaning, in all the writings of *Duns Scotus*, or *Thomas Aquinas*. When he represents the motive to action or volition as passive, he must mean—passive in that affair, or passive with respect to that action, which he speaks of; otherwise it is nothing to his purpose, or relating to the design of his argument: he must mean, (if that can be called a meaning) that the motive to volition is first acted *upon* or *towards* by the volition, choosing to yield to it, making it a ground of action, or determining to

fetch its influence from thence; and so to make it a previous ground of its own excitation and existence. Which is the same absurdity, as if one should say, that the soul of man, or any other thing should, previous to its existing, choose what cause it would come into existence by, and should act upon its cause, to fetch influence from thence, to bring it into being; and so its cause should be a passive ground of its existence!

Mr *Chubb* does very plainly suppose motive or excitement to be the *ground of the being* of volition. He speaks of it as the ground or reason of the EXERTION of an act of the will, p. 391, and 392; and expressly says, that *volition cannot TAKE PLACE* without some *previous ground or motive to induce it*, p. 363.—And he speaks of the act as *FROM the motive* and *FROM THE INFLUENCE of the motive*, p. 352; and from *the influence that the motive has on the man, for the PRODUCTION of an action*, p. 317. Certainly there is no need of multiplying words about this; it is easily judged, whether motive can be the ground of volition's being exerted and taking place, so that the very production of it is from the influence of the motive, and yet the motive, before it becomes the ground of the volition, is passive or acted upon by the volition. But this I will say, that a man, who insists so much on clearness of meaning in others, and is so much in blaming their confusion and inconsistence, ought, if he was able, to have explained his meaning in this phrase of *passive ground of action*, so as to shew it not to be confused and inconsistent.

If any man should suppose, that Mr *Chubb*, when he speaks of Motive as a *passive ground of action*, does not mean passive with regard to that volition which it is the ground of, but some other antecedent volition (though his purpose and argument, and whole discourse, will by no means allow of such a supposition) yet it would not help the matter in the least. For, (1.) If we suppose there to be an act of volition or choice, by which the soul chooses to yield to the invitation of a

motive to another volition, by which the soul chooses something else; both these supposed volitions are in effect the very same. A volition, or choosing to yield to the force of a motive inviting to choose something, comes to just the same thing as choosing the thing, which the motive invites to, as I observed before. So that here can be no room to help the matter, by a distinction of two volitions. (2.) If the motive be passive with respect, not to the same volition, that the motive excites to, but one truly distinct and prior; yet, by Mr *Chubb*, that prior volition cannot take place, without a motive or excitement, as a *previous ground* of its existence. For he insists, that *it is absurd to suppose any volition should take place without some previous motive to induce it*. So that at last it comes to just the same absurdity: for if *every* volition must have a previous motive, then the very *first* in the whole series must be excited by a previous motive; and yet the motive to that first volition is passive; but cannot be passive with regard to another antecedent volition, because, by the supposition, it is the very first: therefore if it be passive with respect to any volition, it must be so with regard to that very volition that it is the ground of, and that is excited by it.

III. Though Mr *Chubb* asserts, as above, that every volition has some motive, and that *in the nature of the thing, no volition can take place without some motive to induce it;* yet he asserts, that volition does not always follow the strongest motive; or, in other words, is not governed by any superior strength of the motive that is followed, beyond motives to the contrary, previous to the volition itself. His own words, p. 258, are as follows: "Though with regard to physical causes, that which is strongest always prevails, yet it is otherwise with regard to moral causes. Of these, sometimes the stronger, sometimes the weaker, prevails. And the ground of this difference is evident, namely, that what we call moral causes, strictly speaking, are no causes at all, but barely passive reasons of, or excitements to the

action, or to the refraining from acting: which excitements we have power, or are at liberty to comply with or reject, as I have shewed above." And so throughout the paragraph, he, in a variety of phrases insists, that the will is not always determined by the strongest motive, unless by strongest we preposterously mean actually prevailing in the event; which is not in the motive, but in the will; but that the will is not always determined by the motive, which is strongest, by any strength previous to the volition itself. And he elsewhere does abundantly assert, that the will is determined by no superior strength or advantage that motives have, from any constitution or state of things, or any circumstances whatsoever, previous to the actual determination of the will. And indeed his whole discourse on human liberty implies it, his whole scheme is founded upon it.

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

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

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

Yea, in this case, Mr *Chubb* supposes, that the event follows an antecedent or a previous thing, as the ground f its existence, not only that has *no existence* to it, but *a contrary tendency*. The event is the preference, which he mind gives to that motive, which is weaker as it stands in the previous view of the mind; the immediate ntecedent is the view the mind has of the two rival motives conjunctly; in which previous view of the mind, ll the preferableness, or previous tendency to preference, is supposed to be on the other side, or in the con-

trary motive; and all the unworthiness of preference and so previous tendency to comparative neglect, rejection or undervaluing, is on that side which is preferred and yet in this view of the mind is supposed to be the *previous ground or reason* of this act of preference, *exciting it, and disposing the mind to it.* Which, I leave the reader to judge, whether it be absurd or not. If it be not, then it is not absurd to say, that the previous tendency of an antecedent to a consequent, is the ground and reason why that consequent does not follow: and the want of a previous tendency to an event, yea, a tendency to the contrary, is the true ground and reason why that event does follow.

An act of choice or preference is a comparative act wherein the mind acts with reference to two or more things that are compared, and stand in competition in the mind's view. If the mind, in this comparative act prefers that which appears inferior in the comparison then the mind herein acts absolutely without motive, or inducement, or any temptation whatsoever. Then, if a hungry man has the offer of two sorts of food, both which he finds an appetite to, but has a stronger appetite to one than the other; and there be no circumstances or excitements whatsoever in the case to induce him to take either the one or the other, but merely his appetite: if in the choice he makes between them, he chooses that, which he has least appetite to, and refuses that, to which he has the strongest appetite, this is a choice made absolutely without previous motive, excitement, reason, or temptation, as much as if he were perfectly without all appetite to either: because his volition in this case is a comparative act, attending and following a comparative view of the food which he chooses, viewing it as related to, and compared with the other sort of food, in which view his preference has absolutely no previous ground, yea, is against all previous ground and motive. And if there be any principle in man, from whence an act of choice may arise after this manner, from the same principle volition may arise wholly without motive on either side. If the mind in its volition can go beyond motive,

hen it can go without motive: for when it is beyond he motive, it is out of the reach of the motive, out of he limits of its influence, and so without motive. If olition goes beyond the strength and tendency of motive, nd especially if it goes against its tendency, this demonstrates the independence of volition or motive. And if o, no reason can be given for what Mr *Chubb* so often sserts, even that *in the nature of things volition cannot take place without a motive to induce it.*

If the Most High should endow a balance with agency or activity of nature, in such a manner, that when unequal weights are put into the scales, its agency could enable it to cause that scale to descend, which has the least weight, and so to raise the greater weight; this would clearly demonstrate, that the motion of the balance does not depend on weights in the scales, at least as much as if the balance should move itself, when there is no weight in either scale. And the activity of the balance which is sufficient to move itself, against the greater weight, must certainly be more than sufficient to move it when there is no weight at all.

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

It further appears on Mr *Chubb's* supposition, that volition must be without any previous ground in any motive, thus: if it be, as he supposes, that the will is not determined by any previous superior strength of the mo-

tive, but determines and chooses its own motive, then when the rival motives are exactly equal in strength and tendency to induce, in all respects, it may follow either; and may in such a case, sometimes follow one sometimes the other. And if so, this diversity which appears between the acts of the will, is plainly without previous ground on either of the motives; for all that is previously in the motives, is supposed precisely and perfectly the same, without any diversity whatsoever. Now perfect identity, as to all that is previous in the antecedent, cannot be the ground and reason of diversity in the consequent. Perfect identity in the ground cannot be a reason why it is not followed with the same consequence. And therefore the source of this diversity of consequence must be sought for elsewhere.

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

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

And yet, according to him, volition itself is the *effec*

of volition: yea, every act of free volition: and therefore every act of free volition must, by what has now been observed from him, be necessary. That every act of free volition is itself the effect of volition, is abundantly supposed by him. In p. 341, he says, "If a man is such a creature as I have proved him to be, that is, if he has in him a power or liberty of doing either good or evil, and either of these is the subject of his own free choice, so that he might, IF HE HAD PLEASED, have CHOSEN and done the contrary."——Here he supposes, all that is good or evil in man is the effect of his choice; and so that his good or evil choice itself is the effect of his pleasure or choice, in these words, *he might, if he had* PLEASED, *have* CHOSEN *the contrary.* So in p. 356, "Though it be highly reasonable, that a man should always choose the greater good,—yet he may, if he PLEASE, CHOOSE otherwise." Which is the same thing as if he had said, *he may, if he chooses, choose otherwise.* And then he goes on,—"that is, he may, *if he pleases, choose* what is good for himself, &c." And again in the same page, "The will is not confined by the understanding, to any particular sort of good, whether greater or less; but is at liberty *to choose* what kind of good it *pleases.*"—If there be any meaning in the last words, the meaning must be this, that *the Will is at liberty to choose what kind of good it chooses to choose;* supposing the act of choice itself determined by an antecedent choice. The liberty Mr *Chubb* speaks of, is not only a man's having power to move his body agreeably to an antecedent act of choice, but to use or exert the faculties of his soul. Thus, in p. 379, speaking of the faculties of his mind, he says, "Man has power, and is at liberty to neglect these faculties, to use them aright, or to abuse them, *as he pleases.*" And that he supposes an act of choice, or exercise of pleasure, properly distinct *from*, and antecedent *to*, those acts thus chosen, directing, commanding, and producing the chosen acts, and even the acts of choice themselves, is very plain in p. 283. "He can *command his actions;* and herein con-

sists his liberty; he can give or deny himself that pleasure, *as he pleases*." And p. 377. If the actions of men—are not the *produce of a free choice*, or election, but spring from a necessity of nature,—he cannot in reason be the object of reward or punishment on their account. Whereas, if action in man, whether good or evil is *the produce of will or free choice*; so that a man in either case, had it in his power, and was at liberty to have CHOSEN the contrary, he is the proper object of reward or punishment, according as he CHOOSES to behave himself." Here, in these last words, he speaks of *Liberty of choosing according as he* CHOOSES. So that the behaviour which he speaks of as subject to his choice, is his *choosing* itself, as well as his external conduct consequent upon it. And therefore it is evident, he means not only external actions, but the acts of choice themselves, when he speaks of *all free actions as the* PRODUCE *of free choice*. And this is abundantly evident in what he says in p. 372, 373.

Now these things imply a twofold great absurdity and inconsistence.

1. To suppose, as Mr *Chubb* plainly does, that every free act of choice is *commanded by*, and is the *produce of, free choice*, is to suppose the first free act of choice, belonging to the case; yea, the first free act of choice that ever man exerted, to be *the produce* of an antecedent act of choice. But I hope I need not labour at all to convince my readers, that it is an absurdity to say, the very *first* act is the produce of another act that went *before* it.

2. If it were both possible and real, as Mr *Chubb* insists, that every free act of choice were the produce or the effect of a free act of choice; yet even then, according to his principles, no one act of choice would be free, but every one necessary; because, every act of choice being the effect of a foregoing act, every act would be necessarily connected with that foregoing cause. For Mr *Chubb* himself says, p. 389, "When the self-moving power is exerted, it becomes the necessary cause of

its effects."——So that his notion of a free act, that is rewardable or punishable, is a heap of contradictions. It is a free act, and yet, by his own notion of freedom, is necessary; and therefore by him it is a contradiction, to suppose it to be free. According to him, every free act is the produce of a free act; so that there must be an infinite number of free acts in succession, without any beginning, in an agent that has a beginning. And therefore here is an infinite number of free acts, every one of them free; and yet not any one of them free, but every act in the whole infinite chain a necessary effect. All the acts are rewardable or punishable, and yet the agent cannot, in reason, be the object of reward or punishment, on account of any one of these actions. He is active in them all, and passive in none; yet active in none, but passive in all, *&c.*

V. Mr *Chubb* does most strenuously deny, that motives are *causes* of the acts of the will; or that the moving principle in man is *moved* or *caused to be exerted* by motives. His words, p. 388 and 389, are "If the moving principle in man is MOVED, or CAUSED TO BE EXERTED, by something external to man, *which all motives are*, then it would not be a self-moving principle, seeing it would be moved by a principle external to itself. And to say, that a self-moving principle is MOVED, or CAUSED TO BE EXERTED, by a cause external to itself, is absurd and a contradiction, &c.—And in the next page, it is particularly and largely insisted, that motives are causes in no case, that *they are merely passive in the production of action, and have no causality in the production of it,—no causality, to be the cause of the exertion of the will.*

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

1. Mr *Chubb* abundantly speaks of motives as *excitements of the acts of the will;* and says, that *motives do excite volition, and induce it*, and that they are necessary to this end; that *in the reason and nature of things*, vo-

lition cannot take place without motives to excite it. But now, if motives *excite* the will, they *move* it; and yet he says, it is absurd to say, the will is moved by motives. And again, if language is of any significancy at all, if motives excite volition, then they are the *cause* of its being excited; and to cause volition to be excited, is to cause it to be put forth or *exerted.* Yea, Mr *Chubb* says himself, p. 317, motive is necessary to the *exertion* of the active faculty. To excite, is positively to *do* something; and certainly that which does something, is the cause of the thing *done* by it. To create is to cause to be created; to make, is to cause to be made; to kill, is to cause to be killed; to quicken, is to cause to be quickened; and *to excite*, is *to cause to be excited.* To excite, is to be a cause, in the most proper sense, not merely a negative occasion, but a ground of existence by positive influence. The notion of *exciting*, is exerting influence to cause the effect to arise or come forth into existence.

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

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

4. In the same page, he once and again speaks of

motives, as *disposing* the Agent to action, *by their influence.* His words are these: "As motive, which takes place in the understanding, and is the product of intelligence, is NECESSARY to action, that is, to the EXERTION of the active faculty, because that faculty would not be exerted without some PREVIOUS REASON to DISPOSE the mind to action; so from hence it plainly appears, that when a man is said to be *disposed* to one action rather than another, this properly signifies the PREVAILING INFLUENCE that one motive has upon a man FOR THE PRODUCTION of an action, or for the being at rest, before all other motives, for the *production* of the contrary. For as motive is the ground and reason of any action, so the motive that *prevails* DISPOSES the agent to the performance of that action."

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

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

A due consideration of these things which Mr *Chubb* has advanced, the strange inconsistencies which the ne-

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

SECTION XI.

The Evidence of God's Certain Foreknowledge of the Volitions of Moral Agents.

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

In handling this argument, I would in the *first* place prove, that God has a certain foreknowledge of the voluntary acts of moral Agents; and *secondly*, shew the consequence, or how it follows from hence, that the Volitions or moral Agents are not contingent, so as to be without necessity of connection and consequence.

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

One would think, it should be wholly needless to enter on such an argument with any that profess themselves Christians: but so it is; God's certain foreknowledge of the free acts of moral Agents, is denied by

some that pretend to believe the scriptures to be the Word of God; and especially of late. I therefore shall consider the evidence of such a prescience in the Most High, as fully as the designed limits of this essay will admit of; supposing myself herein to have to do with such as own the truth of the Bible.

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

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

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

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

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

1. Mens moral conduct and qualities, their virtues and vices, their wickedness and good practice, things rewardable and punishable, have often been foretold by God—*Pharaoh's* moral conduct, in refusing to obey God's command, in letting his people go, was foretold. God says to *Moses*, Exod. iii. 19. *I am sure that the King of* Egypt *will not let you go.* Here God professes not only to guess at, but to know, *Pharaoh's* future disobedience. In chap. vii. 4. God says, *but* Pharaoh *shall not hearken unto you; that I may lay mine hand upon* Egypt, &c. And chap. ix. 30. *Moses* says to *Pharaoh, as for thee, and thy servants, I KNOW that ye will not fear the Lord.* See also chap xi. 9.—The moral conduct of *Josiah*, by name, in his zealously exerting himself in opposition to idolatry, in particular acts of his, was foretold above three hundred years before he was born, and the prophecy sealed by a miracle, and renewed and confirmed by the words of a second prophet, as what surely would not fail, 1 *Kings* xiii. 1, 6, 32. This prophecy was also in effect a prediction of the moral conduct of the people, in upholding their schismatical and idolatrous worship until that time, and the idolatry of those priests of the high places, which it is foretold *Josiah* should offer upon that altar of *Bethel*. *Micaiah* foretold the foolish and sinful conduct of *Ahab*, in refusing to hearken to the word of the Lord by him, and choosing rather to hearken to the false prophets, in going to *Ramoth Gilead* to his ruin, 1 *Kings* xxi. 20—22.—The moral conduct of *Hazael* was foretold, in that cruelty he should be guilty of; on which *Hazael* says, *What, is thy servant a dog, that he should do this thing?* The prophet speaks of the event as what he knew, and not what he conjectured, 2 Kings viii. 12. "I know the evil that thou wilt do unto the children of Israel: Thou wilt dash their children, and rip up their women with child." The moral conduct of *Cyrus* is foretold, long before he had a being, in his mercy to God's peo-

le, and regard to the true God, in turning the captiity of the *Jews*, and promoting the building of the Temple, Isa. xliv. 28 and lxv. 13. Compare 2 Chron. xxi. 22, 23. and Ezra i. 1—4.—How many instances f the moral conduct of the *Kings of the North and outh*, particular instances of the wicked behaviour of he Kings of Syria and Egypt, are foretold in the xith hapter of Daniel? Their corruption, violence, robery, treachery and lies. And particularly, how much foretold of the horrid wickedness of Antiochus Epihanes, called there a *vile person*, instead of Epiphanes, r illustrious. In that chapter, and also in chapter iii. ver. 9, 14, 23, to the end, are foretold his flattery, eceit and lies, "his having his heart set to do mischief, nd set against the holy covenant, his destroying and reading under foot the holy people, in a marvellous anner, his having indignation against the holy covenant, setting his heart against it, and conspiring against , his polluting the sanctuary of strength, treading it nder foot, taking away the daily sacrifice, and placing he abomination that maketh desolate; his great pride, agnifying himself against God, and uttering marvelous blasphemies against Him, until God in indignation hould destroy him. Withal, the moral conduct of the ews on occasion of his persecution, is predicted. It is oretold, that *he should corrupt many by flatteries*, chap. i. 32—34. But that others should behave with a glotous constancy and fortitude, in opposition to him, ver. 2. And that some good men should fall and repent, er. 35. Christ foretold Peter's sin, in denying his ord, with its circumstances, in a peremptory manner. nd so, that great sin of Judas, in betraying his Master, nd its dreadful and eternal punishment in hell, was oretold in the like positive manner, Matthew xxvi. 21 —25, and parallel places in the other evangelists.

2. Many events have been foretold by God, which re consequent and dependent on the moral conduct of articular persons, and were accomplished, either by heir virtuous or vicious actions.—Thus, the children of

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

3. How often has God foretold the future moral conduct of nations and people, of numbers, bodies, and successions of men: with God's judicial proceedings, and many other events consequent and dependent on their virtues and vices; which could not be foreknown, if the volitions of men, wherein they acted as *moral Agents*, had not been foreseen? The future cruelty of the Egyptians in oppressing Israel, and God's judging and punishing them for it, was foretold long before it came to pass, Gen. xv. 13, 14. The continuance of the iniquity of the Amorites and the increase of it until it *should*

full, and they ripe for destruction, was foretold above ur hundred years before-hand, Gen. xv. 16. Acts vii. 7. The prophecies of the destruction of Jerusalem, d the land of Judah, were absolute, 2 Kings xx. 17 -19. chap. xxii. 15, to the end. It was foretold in ezekiah's time, and was abundantly insisted on in the ok of the prophet Isaiah, who wrote nothing after He- kiah's days. It was foretold in Josiah's time, in the ginning of a great reformation, 2 Kings xxii. And is manifest by innumerable things in the prediction of e prophets, relating to this event, its time, its circum- ances, its continuance and end; the return from the ptivity, the restoration of the temple, city, and land, d many circumstances, and consequences of *that*; I y, these shew plainly, that the prophecies of this great ent were *absolute*. And yet this event was connected th, and dependent on, two things in mens moral con- ct: first, the injurious rapine and violence of the king Babylon and his people, as the efficient cause; which od often speaks of as what he highly resented, and uld severely punish; and 2dly, the final obstinacy of e Jews. That great event is often spoken of as sus- nded on this, Jer. iv. 1. and v. 1. vii. 1—7. xi. 1—6. ii. 25, to the end. xxv. 1—7. xxvi. 1—8, 13, and xviii. 17, 18. Therefore this destruction and capti- y could not be foreknown, unless such a moral con- ct of the Chaldeans and Jews had been foreknown. nd then it was foretold, that the people *should be final- obstinate*, to the destruction and utter desolation of e city and land. Isa. vi. 9—11. Jer. i. 18, 19. vii. —29. Ezek. iii. 7. and xxiv. 13, 14.

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

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

The return of the Jews from the *Babylonish* captivity is often very particularly foretold, with many circumstances, and promises of it are very peremptory; Jer. xxx. 35, 40 xxxii. 6—15, 41—44. and xxxiii. 24—26. And the very time of their return was prefixed; Jer. xxv. 11, 12. and xxix. 10, 11. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 21. Ezek. iv. 6. and Dan. ix. 2. And yet the prophecies represent their return as consequent on their repentance. And their repentance itself is very expressly and particularly foretold, Jer. xxix. 12, 13, 14. xxxi. 8, 9, 18—31.—xxxiii. 8. l. 4, 5. Ezek. vi. 8, 9, 10. vii. 16. xiv. 22, 23. and xx. 43, 44.

It was foretold under the Old Testament, that the Messiah should suffer greatly through the malice and cruelty of men; as is largely and fully set forth, Psal. xxii. applied to Christ in the New Testament, Matt. xxvii. 35, 43. Luke xxiii. 34. John xix. 24. Heb. ii. 12. And likewise in Psalm lxix, which, it is also evident by the New Testament, is spoken of Christ; John xv. 25. vii. 5, &c. and ii. 17. Rom. xv. 3. Matt. xxvi. 34, 48. Mark xv. 23. John xix. 29. The same thing is also foretold, Isa. liii. and 1. 6. and Mic. v. 1. The cruelty of men was their sin, and what they acted as in

ral Agents. It was foretold, that there should be an union of Heathen and Jewish rulers against Christ, Psalm ii. 1, 2. compared with Acts iv. 25—28. It was foretold, that the Jews should generally reject and despise the Messiah, Isa. xlix. 5, 6, 7. and liii. 1—3. Psalm xxii. 6, 7. and lxix. 4, 8. 19. 20. And it was foretold that the body of that nation should be rejected in the Messiah's days, from being God's people, for their obstinacy in sin; Isa. xlix. 4—7. and viii. 14, 15, 16. compared with Rom. x. 19. and Isa. lxv. at the beginning, compared with Rom. x. 20, 21. It was foretold, that Christ should be rejected by the chief priests and rulers among the Jews, Psalm cxviii. 22. compared with Matt. xxi. 42. Acts iv. 11. 1 Pet. ii. 4, 7.

Christ himself foretold his being delivered into the hands of the elders, chief priests, and scribes, and his being cruelly treated by them, and condemned to death, and that He by them should be delivered to the Gentiles, and that He should be *mocked* and *scourged*, and *crucified*, (Matt. xvi. 21. and xx. 17—19. Luke ix. 22. John viii. 28.) and that the people should be concerned in and consenting to his death, (Luke xx. 13—18.) especially the inhabitants of Jerusalem; Luke xiii. 33—36. He fore-told, that the disciples should all be offended because of Him that night that he was betrayed, and should forsake him; Matt. xxvi. 31. John xvi. 32. He foretold, that He should be rejected of that generation, even the body of the people, and that they should continue obstinate, to their ruin, Matt. xii. 45. xxi. 33—42. and xxii. 1—7. Luke xiii. 16, 21, 24 xvii. 25. xix. 14, 27, 41—44. xx. 13—18. and xxiii. 34—39.

As it was foretold in both Old Testament and New, that the Jews should reject the Messiah, so it was foretold that the Gentiles should receive Him, and so be admitted to the privileges of God's people; in places too many to be now particularly mentioned. It was foretold in the Old Testament, that the Jews should envy the Gentiles on this account; Deut. xxxii. 21. compared to Rom. x. 19. Christ himself often foretold

that the Gentiles would embrace the true religion, and become his followers and people; Matt. viii. 10, 11, 12. xxi. 41—43. and xxii. 8—10. Luke xiii. 29. xiv. 16—24. and xx. 16. John x. 16. He also foretold the 12—16. Luke xv. 26. to the end. He foretold that they should continue in this opposition and envy, and should manifest it in the cruel persecutions of his followers to their utter destruction: Matt. ch. xxi. 33—42. xxii. 6. and xxiii. 34—39. Luke ch. xi. 49—51. The Jews obstinacy is also foretold Acts ch. xxii. 18. Christ often foretold the great persecutions his followers should meet with, both from Jews and Gentiles; Matt. x. 16.—18, 21, 22, 34—36. and xxiv. 9. Mark xiii. 9. Luke x. 3. xii. 11, 49—53. and xvi. 12, 16, 17. John xv. 18—21. and xvi. 1—4, 20—22, 23. He foretold the martyrdom of particular persons; Matt. xx. 23. John xiii. 36. and xxi. 18, 19, 22. He foretold the great success of the Gospel in the city of Samaria as near approaching; which afterwards was fulfilled by the preaching of Philip; John iv. 35—38. He foretold the rising of many deceivers after his departure, Matt. xxiv. 4, 5, 11. and the apostacy of many of his professed followers; Matt. xxiv. 10.—12.

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

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

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

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

5. Unless God foreknows the future acts of mens wills, and their behaviour as moral Agents, all those great things which are foretold in both Old Testament and New concerning the erection, establishment, and universal extent of the Kingdom of the Messiah, were predicted and promised while God was in ignorance whether any of these things would come to pass or no, and did but guess at them. For that kingdom was not of this world, it does not consist in things external, but is within men, and consists in the dominion of virtue in their hearts, in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost; and in these things made manifest in practice, to the praise and glory of God. The Messiah came to *save men from their sins*, and deliver them *from their* spiritual *enemies; that they might serve him in righteousness and holiness before him; he gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works.* And therefore his success consists in gaining mens hearts to virtue, in their being made *God's willing*

people in the day of his power. His conquest of his enemies consists in his victory over men's corruptions and vices. And such success, such victory, and such a reign and dominion is often expressly foretold: that his kingdom *shall fill the earth; that all people, nations, and languages should serve and obey him*: and so that *all nations should go up to the mountain of the House of the Lord, that he might teach them his ways, and that they might walk in his paths: and* that *all men should be drawn to Christ, and the earth be full of the knowledge of the Lord* (by which, in the style of Scripture, is meant true virtue and religion) *as the waters cover the seas*; that *God's law should be put into mens inward parts and written in their hearts;* and that *God's people should be all righteous*, &c. &c.

A very great part of the prophecies of the Old Testament is taken up in such predictions as these.—And here I would observe, that the prophecies of the universal prevalence of the kingdom of the Messiah, and true religion of Jesus Christ, are delivered in the most peremptory manner, and confirmed by the oath of God. *Isa.* xlv. 22, to the end, *Look to me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else. I have* SWORN *by my Self, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow; and every tongue shall swear.* SURELY, *shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength: even to him shall men come, &c.* But here this peremptory declaration, and great oath of the Most High, are delivered with such mighty solemnity, to things which God did not know, if he did not certainly foresee the volitions of moral agents.

And all the predictions of Christ and his apostles, to the like purpose, must be without knowledge; as those of our Saviour comparing the kingdom of God to a grain of mustard-seed, growing exceeding great, from a small beginning; and to leaven hid in three measures of meal, until the whole was leavened, &c.——And the prophecies in the Epistles concerning the restoration of the

nation of the *Jews* to the true church of God, and the bringing in the fulness of the *Gentiles ;* and the prophecies in all the *Revelation* concerning the glorious change in the moral state of the world of mankind, attending the destruction of Antichrist, "the kingdoms of the world becoming the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ ; and its being granted to the church to be arrayed in that fine linen, white and clean, which is the righteousness of saints, &c."

Corol. 1. Hence that great promise and oath of God to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, so much celebrated in Scripture, both in the Old Testament and New, namely, "That in their seed all the nations and families of the earth should be blessed," must be made on uncertainties, if God does not certainly foreknow the volitions of moral agents. For the fulfilment of this promise consists in that success of Christ in the work of redemption, and that setting up of his spiritual kingdom over the nations of the world, which has been spoken of. Men are blessed in Christ no otherwise than as they are brought to acknowledge Him, trust in Him, love and serve Him, as is represented and predicted in Psalm lxxii. 11. "All Kings shall fall down before Him ; all nations shall serve Him." With ver. 17. "Men shall be blessed in Him ; all nations shall call Him blessed." This oath to Jacob and Abraham is fulfilled in subduing mens iniquities ; as is implied in that of the prophet Mich. chap. vii. 19, 20.

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

6. If it be so, that God has not a prescience of the future actions of moral agents, it will follow, that the

prophecies of Scripture in *general* are without foreknowledge. For Scripture-prophecies, almost all of them, if not universally without any exception, are either predictions of the actings and behaviours of moral agents, or of events depending on them, or some way connected with them; judicial dispensations, judgments on men for their wickedness, or rewards of virtue and righteousness, remarkable manifestations of favour to the righteous, or manifestations of sovereign mercy to sinners, forgiving their iniquities, and magnifying the riches of divine grace; or dispensations of providence, in some respect or other, relating to the conduct of the subjects of God's moral government, wisely adapted thereto; either providing for what should be in a future state of things, through the volitions and voluntary actions of moral agents, or consequent upon them, and regulated and ordered according to them. So that all events that are foretold, are either moral events, or other events which are connected with, and accommodated to moral events.

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

For instance, the coming into existence of those particular men, who have been the great conquerors of the world, which, under God, have had the main hand in all the consequent state of the world, in all after-ages; such

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

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

And therefore, unless God does most exactly and perfectly foresee the future acts of men's wills, all the predictions which he ever uttered concerning David, Hezekiah, Josiah, Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus, Alexander; concerning the four monarchies, and the revolutions in them; and concerning all the wars, commotions, victories, prosperities, and calamities of any of the kingdoms, nations, or communities of the world, have all been without knowledge.

So that, according to this notion of God's not foreseeing the Volitions and free actions of men, God could foresee nothing appertaining to the state of the world of mankind in future ages; not so much as the being of one person that should live in it; and could foreknow

no events, but only such as He would bring to pass Himself, by the extraordinary interposition of his immediate power; or things which should come to pass in the natural material world, by the laws of motion, and course of nature, wherein that is independent on the actions or works of mankind: that is, as he might, like a very able mathematician and astronomer, with great exactness calculate the revolutions of the heavenly bodies, and the greater wheels of the machine of the external creation.

And if we closely consider the matter, there will appear reason to convince us, that he could not, with any absolute certainty, foresee even these. As to the *first*, namely, things done by the immediate and extraordinary interposition of God's power, these cannot be foreseen, unless it can be foreseen when there shall be occasion for such extraordinary interposition: and that cannot be foreseen, unless the state of the moral world can be foreseen. For whenever God thus interposes, it is with regard to the state of the moral world, requiring such divine interposition. Thus God could not certainly foresee the universal deluge, the calling of Abraham, the destruction of Sodom and Gommorrah, the plagues on Egypt, and Israel's redemption out of it, the expelling the seven nations of Cannaan, and the bringing Israel into that land; for these all are represented as connected with things belonging to the state of the moral world. Nor can God foreknow the most proper and convenient time of the day of judgment and general conflagration; for that chiefly depends on the course and state of things in the moral world.

Nor, *Secondly*, can we on this supposition reasonably think, that God can certainly foresee what things shall come to pass, in the course of things, in the natural and material world, even those which in an ordinary state of things might be calculated by a good astronomer. For the moral world is the end of the natural world; and the course of things in the former, is undoubtedly subordinate to God's designs with respect to the latter. Therefore he has seen cause, from regard to the state of

things in the moral world, extraordinarily to interpose, to interrupt and lay an arrest to the course of things in the natural world; and even in the greatest wheels of its motion, even so as to stop the sun in its course. And unless he can foresee the Volitions of men, and so know something of the future state of the moral world, He cannot know but that he may still have as great occasion to interpose in this manner, as ever he had: nor can he foresee how, or when, He shall have occasion thus to interpose.

Corol. 1. It appears from the things which have been observed, that unless God foresees the Volitions of moral Agents, that cannot be true which is observed by the apostle *James*, Acts xv. 18. "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world."

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

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

Corol. 4. From the same notion of God's ignorance, it would follow, that in vain has God Himself often spoken of the predictions of his word, as evidences of Foreknowledge; and so as evidences of that which is his prerogative as GOD, and his peculiar glory, greatly distinguishing Him from all other beings; as in Isa. xl.

22—26. xliii. 9, 10. xliv. 8. xlv. 21. xlvi. 10. and xlviii. 14.

Arg. II. If God does not foreknow the volitions of moral Agents, then he did not foreknow the fall of man, nor angels, and so could not foreknow the great things which are *consequent*, on these events; such as his sending his Son into the world to die for sinners, and all things pertaining to the great work of redemption; all the things which were done for four thousand years before Christ came, to prepare the way for it; and the incarnation, life, death, resurrection and ascension of Christ; and the setting Him at the head of the universe as King of heaven and earth, angels and men; and the setting up His church and kingdom in this world, and appointing Him the Judge of the world: and all that Satan should do in the world in opposition to the kingdom of Christ: and the great transactions of the day of judgment, that men and devils shall be the subjects of, and angels concerned in; they are all what God was ignorant of before the fall. And if so, the following scriptures, and others like them, must be without any meaning or contrary to truth. Eph. i. 4. "According as 'he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the 'world. 1 Pet. i. 20. Who verily was fore-ordained 'before the foundation of the world. 2 Tim. i. 9. 'Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling; 'not according to our works, but according to his own 'purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus 'before the world began. So Eph. iii. 11. (speaking 'of the wisdom of God in the work of redemption) according to the eternal purpose which he proposed in 'Christ Jesus. Tit. i. 2. In hope of eternal life, 'which God that cannot lie, promised before the world 'began. Rom. viii. 29. Whom he did foreknow, them 'he also did predestinate, &c. 1 Pet. i. 2. Elect, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father."

If God did not foreknow the fall of man, nor the redemption by Jesus Christ, nor the Volitions of man since the fall; then he did not foreknow the saints in

any sense; neither as particular persons, nor as soci ties or nations; either by election, or mere foresight their virtue or good works, or any foresight, or a thing about them relating to their salvation; or any b nefit they have by Christ, or any manner of concern theirs with a Redeemer.

Arg. III. On the supposition of God's ignorance the future Volitions of free agents, it will follow, th God must in many cases truly *repent* what He has don so as properly to wish He had done otherwise: by re son that the event of things, in those affairs which a most important, viz. the affairs of his moral kingdo being uncertain and contingent, often happens qui otherwise than he was aware before-hand. And the would be reason to understand, that in the most liter sense, in Gen. vi. 6. "It repented the Lord, that h had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at h heart." And that 1 Sam. xv. 11. contrary to tha Num. xxiii. 19. "God is not the Son of Man, that H should repent." And 1 Sam. xv. 15. 29. "Also th Strength of Israel will not lie, nor repent; for He not a man that He should repent." Yea, from th notion it would follow, that God is liable to repent ar be grieved at His heart, in a literal sense, continually and is always exposed to an infinite number of real di appointments in his governing the world; and to man fold, constant, great perplexity and vexation: but th is not very consistent with his title of *God over al blessed for evermore;* which represents Him as possesse of perfect, constant, and uninterrupted tranquillity an felicity, as God over the universe, and in his manag ment of the affairs of the world, as supreme and univer sal Ruler. See Rom. i. 25. ix. 5. 2 Cor. xi. 41. Tim. vi. 15.

Arg. IV. It will also follow from this notion, that God is liable to be continually repenting what He ha done; so He must be exposed to be constantly *chang ing* his mind and intentions, as to his future conduct altering his measures, relinquishing his old designs, an

forming new schemes and projections. For his purposes, even as to the main parts of his scheme, namely, such as belong to the state of his moral kingdom, must be always liable to be broken, through want of foresight; and he must be continually putting his system to rights, as it gets out of order, through the contingence of the actions of moral agents; He must be a Being, who, instead of being absolutely immutable, must necessarily be the subject of infinitely the most numerous acts of repentance, and changes of intention, of any being whatsoever; for this plain reason, that his vastly extensive charge comprehends an infinitely greater number of those things which are to him contingent and uncertain. In such a situation, He must have little else to do, but to mend broken links as well as he can, and be rectifying his disjointed frame and disordered movements, in the best manner the case will allow. The Supreme Lord of all things must needs be under great and miserable disadvantages, in governing the world which He has made, and has the care of, through his being utterly unable to find out things of chief importance, which hereafter shall befall his system; which if He did but know, He might make seasonable provision for. In many cases, there may be very great necessity that He should make provision, in the manner of his ordering and disposing things, for some great events which are to happen, of vast and extensive influence, and endless consequence to the universe; which He may see afterwards, when it is too late, and may wish in vain that He had known before-hand, that He might have ordered his affairs accordingly. And it is in the power of man, on these principles, by his devices, purposes and actions, thus to disappoint God, break his measures, make Him continually to change his mind, subject Him to vexation, and bring Him into confusion.

But how do these things consist with reason, or with the Word of God? Which represents, that *all God's works*, all that He has ever to do, the whole scheme and series of his operations, are *from the beginning* perfectly

in his view; and declares, that *whatever devices* and designs *are in the hearts of men, the counsel of the Lord is that which shall stand, and the thoughts of his heart to all generations*, Prov. xix. 21. Psalm xxxiii. 10, 11. *And that which the Lord of Hosts hath purposed, none shall disannul*, Isa. xiv. 27. And that he cannot be frustrated *in one design or thought*, Job xlii. 2. *And that which God doth, it shall be for ever, that nothing can be put to it, or taken from it*, Eccles. iii. 14. The stability and perpetuity of God's counsels are expressly spoken of as connected with the foreknowledge of God, Isa. xlvi. 10. "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done; saying, *My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.*"—And how are these things consistent with what the Scripture says of God's immutability, which represents Him as *without variableness*, or *shadow of turning*; and speaks of Him particularly as unchangeable with regard to his purposes? Mal. iii. 6. "I am the Lord; I change not; therefore ye sons of *Jacob* are not consumed. Exod. iii. 14. *I AM THAT I AM.* Job xxiii. 13, 14. "He is in one mind; and who can turn him? And what his soul desireth, even that he doth: for he performeth the thing that is appointed for me.

Arg. V. If this notion of God's ignorance of future volitions of moral agents, be thoroughly considered in its consequences, it will appear to follow from it, that God, after he had made the world, was liable to be wholly *frustrated of his end* in the creation of it; and so has been, in like manner, liable to be frustrated of his end in all the great works he hath wrought. It is manifest the moral world is the end of the natural; the rest of the creation is but an house which God hath built, with furniture, for moral agents: and the good or bad state of the moral world depends on the improvement they make of their natural agency, and so depends on their volitions. And therefore, if these cannot be foreseen by God, because they are contingent, and subject

to no kind of necessity, then the affairs of the moral world are liable to go wrong, to any assignable degree; yea, liable to be utterly ruined. As on this scheme, it may well be supposed to be literally said, when mankind, by the abuse of their moral agency, became very corrupt before the flood, "that the Lord repented that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at his heart;" so, when *He* made the universe, he did not know but that he might be so disappointed in it, that it might grieve him at his heart that he had made it. It actually proved, that all mankind became sinful, and a very great part of the angels apostatised: and how could God know before-hand, that all of them would not? And how could God know but that all mankind, notwithstanding means used to reclaim them, being still left to the freedom of their own will, would continue in their apostacy, and grow worse and worse, as they of the old world before the flood did?

According to the scheme I am endeavouring to confute, neither the fall of men nor angels, could be foreseen, and God must be greatly disappointed in these events; and so the grand scheme and contrivance for our redemption, and destroying the works of the devil, by the Messiah, and all the great things God has done in the prosecution of these designs, must be only the fruits of his own disappointment, and contrivances of his to mend and patch up, as well as he could, his system, which originally was all very good, and perfectly beautiful; but was marred, broken and confounded by the free will of angels and men. And still he must be liable to be totally disappointed a second time: He could not know that he should have his desired success, in the incarnation, life, death, resurrection and exaltation of his only begotten Son, and other great works accomplished to restore the state of things: He could not know, after all, whether there would actually be any tolerable measure of restoration; for this depended on the free will of man. There has been a general great

apostacy of almost all the Christian World, to that which was worse than Heathenism; which continued for many ages. And how could God, without foreseeing men's volitions, know whether ever Christendom would return from this apostacy? And which way could He tell beforehand how soon it would begin? The apostle says, it began to work in his time; and how could it be known how far it would proceed in that age? Yea, how could it be known that the Gospel which was not effectual for the reformation of the Jews, would ever be effectual for the turning of the heathen nations from their heathen apostacy, which they had been confirmed in for so many ages?

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

SECTION XII.

God's certain Foreknowledge of the future volitions of Moral Agents inconsistent with such a Contingence of those volitions, as is without all Necessity.

HAVING proved, that God has a certain and infallible Prescience of the act of the will of moral agents, I come now, in the *second* place, to shew the consequence; to shew how it follows from hence, that

these events are *necessary*, with a necessity of connection or consequence.

The chief *Arminian* divines, as far as I have had opportunity to observe, deny this consequence; and affirm, that if such foreknowledge be allowed, it is no evidence of any necessity of the event foreknown. Now I desire, that this matter may be particularly and thoroughly enquired into. I cannot but think, that on particular and full consideration, it may be perfectly determined, whether it be indeed so or not.

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

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

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

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

3. It is also very manifest, that those things which are indissolubly connected with other things that are necessary, are themselves necessary. As that proposition whose truth is necessarily connected with another proposition, which is necessarily true, is itself necessarily true. To say otherwise, would be a contradiction: it would be in effect to say, that the connection was indissoluble, and yet was not so, but might be broken. If that, whose

existence is indissolubly connected with something whose existence is now necessary, is itself not necessary, then it may *possibly not exist*, notwithstanding that indissoluble connection of its existence.—Whether the absurdity be not glaring, let the reader judge.

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

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

II. That no future event can be certainly foreknown, whose existence is contingent, and without all necessity, may be proved thus; It is impossible for a thing to be certainly known to any intellect without evidence. To suppose otherwise, implies a contradiction; because for

a thing to be certainly known to any understanding, is for it to be *evident* to that understanding: and for a thing to be *evident* to any understanding is the same thing as for that understanding to *see evidence* of it: but no understanding, created or uncreated, can *see evidence* where there is none: for that is the same thing, as to see that to be, which is not. And therefore, if there be any truth which is absolutely without evidence, that truth is absolutely unknowable, insomuch that it implies a contradiction to suppose that it is known.

But if there be any future event, whose existence is contingent, without all necessity, the future existence of the event is absolutely *without evidence*. If there be any evidence of it, it must be one of these two sorts, either *self evidence*, or *proof;* for there can be no other sort of evidence, but one of these two; an evident thing must be either evident in itself, or evident in something else; that is, evident by connection with something else. But a future thing, whose existence is without all necessity, can have neither of these sorts of evidence. It cannot be *self evident*; for if it be, it may be now known, by what is now to be seen in the thing itself; either its present existence, or the necessity of its nature: but both these are contrary to the supposition. It is supposed, both that the thing has no present existence to be seen; and also that it is not of such a nature as to be necessarily existent for the future: so that its future existence is not self-evident. And *secondly*, neither is there any *proof*, or evidence, *in any thing else*, or evidence of connection with something else that it is evident; for this is also contrary to the supposition. It is supposed, that there is now nothing existent, with which the future existence of the *contingent* event is connected. For such a connection destroys its *contingence*, and supposes necessity. Thus it is demonstrated, that there is in the nature of things absolutely no evidence at all of the future existence of that event, which is contingent, without all necessity (if any such event there be) neither self evidence nor proof. And therefore the

thing in reality is not evident; and so cannot be seen t
be evident, or, which is the same thing, cannot b
known.

Let us consider this in an example. Suppose tha
five thousand seven hundred and sixty years ago, ther
was no other being but the Divine Being; and then thi
world, or some particular body or spirit, all at once start
out of nothing into being, and takes on itself a particula
nature and form; all in *absolute contingence* without an
concern of God, or any other cause, in the matter; with
out any manner of ground or reason of its existence; o
any dependence upon, or connection at all with any thin
foregoing; I say, that if this be supposed, there was n
evidence of that event before-hand. There was no evidenc
of it to be seen *in the thing itself;* for the thing itself a
yet, was not. And there was no evidence of it to be see
in *any thing else;* for *evidence in* something else is *con
nection with* something else: but such connection is con
trary to the supposition. There was no evidence before
that this thing *would happen;* for by the supposition
there was no reason why *it should happen*, rather tha
something else, or rather than nothing. And if so, the
all things before were exactly equal, and the same, wit
respect to that and other possible things; there was n
preponderation, no superior weight or value; and there
fore, no thing that could be of any weight or value t
determine any understanding. The thing was absolute
ly without evidence, and absolutely unknowable. An in
crease of understanding, or of the capacity of discerning
has no tendency, and makes no advance, to a discerning
any signs or evidences of it, let it be increased never s
much; yea, if it be increased infinitely. The increas
of the strength of sight may have a tendency to enabl
to discern the evidence which is far off, and very muc
hid, and deeply involved in clouds and darkness; but i
has no tendency to enable to discern evidence where
there is none. If the sight be infinitely strong, and the
capacity of discerning infinitely great, it will enable t

ce all that there is, and to see it perfectly, and with ase; yet it has no tendency at all to enable a being to iscern that evidence which is not; but, on the contrary, has a tendency to enable to discern with great certainy that there is none.

III. To suppose the future volitions of moral agents ot to be necessary events; or, which is the same thing, vents which it is not impossible but that they may not ome to pass; and yet to suppose that God certainly reknows them, and knows all things; is to suppose od's knowledge to be inconsistent with itself. For to ay, that God certainly, and without all conjecture, nows that a thing will infallibly be, which at the same me he knows to be so *contingent*, that it may possibly ot be, is to suppose his knowledge inconsistent with itelf; or that one thing, that he knows, is utterly inconstent with another thing that he knows. It is the ame thing as to say, he now knows a proposition to be f certain infallible truth, which he knows to be of congent uncertain truth. If a future volition is so ithout all necessity, that there is nothing hinders, but at it may not be, then the proposition, which asserts s future existence, is so uncertain, that there is nothing inders, but that the truth of it may entirely fail. And God knows all things, he knows this proposition to be us uncertain. And that is inconsistent with his knowng that it is infallibly true; and so inconsistent with his nfallibly knowing that it is true. If the thing be indeed ontingent, God views it so, and judges it to be contient, if he views things as they are. If the event be ot necessary, then it is possible it may never be: nd if it be possible it may never be, God knows it may ossibly never be: and that is to know that the roposition, which affirms its existence, may possibly ot be true; and that is to know that the truth of it uncertain; which surely is inconsistent with his nowing it as a certain truth. If volitions are in themelves contingent events, without all necessity, then it no argument of perfection of knowledge in any being determine peremptorily that they will be; but on the

contrary, an argument of ignorance and mistake: because it would argue, that he supposes that proposition to be certain, which in its own nature, and all things considered, is uncertain and contingent. To say, in such a case, that God may have ways of knowing contingent events which we cannot conceive of, is ridiculous; as much so, as to say, that God may know contradictions to be true, for ought we know, or that he may know a thing to be certain, and at the same time know it not to be certain though we cannot conceive how; because he has ways of knowing, which we cannot comprehend.

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

There is as much of an impossibility but that the things which are infallibly foreknown, should be, or (which is the same thing) as great a Necessity of their future existence, as if the event were already written

own, and read by all mankind, through all preceding
es, and there was the most indissoluble and perfect
nnection possible, between the writing, and the thing
itten. In such a case, it would be as impossible the
ent should fail of existence, as if it had existed already;
d a decree cannot make an event surer or more neces-
ry than this.

And therefore, if there be any such foreknowledge,
it has been proved there is, then Necessity of con-
ection and consequence, is not at all inconsistent with
y liberty which man, or any other creature enjoys.
nd from hence it may be inferred, that absolute de-
ees of God, which does not at all increase the Neces-
ty, are not at all inconsistent with the liberty which
an enjoys, on any such account, as that they make the
ent decreed necessary, and render it utterly impossible
t that it should come to pass. Therefore, if absolute
crees are inconsistent with man's liberty as a moral
ent, or his liberty in a state of probation, or any liber-
whatsoever that he enjoys, it is not on account of any
cessity which absolute decrees infer.

Dr Whitby supposes, there is a great difference be-
een God's foreknowledge, and his decrees, with re-
rd to necessity of future events. In his Discourse on
e five Points, p. 474, &c. he says, "God's Prescience
s no influence at all on our actions.——Should God
ays he,) by immediate Revelation, give me the know-
dge of the event of any man's state of actions, would
y knowledge of them have any influence upon his ac-
ons? Surely none at all.—Our knowledge doth not
ffect the things we know, to make them more certain,
more future, than they would be without it. Now,
reknowledge in God is knowledge. As therefore
nowledge has no influence on things that are, so nei-
er has foreknowledge on things that shall be. And
nsequently, the foreknowledge of any action that would
otherwise free, cannot alter or diminish that freedom.
Whereas God's decree of election is powerful and active,
d comprehends the preparation and exhibition of such

means, as shall unfrustrably produce the end.—Henc
God's Prescience renders no actions necessary." An
to this purpose, p. 473, he cites *Origen*, where he says
*God's Prescience is not the cause of things future, bu
their being future is the cause of God's Prescience tha
they will be:* and *Le Blanc*, where he says, *This is th
truest resolution of this difficulty, that Prescience is no
the cause that things are future; but their being futur
is the cause they are foreseen.* In like manner, Dr *Clark*
in his Demonstration of the Being and Attributes o
God, p. 95—99. And the Author of *the Freedom o
the Will, in God and the Creature*, speaking to the like
purpose with Dr *Whitby*, represents *Forekowledge o
having no more influence on things known, to make them
necessary*, than *After-knowledge*, or to that purpose.

To all which I would say; that what is said abou
knowledge, its not having influence on the thing know
to make it necessary, is nothing to the purpose, nor doe
in the least affect the foregoing reason. Whether
Prescience be the thing that makes the event necessary o
no, it alters not the case. Infallible forekowledge ma
prove the necessity of the event foreknown, and ye
not be the thing which cause sthe necessity. If th
foreknowledge be absolute, thia proves the event know
to be necessary, or proves it is impossible but that th
event should be, by some means or other, either by
decree, or some other way, if there be any other way
because, as was said before, it is absurd to say, that
proposition is known tobe cerainly and infallibly tru
which yet may possibly prove not true.

The whole of the seeming force of this evasion lies
this; that, inasmuch as certain Foreknowledge does no
cause an event to be necessary, as a decree does; there
fore it does not *prove* it to be necessary, as a decre
does. But there is no force in this arguing: for it is bui
wholly on this supposition, that nothing can *prove, or
an evidence* of a thing's being necessary, but that which h
a causal influence to make it so. But this can never
maintained. If certain Foreknowledge of the futu

existence of an event, be not the thing, which first makes it impossible that it should fail of existence; yet it may, and certainly does *demonstrate*, that it is impossible it should fail of it, however that impossibility comes. If Foreknowledge be not the cause, but the effect of this impossibility, it may prove that there is such an impossibility, as much as if it were the cause. It is as strong arguing from the effect to the cause, as from the cause to the effect. It is enough, that an existence, which is infallibly foreknown, cannot fail, whether that impossibility arises from the Foreknowledge, or is prior to it. It is as evident, as it is possible any thing should be, that it is impossible a thing, which is infallibly known to be true should prove not to be true: therefore there is a *Necessity* that it should be otherwise: whether the Knowledge be the cause of this Necessity, or the Necessity the cause of the Knowledge.

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

There must be a certainty in things themselves, before they are certainly known, or (which is the same thing) known to be certain. For certainty of knowledge is nothing else but knowing or discerning the certainty there is in the things themselves, which are known. Therefore there must be a certainty in things to be a ground of certainty of knowledge, and to render things capable of being known to be certain. And this is nothing but the necessity of the truth known, or its being impossible but that it should be true; or, in other words, the firm and infallible connection between the subject and predicate of the proposition that contains that truth. All certainty of knowledge consists in the view of the firmness of that connection. So God's certain Foreknowledge of the future existence of any event, is his view of the firm and indissoluble connection of the subject and predicate of the proposition that affirms its future existence. The subject is that possible event; the predicate is its future existence: but if future existence be firmly and indissolubly connected with that event, then the future existence of that event is necessary. If God certainly knows the future existence of an event which is wholly contingent, and may possibly never be, then He sees a firm connection between a subject and predicate that are not firmly connected; which is a contradiction.

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

I would observe one thing further concerning this matter, it is this; that if it be as those forementioned

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

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

utterly impossible to be otherwise: this proves in like manner, as in the other instance, that the existence of the things, which are their causes, is also equally sure firm, and necessary; and that it is alike impossible but that they should be, as if they had been already, as their effects have. And if instead of images in a glass, we suppose the antecedent effects to be perfect ideas of them in the Divine Mind, which have existed there from all eternity, which are as properly effects, as truly and properly connected with their cause, the case is not altered.

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

1. It has been already shewn, that all certain knowledge proves the necessity of the truth known; whether it be before, after, or at the same time.—Though it be true, that there is no succession in God's knowledge, and the manner of his knowledge is to us inconceivable, yet thus much we know concerning it, that there is no event, past, present or to come, that God is ever uncertain of; He never is, never was, and never will be without infallible knowledge of it; He always sees the existence of it to be certain and infallible. And as he always sees things as they are in truth; hence there never is in reality any thing contingent in such a sense, as that possibly it may happen never to exist. If, strictly speaking, there is no foreknowledge in God, it is because those things, which are future to us, are as present to God, as if they already had existence: and that is as much as to say, that future events are always in

God's view as evident, clear, sure, and necessary as if they already were. If there never is a time wherein the existence of the event is not present with God, then there never is a time wherein it is not as much impossible for it to fail of existence, as if its existence were present, and were already come to pass.

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

We know, that God knows the future voluntary actions of men in such a sense beforehand, as that he is able particularly to declare and foretell them, and write them, or cause them to be written down in a book, as he often has done; and that therefore the necessary connection which there is between God's knowledge and the event known, does as much prove the event to be necessary before-hand, as if the divine knowledge were in the same sense before the event, as the prediction or writing is. If the knowledge be infallible, then the expression of it in the written prediction is infallible; that is, there is an infallible connection between that written prediction and the event. And if so, then it is impossible it should ever be otherwise then that that prediction and the event should agree; and this is the same thing as to say, it is impossible but that the event should come to pass: and this is the same as to say that its coming to pass is necessary.—So that it is manifest, that there being no proper succession in God's mind, makes no alteration as to the necessity of the existence of the events which God knows. Yea,

2. This is so far from weakening the proof which has been given of the impossibility of the not coming to pass of future events known, as that it establishes that where-

in the strength of the foregoing arguments, consists, an shews the clearness of the evidence. For,

(1.) The very reason why God's knowledge is wit out succession, is because it is absolutely perfect, to th highest possible degree of clearness and certainty: a things, whether past, present, or to come, being viewe with equal evidence and fulness; future things beir seen with as much clearness as if they were present; th view is always in absolute perfection: and absolute co stant perfection admits of no alteration, and so no succe sion; the actual existence of the thing known, does n at all increase, or add to the clearness or certainty of th thing known: God calls the things that are not, though they were; they are all one to him as if they ha already existed. But herein consists the strength of th demonstration before given, of the impossibility of th not existing of those things, whose existence God knows that it is as impossible they should fail of existence, if they existed already. This objection, instead weakening this argument, sets it in the clearest an strongest light; for it supposes it to be so indeed, th the existence of future events is in God's view so mu as if it already had been, that when they come actual to exist, it makes not the least alteration or variation his view or knowledge of them.

(2.) The objection is founded on the *immutability* God's knowledge; for it is the immutability of know ledge makes his knowledge to be without successio But this most directly and plainly demonstrates the thi I insist on, *viz.* that it is utterly impossible the know events should fail of existence. For if that were po sible, then it would be possible for there to be a chan in God's knowledge and view of things. For if th known event should fail of existence, and not come in being, as God expected, then God would see it, and would change his mind, and see his former mistake and thus there would be change and succession in h knowledge. But as God is immutable, and so it is u terly infinitely impossible that his view should be chan

d; so it is, for the same reason, just so impossible that he fore-known event should not exist; and that is to be impossible, in the highest degree: and therefore the contrary is necessary. Nothing is more impossible than the immutable God should be changed, by the succession of time; who comprehends all things, from eternity to eternity, in one most perfect and unalterable view; so that his whole eternal duration is *vitæ interminabilis, tota, simul, & perfecta possessio.*

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

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

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

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

SECTION XIII.

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

EVERY act of the will has a cause, or it has not. If it has a cause, then according to what has already been demonstrated, it is not contingent, but necessary; the effect being necessarily dependent and consequent on its cause; and that, let the cause be what it will. If the cause is the will itself, by antecedent acts choosing and determining; still the *determined* and *caused* act must be a necessary effect. The act, that is the determined effect of the foregoing act which is its cause, cannot prevent the efficiency of its cause; but must be wholly subject to its determination and command, as much as the motions of the hands and feet. The consequent commanded acts of the will are as passive and as necessary, with respect to the antecedent determining acts, as the parts of the body are to the volitions which determine and command them. And therefore, if all the free acts of the will are thus, i. they are all determined effects, determined by the wi

self, that is, determined by antecedent choice, then ney are all necessary; they are all subject to, and de- sively fixed by the foregoing act, which is their cause: ea, even the determining act itself; for that must be etermined and fixed by another act, preceding that, if be a free and voluntary act; and so must be neces- ry. So that by this all the free acts of the will are ecessary, and cannot be free unless they are necessary; ecause they cannot be free, according to the *Arminian* tion of freedom, unless they are determined by the ill; which is to be determined by antecedent choice: hich being their cause, proves them necessary. And t they say, necessity is utterly inconsistent with Li- rty. So that, by their scheme, the acts of the will nnot be free unless they are necessary, and yet can- t be free if they be not necessary!

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

The will, or the soul, was indeed the subject of hat happened to it accidentally, but was not the cause. he will is not active in causing or determining, but rely the passive subject; at least, according to their tion of action and passion. In this case, Contingence es as much prevent the determination of the will, as a oper cause; and as to the will, it was necessary, and uld be no otherwise. For to suppose that it could ve been otherwise, if the will or soul had pleased, is to ppose that the act is dependent on some prior act of oice or pleasure; contrary to what now is supposed; is to suppose that it might have been otherwise, if its se had made it or ordered it otherwise. But this does t agree to its having no cause or order at all. That

must be necessary as to the soul, which is dependent o no free act of the soul: but that which is without cause is dependent on no free act of the soul: because by the supposition, it is dependent on nothing, and connected with nothing. In such a case, the soul is neces sarily subjected to what accident brings to pass, fro time to time, as much as the earth, that is inactive, necessarily subjected to what falls upon it. But thi does not consist with the *Arminian* notion of liberty which is the will's power, of determining itself in it own acts, and being wholly active in it, without pa siveness, and without being subject to necessity. Thu Contingence belongs to the *Arminian* notion of liberty and yet is inconsistent with it.

I would here observe, that the author of the *Essay o the Freedom of the Will, in God and the Creature*, 76, 77, says as follows: "The word *Chance* alway means something done without design. Chance and de sign stand in direct opposition to each other: and chanc can never be properly applied to acts of the will, whic is the spring of all design, and which designs to choos whatsoever it doth choose, whether there be any sup rior fitness in the thing which it chooses, or no; and designs to determine itself to one thing, where two things perfectly equal, are proposed, merely because it will But herein appears a very great inadvantage in this a thor. For if *the will be the spring of all design*, as h says, then certainly it is not always the *effect* of design and the acts of the will themselves must sometimes com to pass, when they do not *spring from* design; and co sequently come to pass by chance, according to his ow definition of chance. And *if the will designs to choo whatever it does choose*, and *designs to determine itsel* as he says, then it designs to determine all its design which carries us back from one design to a foregoing d sign determining that, and to another determining tha and so on *in infinitum*. The very first design must the effect of foregoing design, or else it must be chance, in his notion of it.

Here another alternative may be proposed, relating o the connection of the acts of the will with something oregoing that is their cause, not much unlike to the ther; which is this, either human liberty is such, that may well stand with volitions being necessarily conected with the views of the understanding, and so is onsistent with necessity; or it is inconsistent with, and ontrary to such a connection and necessity. The forer is directly subversive of the *Arminian* notion of liberty, consisting in freedom from all necessity. And if he latter be chosen, and it be said, that liberty is inonsistent with any such necessary connection of voliion with foregoing views of the understanding, it consisting in freedom from any such necessity of the will that would imply; then the liberty of the soul consists (in part at least) in the freedom from restraint, limitation and government, in its actings, by the underanding, and in liberty and liableness to act contrary to he understanding's views and dictates: and consequentthe more the soul has of this disengagedness in its cting, the more liberty. Now let it be considered what his brings the noble principle of human liberty to, parcularly when it is possessed and enjoyed in its perfecon, *viz.* a full and perfect freedom and liableness to act together at random, without the least connection with, restraint or government by, any dictate of reason, or y thing whatsoever apprehended, considered or viewed the understanding; as being inconsistent with the ll and perfect sovereignty of the will over its own derminations.—The notion mankind has conceived of berty, is some dignity or privilege, something worth aiming. But what dignity or privilege is there, in eing given unto such a wild contingence as this, to be erfectly and constantly liable to act unintelligently and nreasonably, and as much without the guidance of unerstanding, as if we had none, or were as destitute of erception as the smoke that is driven by the wind!

PART III.

Wherein it is enquired, Whether any such Liberty of Will as A
minians hold, be necessary to Moral Agency, Virtue and Vi
Praise and Dispraise, &c.

SECTION I.

God's Moral Excellency Necessary, yet Virtuo and Praiseworthy.

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

I shall begin with some consideration of the virtue a agency of the Supreme Moral Agent and Fountain all Agency and Virtue.

Dr Whitby, in his Discourse on the Five Point page 14, says, "If all human actions are necessary, vi tue and vice must be empty names; we being capab of nothing that is blame-worthy, or deserveth praise for who can blame a person for doing only what he cou not help, or judge that he deserveth praise only for wh he could not avoid? To the like purpose he speaks places innumerable; especially in his Discourse on t *Freedom of the Will*; constantly maintaining, that freedom not only from coaction, but necessity, is abs lutely requisite, in order to actions being either wort

of blame, or deserving of praise. And to this agrees, as is well known, the current doctrine of *Arminian* writers, who in general hold, that there is no virtue or vice, reward or punishment, nothing to be commended or blamed, without this freedom. And yet Dr Whitby, p. 300, allows, that God is without this freedom; and *Arminians*, so far as I have had opportunity to observe, generally acknowledge, that God is necessarily holy, and his will necessarily determined to that which is good.

So that, putting these things together, the infinitely holy God, who always used to be esteemed by God's people not only virtuous, but a Being in whom is all possible virtue, and every virtue in the most absolute purity and perfection, and in infinitely greater brightness and amiableness than in a creature; the most perfect pattern of virtue, and the fountain from whom all other virtue is but as beams from the sun; and who has been supposed to be, on account of his virtue and holiness, infinitely more worthy to be esteemed, loved, honoured, admired, commended, extolled, and praised, than any creature: and He who is thus every where represented in Scripture, I say, this Being, according to this notion of Dr Whitby, and other Arminians, has no virtue at all; virtue, when ascribed to him, is but an empty name; and he is deserving of no commendation or praise; because he is under necessity, He cannot avoid being holy and good as he is; therefore no thanks to him for it. It seems, the holiness, justness, faithfulness, &c. of the Most High must not be accounted to be of the nature of that which is virtuous and praise-worthy. They will not deny, that these things in God are good; but then we must understand them, that they are no more virtuous, or of the nature of any thing commendable, than the good that is in any other being that is not a moral agent; as the brightness of the sun, and the fertility of the earth are good, but not virtuous, because these properties are necessary to these bodies, and not the fruits of self-determining power.

There needs no other confutation of this notion of

God's not being virtuous or praise-worthy to Christians acquainted with their Bible, but only stating and particularly representing of it. To bring texts of Scripture, wherein God is represented as in every respect, in the highest manner virtuous, and supremely praise-worthy, would be endless, and is altogether needless to such as have been brought up in the light of the Gospel.

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

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

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

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

That virtue in God is not, in the most proper sense, *rewardable*, is not for want of merit in his moral perfections and actions, sufficient to deserve rewards from his

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

SECTION II.

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

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

threatenings, (p. 298, 301, 305, 311, 339, 340, 363.) And as requisite to *a state of trial*, (p. 297, &c.)

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

I. It was *impossible* that the acts of the will of the human soul of Christ should, in any instance, degree, or circumstance, be otherwise than holy, and agreeable to God's nature and will. The following things make this evident.

1. God had promised so effectually to preserve and uphold him by his Spirit, under all his temptations, that he could not fail of reaching the end for which He came into the world;—which he would have failed of, had he fallen into sin. We have such a promise, Isa. xliii. 1, 2, 3, 4. "Behold my Servant, whom I uphold; mine Elect, in whom my soul delighteth: I have put my Spirit upon him: He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles: He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. He shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall not fail, nor be discouraged, till He have set judgment in the earth; and the isles shall wait his law." This promise of Christ's having God's Spirit put upon him, and his not crying and lifting up his voice, &c. relates to the time of Christ's appearance on earth; as is manifest from the nature of the promise, and also the application of it in the New Testament, Matthew xii. 18. And the words imply a promise of his being so upheld by God's Spirit, that he should be preserved from sin; particularly from pride

and vain-glory, and from being overcome by any of the temptations, he should be under to affect the glory of this world, the pomp of an earthly prince, or the applause and praise of men: and that he should be so upheld, that he should by no means fail of obtaining the end of his coming into the world, of bringing forth judgment unto victory, and establishing his kingdom of grace in the earth.—And in the following verses, this promise is confirmed, with the greatest imaginable solemnity. "Thus saith the LORD, He that created the heavens, and stretched them out; He that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; He that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein; I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand; and will keep Thee, and give Thee for a covenant of the people, for a Light of the Gentiles, to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house. I am JEHOVAH, that is my name," &c.

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

And in Isa. l. 5, 6, we have the Messiah expressing his assurance, that God would help Him, by so opening his ear, or inclining his heart to God's commandments, that He should not be rebellious, but should persevere, and not apostatise, or turn his back: that through God's help, He should be immoveable, in a way of obedience

under the great trials of reproach and suffering he should meet with; setting his face like a flint: so that He knew He should not be ashamed, or frustrated in his design; and finally should be approved and justified, as having done his work faithfully. "The Lord hath opened mine ear; so that I was not rebellious, neither turned away my back: I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked of the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting. For the Lord God will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded; therefore have I set my face as a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed. He is near that justifieth me; who will contend with me? Let us stand together. Who is mine adversary? Let him come near to me. Behold the Lord God will help me: who is he that shall condemn me? Lo, they shall all wax old as a garment, the moth shall eat them up."

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

so every thing that is said from thence to the end of th Psalm. And those promises, Isa. iii. 13, 14, ch. 15. lii and 10, 11, 12. And all those promises which Go makes to the Messiah, of success, dominion, and glor in the character of a Redeemer, in Isa. xlix.

3. It was often promised to the church of God of old for their comfort, that God would give them a righteous sinless Saviour. Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. "Behold, the day come, saith the Lord, that I will raise up unto David righteous branch; and a King shall reign and prosper and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth In his days shall Judah be saved, and Israel shall dwe safely. And this is the name whereby He shall be ca led, The Lord our righteousness." So Jer. xxxiii. 15 "I will cause the branch of righteousness to grow u unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righ eousness in the land." Isa. xi. 6, 7. "For unto us child is born;—upon the throne of David and of hi kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgmer and justice, from henceforth, even for ever: the zeal o the Lord of Hosts will do this." Chap. ix. at the be ginning. "There shall come forth a rod out of the ste of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots; an the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him,—the Spir of Knowledge, and the Fear of the Lord:—with righ eousness shall He judge the poor, and reprove wit equity;—Righteousness shall be the girdle of his loin and faithfulness the girdle of his reins." Chap. lii. 1 "My Servant shall deal prudently." Chap. liii. 9 "Because He had done no violence, neither was gui found in his mouth." If it be impossible, that thes promises should fail, and it be easier for heaven ar earth to pass away, than for one jot or title of the promises of God to pass away, then it was impossib that God should commit any sin. Christ himself sig nified, that it was impossible but that the things whi were spoken concerning Him, should be fulfilled. Luk xxiv. 44.—"That all things must be fulfilled, whic were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophet

nd in the Psalms concerning me." Matt. xxvi. 53, 4. "But how then shall the Scripture be fulfilled, hat thus it must be?" Mark xiv. 49. "But the criptures must be fulfilled." And so the Apostle, cts i. 16, 17.—"This Scripture must needs have een fulfilled."

4. All the promises, which were made to the church f old, of the Messiah as a future Saviour, from that ade to our first parents in Paradise, to that which was elivered by the prophet Malachi, shew it to be impossible that Christ should not have persevered in perfect oliness. The ancient predictions given to God's church, f the Messiah as a Saviour, were of the nature of romises; as is evident by the predictions themselves, nd the manner of delivering them. But they are xpressly, and very often called promises in the New estament; as in Luke i. 54, 55, 72, 73. Acts xiii. 2, 33. Rom. i. 1, 2, 3, and chap. xv. 8. Heb. vi. 3, &c. These promises were often made with great olemnity, and confirmed by an oath; as in Gen. xxii. 6, 17. "By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, that n blessing, I will bless thee, and in multiplying, I will ultiply thy seed, as the stars of heaven, and as the sand hich is upon the sea-shore:—And in thy seed shall all he nations of the earth be blessed." Compare Luke i. 2, 73, and Gal. iii. 8, 15, 16. The Apostle, in Heb. i. 17, 18, speaking of this promise to Abraham, says, "Wherein God willing more abundantly to shew to the eirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two IMMUTABLE things, n which it was IMPOSSIBLE for God to lie, we might ave strong consolation."—In which words, the necesity of the accomplishment, or (which is the same thing) he impossibility of the contrary, is fully declared. So God confirmed the promise of the great salvation of the Messiah, made to David, by an oath; Psalm lxxxix. , 4. "I have made a covenant with my chosen, I ave sworn unto David my servant; thy seed will I stablish forever, and build up thy throne to all generaons.' There is nothing that is so absolutely set forth

in Scripture, as sure and irrefragable, as this promise and oath of David. See Psalm lxxxix. 34, 35, 36. 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. Isa. lv. 4. Acts ii. 29, 30; and xiii. 34. The Scripture expressly speaks of it as utterly impossible that this promise and oath to David, concerning the everlasting dominion of the Messiah of his seed should fail. Jer. xxxiii. 15, &c. "In those days, and at that time, I will cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David.—For thus saith the Lord, David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel. Ver. 20, 21: "If you can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season; then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that He should not have a son to reign upon his throne." So in ver. 25, 26. Thus abundant is the Scripture in representing how *impossible* it was, that the promises made of old concerning the great salvation and kingdom of the Messiah should fail: which implies that it was impossible that this Messiah, the second Adam, the promised seed of Abraham, and of David, should fall from his integrity, as the first Adam did.

5. All the promises that were made to the church of God under the Old Testament, of the great enlargement of the church, and advancement of her glory, in the days of the Gospel, after the coming of the Messiah; the increase of her light, liberty, holiness, joy, triumph over her enemies, &c. of which so great a part of the Old Testament consists; which are repeated so often, are so variously exhibited, so frequently introduced with great pomp and solemnity, and are so abundantly sealed with typical and symbolitical representations; I say, all these promises imply, that the Messiah should perfect the work of redemption; and this implies that he should persevere in the work, which the Father had appointed Him, being in all things conformed to his Will. These promises were often confirmed by an oath. (See Isa. liv. 9. with the context; chap. lxii. 18.) And it is represented as utterly impossible that these pro-

ises should fail. (Isa. xlix. 15. with the context; ap. li. 4—7. chap. xl. 8. with the context.) And erefore it was *impossible*, that the Messiah should fail, commit sin.

6. It was *impossible* that the Messiah should fail of rsevering in integrity and holiness, as the first Adam l, because this would have been inconsistent with the omises which God made to the blessed Virgin, his mo-er, and to her husband; implying that "He should ve his people from their sins, that God would give im the throne of his Father David, that He should gn over the house of Jacob for ever, and that of his king-m there shall be no end." These promises were sure, d it was *impossible* they should fail. And therefore e Virgin *Mary*, in trusting fully to them, acted rea-nably, having an immoveable foundation of her faith; *Elizabeth* observes, ver. 45. "And blessed is she t believeth; for there shall be a performance of those ngs, which were told her from the Lord."

7. That it should have been possible that Christ uld sin, and so fail in the work of our redemption, es not consist with the eternal purpose and decree of d, revealed in the Scriptures, that he would provide vation for fallen man in and by Jesus Christ; and that vation should be offered to sinners through the preach-of the Gospel. Such an absolute decree as this *minians* do not deny. Thus much at least (out of all troversy) is implied in such Scriptures, as 1 Cor. ii. Eph. i. 4, 5. and chap. iii. 9, 10, 11. 1 Pet. i. 19, . Such an absolute decree as this, *Arminians* allow be signified in these texts. And the *Arminians* ctions of nations and societies, and general election of Christian Church, and conditional election of particu-persons imply this. God could not decree before foundation of this world, to save all that should be-e in, and obey Christ, unless he had absolutely de-ed, that salvation should be provided, and effect-y wrought out by Christ. And since (as the *Ar-ians* themselves strenuously maintain) a decree of

God infers *necessity* ; hence it became *necessary*, th Christ should persevere, and actually work out salvati for us, and that he should not fail by the commission sin.

8. That it should have been possible for Chris Holiness to fail, is not consistent with what God prom ed to his Son, before all ages. For, that salvati should be offered to men, through Christ, and besto ed on all his faithful followers, is what is at least impli in that certain and infallible promise spoken of by t apostle, Tit. i. 2. " In hope of eternal life ; which G that cannot lie, promised before the world began." T does not seem to be controverted by *Arminians* *.

9. That it should be possible for Christ to fail of d ing his Father's Will, is inconsistent with the promi made to the Father by the Son, by the *Logos* that w with the Father from the beginning, before he took t human nature: as may be seen in Psalm xl. 6, 7, (compared with the apostle's interpretation, Heb. x. 9.) " Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desi mine ears hast thou opened, (or bored ;) burnt-offeri and sin-offering thou hast not required. Then said I, I I come ; in the volume of the book it is written of me delight to do thy Will, O my God, and thy law is with my heart." Where is a manifest allusion to the covena which the willing servant, who loved his master's servi made with his master, to be his servant for ever, on t day wherein he had his ear bored ; which covenant w probably inserted in the public records, called the *lume of the Book*, by the judges, who were called take cognizance of the transaction ; Exod. xxi. If t *Logos*, who was with the Father before the world, a who made the world, thus engaged in covenant to do t Will of the Father in human nature, and the promis was as it were recorded, that it might be made su

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

doubtless it was impossible that it should fail; and so it was impossible that Christ should fail of doing the Will of the Father in the human nature.

10. If it was possible for Christ to have failed of doing the Will of his Father, and so to have failed of effectually working out redemption for sinners, then the salvation of all the saints, who were saved from the beginning of the world, to the death of Christ, was not built on a firm foundation. The Messiah, and the redemption, which He was to work out by his obedience unto death, was the foundation of the salvation of all the posterity of fallen man, that ever were saved. Therefore, if when the Old Testament saints had the pardon of their sins, and the favour of God promised them, and salvation bestowed upon them, still it was possible that the Messiah, when he came, might commit sin, then all this was on a foundation that was not firm and stable, but liable to fail; something which it was possible might never be. God did as it were trust to what his Son had engaged and promised to do in future time; and depended so much upon it, that He proceeded actually to assure men on the account of it, as though it had been already done. But this trust and dependence of God, on the supposition of Christ's being liable to fail of doing his Will, was leaning on a staff that was weak, and might possibly break. The saints of old trusted on the promises of a future redemption to be wrought out and completed by the Messiah, and built their comfort upon it; Abraham saw Christ's Day, and rejoiced; and he and the other Patriarchs died in the faith of the promise of it. (Heb. xi. 13.) But on this supposition, their faith and their comfort, and their salvation, was built on a moveable, fallible foundation; Christ was not to them a tried stone, a sure foundation; as in Isa. xxviii. 16. David entirely rested on the covenant of God with him, concerning the future glorious dominion and salvation of the Messiah, of his Seed; says, it was *all his salvation, and all his desire;* and comforts himself that this covenant was an *everlasting covenant, ordered in all things*

and sure, 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. But if Christ's virtue migh
fail, he was mistaken; his great comfort was not built s
sure, as he thought it was, being founded entirely on th
determinations of the Free Will of Christ's human soul
which was subject to no necessity, and might be deter
mined either one way or the other. Also the de
pendance of those, who looked for redemption in Je
rusalem, and waited for the consolation of Israel, (Luk
ii. 25, 38.) and the confidence of the disciples of Jesus
who forsook all and followed Him, that they might en
joy the benefits of his future kingdom, was built on
sandy foundation.

11. The Man Christ Jesus, before he had finishe
his course of obedience, and while in the midst of temp
tations and trials, was abundant in positively predictin
his own future glory in his kingdom, and the enlarge
ment of his Church, the salvation of the Gentiles throug
Him, &c. and in promises of blessings he would besto
on his true disciples in his future kingdom; on which pr
mises he required the full dependance of his disciple
(John xiv.) But the disciples would have no groun
for such dependence, if Christ had been liable to fail i
his work; and Christ himself would have been guilty
presumption, in so abounding in peremptory promises
great things, which depend on a mere contingence; vi
the determinations of his Free Will, consisting in a fre
dom *ad utrumque*, to either sin or holiness, standing i
indifference, and incident, in thousands of future in
stances, to go either one way or the other.

Thus it is evident, that it was *impossible* that the Ac
of the Will of the human soul of Christ should be othe
wise than holy, and conformed to the will of the Fathe
or, in other words, they were necessarily so conforme

I have been the longer in the proof of this matter,
being a thing denied by some of the greatest *Arminian*
by *Episcopius* in particular; and because I look upon
as a point clearly and absolutely determining the contr
versy between *Calvinists* and *Arminians*, concerni
the necessity of such a freedom of will as is insisted
by the latter in order to moral agency, virtue, co

mand, prohibition, promise or threatening, reward or punishment, praise or dispraise, merit or demerit. I ow therefore proceed,

II. To consider whether Christ, in his holy behaviour n earth, was not thus a *moral agent*, subject to *com-nands, promises*, &c.

Dr. *Whitby* very often speaks of what he calls a free-om *ad utrumlibet*, without necessity, as requisite to *law nd commands*; and speaks of necessity as entirely in-onsistent with *injunctions and prohibitions*. But yet we ead of Christ's being the subject of the commands of his 'ather, Job x. 18, and xv. 10. And Christ tells us, hat every thing that he *said*, or *did*, was in compliance ith *commandments he had received of the Father*, John ii. 49, 50; and xiv. 31. And we often read of Christ's *bedience* to his Father's commands, Rom. v. 19. Phil. . 18. Heb. v. 8.

The forementioned writer represents *promises offered s motives* to persons to do their duty, or *a being moved nd induced by promises*, as utterly inconsistent with a tate wherein persons have not a liberty *ad utrumlibet*, ut are necessarily determined to one. (See particular-, p. 298, and 311.) But the thing which this writer sserts, is demonstrably false, if the Christian religion be ue. If there be any truth in Christianity or the holy criptures, the Man Christ Jesus had his Will infalli-y, unalterably, and unfrustrably determined to good nd that alone; but yet he had promises of glorious re-ards made to him, on condition of his preserving in nd perfecting the work which God hath appointed Him sa. liii. 10, 11, 12. Psalm ii. and cx. Isa. xlix. 7, . 9.—In Luke xxii. 28, 29, Christ says to his dis-ples, "Ye are they which have continued with me in y temptations; and I appoint unto you a kingdom, as y Father hath appointed unto me." The word most pro-erly signifies to appoint by covenant, or promise. The lain meaning of Christ's words is this: "As you have artook of my temptations and trials, and have been sted-st, and have overcome; I promise to make you parta-

kers of my reward, and to give you a kingdom; as th
Father hath promised me a kingdom for continuing sted
fast, and overcoming those trials." And the words ar
well explained by those in Rev. iii. 21. "To him tha
overcometh, will I grant to sit with me on my throne
even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Fathe
in his throne." And Christ had not only promises
glorious success and rewards made to his obedience an
sufferings, but the Scriptures plainly represent Him a
using these promises for motives and inducements to obe
and suffer; and particularly that promise of a kingdo
which the Father hath appointed Him, or sitting wit
the Father on his throne; as in Heb. xii. 1, 2, "Let u
lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth easil
beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is s
before us, looking unto Jesus the Author and Finishe
of our faith; who for the joy that was set before Hi
endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set dow
on the right hand of the throne of God."

And how strange would it be to hear any Christia
assert, that the holy and excellent temper and behavio
of Jesus Christ, and that obedience, which he performe
under such great trials, was not *virtuous or praise-wo
thy;* because his will was not free *ad utrumque*, to eith
holiness or sin, but was unalterably determined to one
that, upon this account, there is no virtue at all in a
Christ's humility, meekness, patience, charity, forgiv
ness of enemies, contempt of the world, heavenly-min
edness, submission to the will of God, perfect obedien
to his commands (though He was obedient unto deat
even the death of the cross) hisgreat compassion to th
afflicted, his unparalleled love to mankind, his faithfu
ness to God and man, under such great trials; his pra
ing for his enemies, even when nailing Him to the cross
that *virtue*, when applied to these things, *is but a
empty name;* that there was no merit in any of the
things; that is, that Christ was *worthy* of nothing at a
on account of them,—worthy of no reward, no praise, r
honour, or respect from God or man; because his wi

was not indifferent, and free either to these things or the contrary; but under such a strong inclination or bias to the things that were excellent, as made it *impossible* that he should choose the contrary; that upon this account (to use Dr Whitby's language) *it would be sensibly unreasonable* that human nature should be rewarded for any of these things.

According to this doctrine, that creature who is evidently set forth in Scripture as the *first born of every creature*, as having *in all things the pre-eminence*, and as the highest of all creatures in virtue, honour, and worthiness of esteem, praise, and glory, on the account of his virtue, is less worthy of reward or praise than the very least of saints; yea, no more worthy than a clock or mere machine, that is purely passive, and moved by natural necessity.

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

God speaks of himself as peculiarly well-pleased with the righteousness of this servant of his. Isa. xlii. 21. "The Lord is well-pleased for his righteousness sake." The sacrifices of old are spoken of as a sweet savour to God; but the obedience of Christ as far more acceptable than they. Psalm xl. 6, 7. "Sacrifice and offering Thou didst not desire:—Mine ear hast thou opened [as thy servant performing willing obedience;] burnt offering and sin-offering hast thou not required: then said I, Lo, I come [as a servant that cheerfully answers the calls of his master:] I delight to do thy will, O my God, and thy law is within mine heart!" Matt. xvii. 5. "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased." And Christ tells us expressly, that the Father loves him for that wonderful instance of his obedience,—his voluntary yielding himself to death, in compliance with his Father's command, John x. 17, 18. "Therefore, doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life:—No man taketh it from me; but I lay it down of myself. This commandment received I of my Father."

If there was no merit in Christ's obedience unto death, if it was not worthy of praise, and of the most glorious rewards, the heavenly hosts were exceedingly mistaken by the account that is given of them, in Rev. v. 8—12. "The four beasts and the four-and-twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps and golden vials full of odours; and they sung a new song, saying, Thou art *worthy* to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders, and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, saying, with a loud voice, *Worthy* is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing."

Christ speaks of the eternal life which he was to receive, as the reward of his obedience to the Father's commandments. John xii. 49, 50. "I have not spoke

f myself; but the Father which sent me. He gave
ne a commandment what I should say, and what I should
peak: and I know that his commandment is life ever-
sting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Fa-
her said unto me, so I speak."—God promises to divide
im a portion with the great, &c. for his being his right-
ous Servant, for his glorious virtue under such great
ials and afflictions. Isa. liii. 11, 12. "He shall see
he travail of his soul and be satisfied: by his knowledge
hall my righteous Servant justify many; for he shall
ear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a
ortion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with
he strong, because he hath poured out his soul unto death."
The Scriptures represent God as rewarding Him far
bove all his other Servants. Phil. ii. 7, 8, 9. "He
ook on Him the form of a servant, and was made in
he likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a
an, He humbled himself, and became obedient unto
eath, even the death of the cross; wherefore God also
ath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name above
very name. Psalm xlv. 7. "Thou lovest righteous-
ess, and hatest wickedness; therefore God, thy God,
ath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above thy
llows."

There is no room to pretend, that the glorious bene-
ts bestowed in consequence of Christ's obedience, are
pt properly of the nature of a reward. What is a re-
ard, in the most proper sense, but a benefit bestowed
consequence of something morally excellent in quali-
or behaviour, in testimony of well-pleasedness in that
oral excellency, and respect, and favour on that ac-
unt? If we consider the nature of a reward most
rictly, and make the utmost of it, and add to the
ings contained in this description, proper merit or
orthiness, and the bestowment of the benefit in con-
quence of a promise, still it will be found, there is no-
ing belonging to it; but that the Scripture is most
press as to its belonging to the glory bestowed on
hrist after his sufferings; as appears from what has

been already observed: there was a glorious benefit be stowed in consequence of something morally excellent being called *Righteousness* and *Obedience*, there wa great favour, love, and well-pleasedness for this right cousness and obedience in the Bestower; there wa proper merit, or worthiness of the benefit, in the obe dience; it was bestowed in fulfilment of promises mad to that obedience; and was bestowed *therefore*, or *be cause* he had performed that obedience.

I may add to all these things, that Jesus Christ while here in the flesh, was manifestly in a state of tria The last Adam, as Christ is called (1 Cor. xv. 45 Rom. v. 14) taking on Him the human nature, and s the form of a servant, and being under the law, to stan and act for us, was put into a state of trial, as the firs Adam was.—Dr *Whitby* mentions these three things a evidences of persons being in a state of trial (on th Five Points, p. 298, 299) namely, their afflictions be ing spoken of as their trials or temptations, their bein the subjects of promises, and their being exposed to Sa tan's temptations. But Christ was apparently the sub ject of each of these. Concerning promises made t Him, I have spoken already. The difficulties and affic tions He met with, in the course of his obedience, ar called his temptations or trials. Luke xxii. 28. "Y are they which have continued with me in my tempta tions or trials." Heb. ii. 18. "For in that he him self hath suffered being tempted (or tried) He is able t succour them that are tempted." And chap. iv. 15 "We have not an high-priest, which cannot be touche with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all point *tempted* like as we are, yet without sin:" And as t his being tempted by Satan, it is what none will dis pute.

SECTION III.

The Case of such as are given up of God to Sin, and of fallen man in general, proves moral necessity and inability to be consistent with Blame-worthiness.

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

If these things are true, in Dr *Whitby's* sense of necessity, they will prove all such to be blameless who are given up of God to sin, in what they commit after they are thus given up: that there is such a thing as men's being judicially given up to sin, is certain, if the scripture rightly informs us, such a thing being often there spoken of; as in Psalm lxxxi. 12. "So I gave them up to their own hearts lust, and they walked in their own counsels." Acts vii. 42. "Then God turned, and gave them up to worship the host of Heaven."

---

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

Rom. i. 24. "Wherefore, God also gave them up t uncleanness, through the lusts of their own hearts, dishonour their own bodies between themselves." Ve 26. "For this cause God gave them up to vile affe tions." Ver. 28. "And even as they did not like t retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over t a reprobate mind, to do those things that are not cor venient."

It is needless to stand particularly to inquire wha God's *giving men up to their own hearts lusts* signifies it is sufficient to observe, that hereby is certainly mean God's so ordering or disposing things, in some respec or other, either by doing or forbearing to do, as tha the consequence should be men's continuing in their sin So much as men are given up *to*, so much is the conse quence of their being given up, whether that be less c more. If God does not order things so by action c permission, that sin will be the consequence, then th event proves that they are not given up to that conse quence. If good be the consequence, instead of evi then God's mercy is to be acknowledged in that good which mercy must be contrary to God's judgment i giving up to evil. If the event must prove that the are given up to evil as the consequence, then the person who are the subjects of this judgment, must be the sul jects of such an event, and so the event is necessary.

If not only *co-action*, but *all necessity*, will prove me blameless, then *Judas* was blameless, after Christ ha given him over, and had already declared his certai damnation, and that he should *verily* betray him. H was guilty of no sin in betraying his Master, on thi supposition; though his so doing is spoken of by Chris as the most aggravated sin, more heinous than the si of Pilate in crucifying Him: and the Jews in Egyp in Jeremiah's time, were guilty of no sin, in their nc worshipping the true God, after God had "sworn b his great name, that his name should be no more name in the mouth of any man of Judah, in all the land c Egypt.' Jer. xliv. 26.

Dr *Whitby* (Discourse on Five Points, p. 302, 303,) enies that men in this world are ever so given up by od to sin, that their wills should be necessarily deter-ined to evil; though he owns, that hereby it may be-me *exceeding difficult* for men to do good, having a rong bent and powerful inclination to what is evil. But if e should allow the case to be just as he represents, the dgment of giving up to sin will no better agree with s notions of that liberty, which is essential to praise or ame, than if we should suppose it to render the avoid-g of sin *impossible*; for if an *impossibility* of avoiding wholly excuses a man, then, for the same reason, its ing difficult to avoid it, excuses him in part; and this st in proportion to the degree of difficulty.—If the fluence of *moral* impossibility or inability be the same, excuse persons in not doing, or not avoiding any thing, that of *natural* inability (which is supposed), then un-ubtedly, in like manner, *moral difficulty* has the same fluence to excuse with *natural difficulty*. But all al-w, that natural impossibility wholly excuses, and also at *natural difficulty* excuses in part, and makes the t or omission less blameable in proportion to the diffi-lty. All *natural difficulty*, according to the plainest tates of the light of nature, excuses in some degree, that the neglect is not so blameable as if there had en no difficulty in the case: and so the greater the fficulty is, still the more excusable, in proportion to e increase of the difficulty. And as *natural* impossi-ity wholly excuses and excludes all blame, so the arer the difficulty approaches to impossibility, still e nearer a person is to blamelessness in proportion to proach. And if the case of moral impossibility or ne-ssity, be just the same with natural necessity or co-tion, as to influence to excuse a neglect, then also, for e same reason, the case of natural difficulty does not ffer in influence to excuse a neglect from moral diffi-lty, arising from a strong bias or bent to evil, such as r *Whitby* owns in the case of those that are given up their own hearts lusts. So that the fault of such per-

sons must be lessened, in proportion to the difficulty a
approach to impossibility. If ten degrees of moral
ficulty make the action quite impossible, and so wh
excuse, then if there be nine degrees of difficulty,
person is in great part excused, and is nine degrees
ten less blame-worthy, than if there had been no di
culty at all; and he has but one degree of blame-w
thiness. The reason is plain, on *Arminian* principl
viz. because as difficulty, by antecedent bent and bias
the will, is increased, liberty of indifference and s
determination in the will is diminished: so much h
drance and impediment is there in the way of the wi
acting freely, by mere self-determination. And if
degrees of such hindrance take away all such liber
then nine degrees take away nine parts in ten, and le
but one degree of liberty. And therefore there is
one degree of blameableness, *cæteris paribus*, in the
glect; the man being no further blameable in what
does or neglects, than he has liberty in that affair:
blame or praise, say they, arises wholly from a good
or abuse of liberty.

From all which it follows, that a strong bent and b
one way, and difficulty of going the contrary, ne
causes a person to be at all more exposed to sin, or a
thing blameable: because, as the difficulty is increas
so much the less is required and expected. Though
one respect, exposedness to sin or fault is increased,
by an increase or exposedness to the evil action or om
sion; yet it is diminished in another respect, to bala
it; namely, as the sinfulness or blameableness of the
tion or omission is diminished in the same proportio
So that, on the whole, the affair, as to exposedness
guilt or blame, is left just as it was.

To illustrate this, let us suppose a scale of a balan
to be intelligent, and a free agent, and indued with
self-moving power, by virtue of which it could act a
produce effects to a certain degree, *ex. gr.* to move
self up or down with a force equal to a weight of

pounds; and that it might therefore be required of it, in ordinary circumstances, to move itself down with that force; for which it has power and full liberty, and therefore would be blame-worthy if it failed of it. But then let us suppose a weight of ten pounds to be put in the opposite scale, which in force entirely counter-balances its self-moving power, and so renders it impossible for it to move down at all; and therefore wholly excuses it from any such motion. But if we suppose there to be only nine pounds in the opposite scale, this renders its motion not impossible, but yet more difficult; so that it can now only move down with the force of one pound: but, however, this is all that is required of it under these circumstances; it is wholly excused from nine parts of its motion; and if the scale, under these circumstances, neglects to move, and remains at rest, all that it will be blamed for, will be its neglect of that one tenth part of its motion; which it had as much liberty and advantage for, as in usual circumstances it has for the greater motion, which in such a case would be required. So that this new difficulty does not at all increase its exposedness to any thing blame-worthy.

Thus the very supposition of difficulty in the way of man's *duty*, or proclivity to sin, through a being given up to hardness of heart, or indeed by any other means whatsoever, is an inconsistence, according to Dr *Whitby*'s notions of liberty, virtue and vice, blame and praise. The avoiding sin and blame, and the doing what is virtuous and praise-worthy, must be always equally easy.

Dr *Whitby*'s notion of liberty, obligation, virtue, sin, &c. led him into another great inconsistence. He abundantly insists, that necessity is inconsistent with the nature of sin, or fault. He says, in the forementioned treatise, p. 14. "Who can blame a person for doing what he could not help?" And, p. 15. "It being invisibly unjust to punish any man for doing that which it was never in his power to avoid." And, in p. 341, to confirm his opinion, he quotes one of the Father's say-

ing, "Why doth God command, if man hath no free-wi and power to obey?" And again, in the same and th next page, "Who will not cry out, that it is folly to con mand him that hath not liberty to do what is command ed; and that it is unjust to condemn him that has it no in his power to do what is required?" And, in p. 373 he cites another saying, "A law is given to him that ca turn to both parts;" *i. e.* "obey or transgress it: but n law can be against him who is bound by nature."

Yet the same Dr *Whitby* asserts, that fallen man not able to perform perfect obedience. In p. 105, he ha these words: "The nature of *Adam* had power to con tinue innocent, and without sin; whereas, it is certai our nature never had so." But if we have not pow to continue innocent and without sin, then sin is inco sistent with necessity, and we may be sinful in that whi we have not power to avoid; and those things cannot b true, which he asserts elsewhere, namely, "That if v be necessitated, neither sins of omission nor commissio would deserve that name," p. 348. If we have it n in our power to be innocent, then we have it not in o power to be blameless: and if so, we are under a nece sity of being blame-worthy. And how does this consi with what he so often asserts, that necessity is inconsi tent with blame or praise? If we have it not in o power to perform perfect obedience to all the comman of God, then we are under a necessity of breaking sor commands, in some degree: having no power to perfor so much as is commanded. And if so, why does he c out of the unreasonableness and folly of commanding b yond what men have power to do?

Arminians in general are very inconsistent with the selves in what they say of the inability of fallen man this respect. They strenuously maintain, that it wou be unjust in God to require any thing of us beyond c present power and ability to perform; and also hold, th we are now unable to perform perfect obedience, a that Christ died to satisfy for the *imperfections of o obedience*, and has made way, that our imperfect ol

dience might be accepted instead of perfect: wherein they seem insensibly to run themselves into the grossest inconsistence. For (as I have observed elsewhere) they hold, that God, in mercy to mankind, has abolished that rigorous constitution or law, that they were under originally; and instead of it, has introduced a more mild constitution, and put us under a new law, which requires no more than imperfect, sincere obedience, in compliance with our poor, infirm, impotent circumstances since the fall.

Now, how can these things be made consistent? I would ask, what law these imperfections of our obedience are a breach of? If they are a breach of no law, that we were ever under, then they are not sins. And if they be not sins, what need of Christ's dying to satisfy for them? But if they are sins, and the breach of some law, what law was it? They cannot be a breach of their new law; for that requires no other than imperfect obedience, or obedience with imperfections: and therefore to have obedience attended with imperfections, is no breach of it; for it is as much as it requires. And they cannot be a breach of their old law; for that, they say, is entirely abolished; and we never were under it.—They say, it would not be just in God to require of us perfect obedience, because it would not be just to require more than we can perform, or to punish us for failing of it. And, therefore, by their own scheme, the imperfections of our obedience do not deserve to be punished. What need therefore of Christ's dying to satisfy for them? What need of his *suffering*, to satisfy for that which is no fault, and in its own nature deserves no *suffering?* What need of Christ's dying, to purchase that our *imperfect* obedience should be accepted, when, according to their scheme, it would be unjust in itself that any other obedience than *imperfect* should be required? What need of Christ's dying to make way for God's accepting such an obedience, as it would be unjust in Him not to accept? Is there any need of Christ's dying, to

prevail with God not to do unrighteously ?—If it be said that Christ died to satisfy that old law for us, that so we might not be under it, but that there might be room for our being under a more mild law, still I would inquire what need of Christ's dying, that we might not be under a law which, by their principles, it would be in itself unjust that we should be under, whether Christ had died or no, because, in our present state, we are not able to keep it ?

So the *Arminians* are inconsistent with themselves not only in what they say of the need of Christ's satisfaction to atone for those imperfections which we cannot avoid, but also in what they say of the grace of God granted to enable men to perform the sincere obedience of the new law. "I grant (says Dr *Stebbing* *) indeed that by reason of original sin, we are utterly disabled for the performance of the condition, without new grace from God. But I say then, that he gives such a grace to all of us, by which the performance of the condition is truly possible : and upon this ground he may and doth most righteously require it." If Dr *Stebbing* intends to speak properly, by *grace* he must mean that assistance which is of grace, or of free favour and kindness. But yet in the same place he speaks of it as very *unreasonable*, *unjust*, and *cruel*, for God to require that as the condition of pardon, what is become impossible by original sin. If it be so, what *grace* is there in giving assistance and ability to perform the condition of pardon ? Or why is that called by the name of grace, that is an absolute debt, which God is bound to bestow, and which it would be unjust and cruel in Him to withhold, seeing he requires that, *as the condition of pardon*, which he cannot perform without it ?

---

* Treatise on the Operation of the Spirit. Second Edit. p. 112, 113.

SECTION IV.

Command and Obligation to Obedience, consistent with Moral Inability to Obey.

IT being so much insisted on by *Arminian* writers, that necessity is inconsistent with law or command, and particularly, that it is absurd to suppose God by his command should require that of men which they are unwilling to do; not allowing in this case for any difference that there is between natural and moral inability; I would therefore now particularly consider this matter.

For the greater clearness, I would distinctly lay down the following things:

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

senting, not complying of the will of the commanded to the manifested will of the commander. Other acts that are not the acts of the will, as certain notions of the body and alterations in the soul, are obedience or disobedience only indirectly, as they are connected with the state or actions of the will, according to an established law of nature. So that it is manifest the will itself may be required: and the being of a good will is the most proper, direct, and immediate subject of command; and if this cannot be prescribed or required by command or precept, nothing can; for other things can be required no otherwise than as they depend upon, and are the fruits of a good will.

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

Corol. 2. It also follows, from what has been observed, that if there be any sort of act or exertion of the soul, prior to all free acts of the will, or acts of choice in the case, directing and determining what the acts of the will shall be, that act or exertion of the soul cannot properly be subject to any command or precept, in any respect whatsoever, either directly or indirectly, immediately or remotely. Such acts cannot be subject to commands *directly*, because they are no acts of the will; being, by the supposition, prior to all acts of the will, determining and giving rise to all its acts: they not being acts of the will, there can be in them no consequent to, or compliance with any command. Neither can they be subject to command or precept *indirectly* or *remotely*; for they

re not so much as the *effects* or *consequences* of the will, eing prior to all its acts. So that if there be any bedience in that original act of the soul, determining l volition, it is an act of obedience wherein the will has o concern at all,—it preceding every act of the will. nd, therefore, if the soul either obeys or disobeys in is act, it is wholly voluntarily; there is no willing obeience or rebellion, no compliance or opposition of the ill in the affair; and what sort of obedience or rebelon is this?

Thus the *Arminian* notion of the freedom of the will nsisting in the soul's determining its own acts of the ill, instead of being essential to moral agency, and to an's being the subject of moral government, is utterly consistent with it; for if the soul determines *all* its acts will, it is therein subject to no command or moral goernment, as has been now observed; because its original termining act is no act of will or choice, it being prior, the supposition, to *every act* of the will; and the soul nnot be the subject of command in the act of the will elf, which depends on the foregoing determining act, d is determined by it; inasmuch as this is necessary, ing the necessary consequence and effect of that prior termining act which is not voluntarily. Nor can the an be the subject of command or government in his exrnal actions; because these are all necessary, being the cessary effects of the acts of the will themselves. So at mankind, according to this scheme, are subjects of mmand or moral government in nothing at all; and all eir moral agency is entirely excluded, and no room for tue or vice in the world.

So that it is the *Arminian* scheme, and not the scheme the *Calvinists*, that is utterly inconsistent with moral vernment, and with all use of laws, precepts, prohibins, promises, or threatenings. Neither is there any y whatsoever to make their principles consist with ese things. For if it be said, that there is no prior termining act of the soul, preceding the acts of the l, but that volitions are events that come to pass by

pure accident, without any determining cause, this is most palpably inconsistent with all use of laws and precepts; for nothing is more plain than that laws can be of no use to direct and regulate perfect accident; which by the supposition of its being pure accident, is in no case regulated by any thing preceding; but happens this way or that, perfectly by chance, without any cause or rule. The perfect uselessness of laws and precepts also follows from the *Arminian* notion of indifference, as essential to that liberty which is requisite to virtue or vice. For the end of laws is to *bind to one side;* and the end of commands is to turn the will one way; and therefore they are of no use, unless they turn or bias the will that way. But if liberty consists in indifference; then their biassing the will one way only destroys liberty as it puts the will out of equilibrium. So that the will having a bias, through the influence of binding law laid upon it, is not wholly left to itself to determine which way it will, without influence from without.

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

This is manifest from what was observed in the first part, concerning the nature of *Moral* Inability, as distinguished from *natural;* where it was observed, that a

n may then be said to be morally unable to do a thing, en he is under the influence of prevalence or a con- y inclination, or has a want of inclination, under such umstances and views. It is also evident, from what been before proved, that the will is always, and in ry individual act, necessarily determined by the strong- motive; and so is always unable to go against the ive, which, all things considered, has now the great- strength and advantage to move the will.—But not her to insist on these things, the truth of the position laid down, *viz.* that when the will is opposite to, or ng of a compliance with a thing *in its original deter- ing inclination or act*, it is not able to comply, appears the consideration of these two things.

. The will, in the time of that diverse or opposite ling act or inclination, and when actually under the uence of it, is not able to exert itself to the contrary, nake an alteration, in order to a compliance. The ination is unable to change itself; and that for this n reason, that it is unable to incline to change itself. sent choice cannot at present choose to be otherwise: what would be *at present* to choose something diverse n what is *at present* chosen. If the will, all things considered, inclines or chooses to go that way, then annot choose, all things now considered, to go the er way, and so cannot choose to be made to go the er way. To suppose that the mind is now sincerely ined to change itself to a different inclination, is to pose the mind is now truly inclined otherwise than it now inclined. The will may oppose some future ote act that it is exposed to, but not its own present

. As it is impossible that the will should comply with thing commanded, with respect to its *leading act*, by act of its own, in the time of that diverse or opposite *ling and original act*, or after it has actually come er the influence of that *determining choice or inclina- ; so it is impossible it should be determined to a pliance by any foregoing act; for, by the very sup-

position, there is no foregoing act; the opposite or n
complying act being that act which is *original* and *de*
mining in the case. Therefore, it must be so, tha
this first determining act be found non-complying, on
proposal of the command, the mind is morally unabl
obey. For to suppose it to be able to obey, is to
pose it to be able to determine and cause its first de
mining act to be otherwise, and that it has power be
to govern and regulate its first governing and regula
act, which is absurd; for it is to suppose a prior ac
the will, determining its first determining act: that
an act prior to the first, and leading and governing
original and governing act of all; which is a contra
tion.

Here if it should be said, that although the mind
not any ability to will contrary to what it does will,
the original and leading act of the will, because ther
supposed to be no prior act to determine and order
otherwise, and the will cannot immediately change it
because it cannot at present incline to a change;
the mind has an ability for the present to forbear to
ceed to action, and taking time for deliberation; wh
may be an occasion of the change of the inclination.

I answer, (1.) In this objection that seems to be
gotten, which was observed before, *viz.* that the de
mining to take the matter into consideration, is itsel
act of the will; and if this be all the act wherein
mind exercises ability and freedom, then this, by
supposition, must be all that can be commanded or
quired by precept. And if this act be the command
act, then all that has been observed concerning the c
manding act of the will remains true, that the very w
of it is a moral inability to exert it, &c. (2.) We
speaking concerning the first and leading act of the
in the case, or about the affair; and if a determining
deliberate, or, on the contrary, to proceed immedia
without deliberating, be the first and leading act;
whether it be or no, if there be another act before
which determines that; or whatever be the original

ding act, still the foregoing proof stands good that non-compliance of the leading act implies moral inaty to comply.

If it should be objected, that these things make all ral inability equal, and suppose men morally unable will, otherwise than they actually do will, in all cases, l equally so in every instance.

In answer to this objection, I desire two things may observed :—*First*, That if by being *equally* unable meant as *really* unable; then, so far as the inability merely moral, it is true, the will, in every instance, s by moral necessity, and is morally unable to act erwise, as truly and properly in one case as another; I humbly conceive, has been perfectly and abundantdemonstrated by what has been said in the preceding rt of this Essay. But yet, in some respect, the inaity may be said to be greater in some instances than ers; though the man be truly unable (if moral inaity can truly be called Inability) yet he may be furer from being able to do somethings than others. As is in things, which men are naturally unable to do. person, whose strength is no more than sufficient to t the weight of one hundred pounds, is as truly and ally unable to lift one hundred and one pounds as ten ousand pounds; but yet he is further from being able lift the latter weight than the former; and so, acrding to common use of speech, has a greater inabilifor it. So it is in moral inability. A man is truly orally unable to choose contrary to a present inclinan, which in the least degree prevails; or, contrary that motive, which, all things considered, has strength d advantage now to move the will, in the least degree, perior to all other motives in view; but yet he is furer from ability to resist a very strong habit and a viont and deeply rooted inclination, or a motive vastly ceeding all others in strength. And again: the inality may, in some respects, be called greater in some stances than others, as it may be *more general* and *exsive to all acts of that kind.* So men may be said to

be unable in a different sense, and to be further f
moral ability, who have that moral inability whic
general and habitual, than they who have only that
bility which is occasional and particular*. Thus
cases of natural inability, he that is born blind ma
said to be unable to see, in a different manner, and
in some respects, further from being able to see thar
whose sight is hindered by a transient cloud or mist.

Besides, that which was observed in the first par
this discourse, concerning the inability which attenc
strong and settled habit should be here remembered ;
that fixed habit is attended with this peculiar moral
bility, by which it is distinguished from *occasional v*
tion, namely, that endeavours to avoid future volit
of that kind, which are agreeable to such a habit, n
more frequently and commonly prove vain and ins
cient. For though it is impossible there should be
true sincere desires and endeavours against a pres
volition or choice, yet there may be against volition
that kind, when viewed at a distance. A person
desire and use means to prevent future exercises
certain inclination ; and in order to it, may wish
habit might be removed ; but his desires and end
vours may be ineffectual. The man may be said
some sense to be unable ; yea, even as the word *un*
is a *relative term*, and has relation to ineffectual end
ours ; yet not with regard to present, but remote
deavours.

Secondly, It must be borne in mind, according
what was observed before, that indeed no inability w
soever, is merely moral, is properly called by the nam
Inability ; and that in the strictest propriety of speec
man may be said to have a thing in his power if he
it at his election ; and he cannot be said to be unable
do a thing, when he can, if he now pleases, or whene
he has a proper, direct, and immediate desire for it.

---

* See this distinction of Moral Inability explained, in Par
Section iv.

those desires and endeavours that may be against the
xercises of a strong habit, with regard to which men
ay be said to be unable to avoid those exercises, they
e remote desires and endeavours in two respects.—
irst, As to *time*; they are never against present voliti-
s, but only against volitions of such a kind, when view-
at a distance. *Secondly*, As to their *nature*; these
posite desires are not directly and properly against the
bit and inclination itself, or the volitions in which it is
ercised; for these, in themselves considered, are agree-
e: but against something else that attends them, or is
eir consequence; the opposition of the mind is levelled
tirely against this; the inclination or volitions them-
ves are not at all opposed directly, and for their own
e; but only indirectly and remotely on the account of
nething alien and foreign.

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

Such a state, or act of the will, may be required by
mand, as does not already exist. For if that volition
y may be commanded to be which already is, there
ld be no use of precept; commands in all cases would
perfectly vain and impertinent; and not only may
h a will be required, as is wanting before the com-
nd is given, but also such as may possibly be wanting
rwards; such as the exhibition of the command may
be effectual to produce or excite. Otherwise, no
h thing as disobedience to a proper and rightful com-
nd is possible in any case; and there is no case sup-
able or possible, wherein there can be an excusable

or faulty disobedience; which *Arminians* cannot affi
consistently with their principles; for this makes o
dience to just and proper commands always *necessary*, a
disobedience impossible. And so the *Arminian* wou
overthrow himself, yielding the very point we are up
which he so strenuously denies, *viz.* that law and co
mand are consistent with necessity.

If merely that inability will excuse disobedien
which is implied in the opposition or defect of incli
tion, remaining after the command is exhibited, th
wickedness always carries that in it which excuses it.
is evermore so, that by how much the more wickedn
there is in a man's heart, by so much is his inclination
evil the stronger, and by so much the more, therefo
has he of moral inability to the good required. His m
ral inability, consisting in the strength of his evil in
nation, is the very thing wherein his wickedness consis
and yet, according to *Arminian* principles, it must b
thing inconsistent with wickedness; and by how mu
the more he has of it, by so much is he the further fr
wickedness.

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

Natural inability, arising from the want of natu
capacity or external hindrance (which alone is prope
called Inability) without doubt wholly excuses, or mal
a thing improperly the matter of command. If men
excused from doing or acting any good thing, suppos
to be commanded, it must be through some defect
obstacle that is not in the will itself, but intrinsic to
either in the capacity of understanding, or body, or o
ward circumstances.

Here two or three things may be observed,

1. As two spiritual duties or acts, or any good th
in the state of imminent acts of the will itself, or of
affections (which are only certain modes of the exer

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

2. As to such motions of body or exercises and alterations of mind, which does not consist in the immanent acts or state of the will itself, but are supposed to be required as effects of the will, I say, in such supposed effects of the will, in cases wherein there is no want of a capacity of understanding, that inability, and that only, excuses, which consists in want of connection between them and the will. If the will fully complies, and the proposed effect does not prove, according to the laws of Nature, to be connected with his volition, the man is perfectly excused: he has a natural inability to the thing required; for the will itself, as has been observed, is all that can be directly and immediately required by command; and other things only indirectly, as connected with the will. If therefore there can be a

full compliance of will, the person has done his dut and if other things do not prove to be connected wi his volition, that is not owing to him.

3. Both these kinds of natural inability that have be mentioned, and so all inability that excuses, may be r solved into one thing; namely, want of natural capaci or strength; either capacity of understanding or exte nal strength. For when there are external defects a obstacles, they would be no obstacles, were it not f the imperfection and limitations of understanding a strength.

Corol. If things, for which men have a moral ina lity, may properly be the matter of precept or comma then they may also of invitation and counsel. Co mands and invitations come very much to the same thi the difference is only circumstantial; commands are much a manifestation of the will of him that speaks invitations, and as much testimonies of expectation compliance. The difference between them lies in r thing that touches the affair in hand. The main diff ence between Command and Invitation consists in t inforcement of the will of him who commands or invit In the latter it is his *kindness*, the goodness which will arises from; in the former it is his *authority*. I whatever be the ground of the will of him that spea or the enforcement of what he says, yet seeing neit his will nor expectation, is any more testified in the c case than the other; therefore a person's being dire ed *by invitation*, is no more an evidence of insincer in him that directs in manifesting either a will or pectation which he has not, then his being known to morally unable to do what he is directed to *by comma* So that all this grand objection of *Arminians* against inability of fallen men to exert faith in Christ, or to p form other spiritual gospel-duties, from the sincer of God's counsels and invitations, must be with force.

SECTION V.

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

[T is what is much insisted on by many, that som men though they are not able to perform spiritua uties, such as repentance of sin, love to God, a cor- ial acceptance of Christ as exhibited and offered in the ospel, &c. yet they may sincerely desire and endea- our these things, and therefore must be excused; it be- g unreasonable to blame them for the omission of ose things, which they sincerely desire and endeavour do, but cannot do.

Concerning this matter, the following things may be bserved :—

1. What is here supposed, is a great mistake and oss absurdity; even that men may sincerely choose and esire those spiritual duties of love, acceptance, choice, jection, &c. consisting in the exercise of the will itself, in the disposition and inclination of the heart, and yet t be able to perform or exert them. This is absurd; ecause it is absurd to suppose that a man should direct-, properly, and sincerely incline to have an inclination, hich at the same time is contrary to his inclination; for at is to suppose him not to be inclined to that which is inclined to. If a man, in the state and acts of his ll and inclination, does properly and directly fall in th those duties, he therein performs them; for the ties themselves consist in that very thing: they con- t in the state and acts of the will being so formed and rected. If the soul properly and sincerely falls in with certain proposed act of will or choice, the soul therein kes that choice its own. Even as when a moving

body falls in with a proposed direction of its motion, tha
is the same thing as to move in that direction.

2. That which is called a *desire* and *willingness* fo
those inward duties, in such as do not perform, has re
spect to these duties only indirectly and remotely, and i
improperly represented as a willingness for them; no
only because (as was observed before) it respects thos
good volitions only in a distant view, and with respe
to future time; but also because evermore, not thes
things themselves, but something else that is alien an
foreign is the object that terminates these volitions an
desires.

A drunkard, who continues in his drunkenness, bein
under the power of a love and violent appetite to stron
drink, and without any love to virtue; but being also ex
tremely coveteus and close, and very much exercised an
grieved at the diminution of his estate, and prospect
poverty, may in a sort *desire* the virtue of Temperance
and though his present will is to gratify his extravagan
appetite, yet he may wish he had a heart to forbear fu
ture acts of intemperance, and forsake his excesse
through an unwillingness to part with his money: b
still he goes on with his drunkenness; his wishes and e
deavours are insufficient and ineffectual. Such a ma
has no proper, direct, sincere willingness to forsake th
vice and vicious deeds which belong to it: for he ac
voluntarily in continuing to drink to excess; his desi
is very improperly called a willingness to be temperate
it is no true desire of that virtue; for it is not that vi
tue that terminates his wishes; nor have they any dire
respect at all to it. It is only *the saving his money*, an
avoiding poverty, that terminates and exhausts the whc
strength of his desire. The virtue of Temperance is r
garded only very indirectly and improperly, even as
necessary means of gratifying the vice of Covetousne

So a man of an exceeding corrupt and wicked hea
who has no love to God and Jesus Christ, but, on t
contrary, being very profanely and carnally inclined, h
the greatest distaste of the things of religion, and e

ity against them; yet being of a family, that, from
e generation to another, have most of them died in
outh, of an hereditary consumption, and so having
ttle hope of living longer; and having been instructed
the necessity of a supreme love to Christ, and grati-
de for his death and sufferings, in order to his salva-
on from eternal misery; if under these circumstances
e should, through fear of eternal torments, wish he
d such a disposition: but his profane and carnal
art remaining, he continues still in his habitual dis-
ste of and enmity to God and religion, and wholly
thout any exercise of that love and gratitude (as,
oubtless, the very devils themselves, notwithstanding
the devilishness of their temper, would wish for a
ly heart, if by that means they could get out of hell:)
this case, there is no sincere willingness to love
hrist, and choose him as his chief good. These holy
spositions and exercises are not at all the direct object
the will: they truly share no part of the inclination
desire of the soul; but all is terminated on deliver-
ce from torment: and these graces and pious volitions,
twithstanding this forced consent, are looked upon
desirable; as when a sick man desires a dose he
eatly abhors, to save his life.—From these things it
pears,

3. That this indirect willingness which has been
oken of, is not that exercise of the will which the
mmand requires; but is entirely a different one;
ing a volition of a different nature, and terminated al-
gether on different objects; wholly falling short of
at virtue of will, which the command has respect to.

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

Further to illustrate this matter:—If a child has a
st excellent father, that has ever treated him with

fatherly kindness and tenderness, and has every way, i the highest degree, merited his love and dutiful regard being withal very wealthy; but the son is of so vile a dis position, that he inveterately hates his father; and ye apprehending that his hatred of him is like to prove hi ruin, by bringing him finally to poverty and abject ci cumstances, through his father's disinheriting him, o otherwise; which is exceeding cross to his avarice an ambition; he, therefore, wishes it were otherwise: bu remaining under the invisible power of his vile and ma lignant disposition, he continues still in his settled hatre of his father. Now, if such a son's indirect willingnes to have love and honour towards his father, at all acquit or excuses before God, for his failing of actually exer cising these dispositions towards him, which God requires it must be on one of these accounts: (1.) Either tha it answers and fulfils the command. But this it does not by the supposition; because the thing commanded, i love and honour to his worthy parent. If the comman be proper and just, as is supposed, then it obliges to th thing commanded; and so nothing else but that can an swer the obligation.

Or, (2.) It must be at least because that virtue o goodness in his indirect willingness, that is equivalen to the virtue required; and so balances or countervail it, and makes up for the want of it. But that also is con trary to the supposition. The willingness the son ha merely from a regard to money and honour, has no good ness in it to countervail the want of the pious filial res pect required.

Sincerity and reality, in that indirect willingness which has been spoken of, does not make it the better That which is real and hearty is often called sincere whether it be in virtue or vice. Some persons are sin cerely *bad;* others are sincerely *good;* and others ma be sincere and hearty in things, which are in their owi nature *indifferent;* as a man may be sincerely desirou of eating when he is hungry. But a being sincere hearty, and in good earnest, is no virtue, unless it be i

thing that is virtuous. A man may be sincere and earty in joining a crew of pirates or a gang of robbers. When the devils cried out, and besought Christ not to rment them, it was no mere pretence; they were very earty in their desires not to be tormented; but this d not make their will or desires virtuous. And if ien have sincere desires, which are in their kind and ature no better, it can be no excuse for the want of any quired virtue.

As a man's being sincere in such an indirect desire or illingness to do his duty, as has been mentioned, can-t excuse for the want of performance; so it is with ndeavours arising from such a willingness. The en-eavours can have no more goodness in them than the ill which they are the effect and expression of; and, erefore, however sincere and real, and however great person's endeavours are; yea, though they should be the utmost of his ability; unless the will which they roceed from be truly good and virtuous, they can be no avail, influence, or weight to any purpose whatso-ver, in a moral sense or respect. That which is not uly virtuous in God's sight, is looked upon, by Him, good for nothing: and so can be of no value, weight, influence in his account, to recommend, satisfy, ex-ise, or make up for any moral defect; for nothing can unter-balance evil but good. If evil be in one scale, nd we put a great deal into the other sincere and ear-st desires, and many and great Endeavours; yet, if ere be no real goodness in all, there is no weight in ; and so it does nothing towards balancing the real eight, which is in the opposite scale. It is only like e substracting a thousand noughts from before a real umber, which leaves the sum just as it was.

Indeed such endeavours may have a negatively good fluence. Those things which have no positive virtue, ave no positive moral influence; yet they may be an ccasion of persons avoiding some positive evils. As if man were in the water with a neighbour that he had will to, who could not swim, holding him by his hand;

which neighbour was much in debt to him, and shou
be tempted to let him sink and drown; but should
fuse to comply with the temptation; not from love
his neighbour, but from the love of money, and because
his drowning he should lose his debt; that which
does in preserving his neighbour from drowning, is n
thing good in the sight of God: yet hereby he avoi
the greater guilt that would have been contracted, if
had designedly let his neighbour sink and perish. B
when *Arminians*, in their disputes with *Calvinists*, insi
so much on sincere desires and endeavours, as wh
must excuse men, must be accepted of God, &c. it
manifest they have respect to some positive moral weig
or influence of those desires and endeavours. Accep
ing, justifying, or excusing on the account of since
honest endeavours (as they are called), and men's doi
what they can, &c. has relation to some more valu
something that is accepted as good, and as such, cou
tervailing some defect.

But there is a great and unknown deceit arising fro
the ambiguity of the phrase, *Sincere Endeavours*. I
deed there is a vast indistinctness and unfixedness
most, or at least very many of the terms used to expre
things pertaining to moral and spiritual matters. When
arise innumerable mistakes, strong prejudices, inextric
ble confusion, and endless controversy.

The word *sincere* is most commonly used to signi
something that is good: men are habituated to unde
stand by it the same as *honest* and *upright*; which tern
excite an idea of something good in the strictest an
highest sense; good in the sight of Him, who sees n
only the outward appearance, but the heart. And ther
fore, men think that if a person be *sincere*, he will ce
tainly be accepted. If it be said that any one is sin
cere in his endeavours, this suggests to men's minds
much, as that his heart and will is good, that there is n
defect of duty, as to virtuous inclination; he *honestl*
and *uprightly* desires and endeavours to do as he is re
quired; and this leads them to suppose that it would

ry hard and unreasonable to punish him, only because is unsuccesful in his endeavours, the thing endeavour- being beyond his power.—Whereas it ought to be served, that the word *sincere* has these different sig- fications.

1. Sincerity, as the word is sometimes used, signifi- no more than *reality of Will and Endeavour*, with spect to any thing that is professed or pretended ; thout any consideration of the nature of the principle aim, whence this real Will and true Endeavour arises. a man has some real desire to obtain a thing either rect or indirect, or does really endeavour after a thing, is said sincerely to desire or endeavour it ; without y consideration of the goodness or virtuousness of the inciple he acts from, or any excellency or worthiness the end he acts for. Thus a man, who is kind to his ighbour's wife, who is sick and languishing, and very lpful in her case, makes a shew of desiring and endeav- ring her restoration to health and vigour; and not ly makes such a shew, but there is a reality in his etence, he does heartily and earnestly desire to have r health restored, and uses his true and utmost en- avours for it ; he is said sincerely to desire and en- avour it, because he does so truly or really ; though rhaps the principle he acts from, is no other than a le and scandalous passion; having lived in adultery th her, he earnestly desires to have her health and vi- ur restored, that he may return to his criminal plea- res with her. Or,

2. By *sincerity* is meant, not merely a *reality* of Will d Endeavour of some sort or other, and from some con- leration or other, but a *virtuous sincerity*. That is, at in the performance of those particular acts that e the matter of virtue or duty, there be not only the atter, but the form and essence of virtue consisting in e aim that governs the act, and the principle exer- ed in it. There is not only the reality of the act, that as it were the *body* of the duty ; but also the *soul*, hich should properly belong to such a body. In this

sense, a man is said to be sincere, when he acts with *pure intention*; not from sinister views or bye ends he not only in reality desires and seeks the thing to done or qualification to be obtained, for some end or other but he wills the thing directly and properly, as neith forced nor bribed; the virtue of the thing is proper the object of the will.

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

In the latter kind of sincerity, only, is there any thin truly valuable or acceptable in the sight of God. An this is the thing, which in Scripture is called *sincerity uprightness*, *integrity*, *truth in the inward parts*, and *being of a perfect heart*. And if there be such a sin cerity, and such a degree of it as there ought to be, an there be any thing further that the man is not able t perform, or which does not prove to be connected wit his sincere desires and endeavours, the man is wholl excused and acquitted in the sight of God; his wi shall surely be accepted for his deed; and such a sincer will and endeavour is all that in strictness is required c him by any command of God. But as to the other kin of sincerity of desires and endeavours, it having no vir tue in it (as was observed before) can be of no ava before God, in any case, to recommend, satisfy, or ex cuse, and has no positive moral weight or influenc whatsoever.

Corol. 1. Hence it may be inferred, that nothing i the reason and nature of things appears from the con sideration of any moral weight of that former kind c sincerity, which has been spoken of, at all obliging us t believe or leading us to suppose that God has made an

positive promises of salvation, or grace, or any saving assistance, or any spiritual benefit whatsoever, to any desires, prayers, endeavours, striving, or obedience of those who hitherto have no true virtue or holiness in their hearts; though we should suppose all the sincerity, and the utmost degree of endeavour that is possible to be in a person without holiness.

Some object against God's requiring, as the condition of salvation, those holy exercises which are the result of a supernatural renovation; such as a supreme respect to Christ, love to God, loving holiness for its own sake, &c. that these inward dispositions and exercises are above men's power, as they are by nature; and therefore that we may conclude, that when men are brought to be sincere in their endeavours, and do as well as they can, they are accepted; and that this must be all that God requires in order to men's being received as the objects of his favour, and must be what God has appointed as the condition of salvation: concerning which, I would observe, that in such a manner of speaking of *men's being accepted, because they are sincere, and do as well as they can*, there is evidently a supposition of some virtue, some degree of that which is truly good; though it does not go so far as were to be wished. For if men do *what they can*, unless their so doing be from some good principle, disposition, or exercise of heart, some virtuous inclination or act of the will; their so doing what they can, is in some respects, not a whit better than if they did nothing at all. In such a case, there is no more positive moral goodness in a man's doing what he can, than in a wind-mill's doing what it can; because the action does not more proceed from virtue; and there is nothing in such sincerity of endeavour or doing what he can, that should render it any more a proper or fit recommendation to positive favour and acceptance, or the condition of any reward or actual benefit, than doing nothing; for both the one and the other are alike nothing, as to any true moral weight or value.

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

SECTION VI.

Liberty of Indifference, not only not necessa to Virtue, but utterly inconsistent with i and all, either virtuous or Vicious Habits Inclinations, inconsistent with Arminian N tions of Liberty and Moral Agency.

TO suppose such a freedom of will as *Arminians* t of, to be requisite to virtue and vice, is many w contrary to common sense.

If indifference belongs to liberty of will, as *Armini* suppose, and it be essential to a virtuous action, that be performed in a state of liberty, as they also suppo it will follow, that it is essential to a virtuous action, t it be performed in a state of indifference, then doubt it must be performed in the time of indifference. A so it will follow, that in order to the virtuousness of act, the heart must be indifferent in the time of the formance of that act, and the more indifferent and the heart is with relation to the act which is perform so much the better; because the act is performed w so much the greater liberty. But is this agreeable the light of nature? Is it agreeable to the not which mankind in all ages have of virtue, that it lie

hat which is contrary to indifference, even in the *Tendency* and *Inclination* of the heart to virtuous action; nd that the stronger the inclination, and so the further om indifference, the more virtuous the heart, and so uch the more praise-worthy the act which proceeds om it?

If we should suppose (contrary to what has been bepre demonstrated) that there may be an act of will in a tate of indifference; for instance, this act, *viz.* The ill's determining to put itself out of a state of indiffernce, and give itself a preponderance one way, then it ould follow, on Arminian principles, that this act or dermination of the will is that alone wherein virtue conists, because this only is performed, while the mind remains in a state of indifference, and so in a state of liberty: for when once the mind is put out of its equilirium, it is no longer in such a state; and therefore all he acts which follow afterwards, proceeding from bias, an have the nature neither of virtue nor vice. Or if the hing which the will can do, while yet in a state of indifference, and so of liberty, be only to suspend acting, nd determine to take the matter into consideration, hen this determination is that alonewherein virtue conists, and not proceeding to action after the scale is turned by consideration. So that it will follow, from these principles, all that is done after the mind, by any means, s once out of its equilibrium and already possessed by an nclination, and arising from that inclination, has nothing f the nature of virtue or vice, and is worthy of neither blame nor praise. But how plainly contrary is this to he universal sense of mankind, and to the notion they have of sincerely virtuous actions? Which is, that they re actions which proceed from a heart *well disposed* and *inclined;* and the *stronger,* and the more *fixed* and *determined* the good disposition of the heart, the greater he sincerity of virtue, and so the more of the truth and reality of it. But if there be any acts which are done in a state of equilibrium, or spring immediately from perfect indifference and coolness of heart, they cannot arise

from any good principle or disposition in the heart; and consequently, according to common sense, have no sincere goodness in them, having no virtue of heart in them. To have a virtuous heart, is to have a heart that favours virtue, and is friendly to it, and not one perfectly cold and indifferent about it.

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

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

might be mentioned, the being indifferent for a moment would be highly vicious and vile.

It may be further observed, that to suppose this liberty of indifference is essential to virtue and vice, destroys the great difference of degrees of the guilt of different crimes, and takes away the heinousness of the most flagitious, horrid iniquities; such as adultery, bestiality, murder, perjury, blasphemy, &c.; for, according to these principles, there is no harm at all in having the mind in a state of perfect indifference with respect to these crimes; nay, it is absolutely necessary in order to any virtue in avoiding them, or vice in doing them.—But for the mind to be in a state of indifference with respect to them, is to be next door to doing them; it is then infinitely near to choosing, and so committing the fact; for equilibrium is the next step to a degree of preponderation; and one, even the least degree of preponderation (all things considered) is choice; and not only so, but for the will to be in a state of perfect equilibrium, with respect to such crime, is for the mind to be in such a state as to be full as likely to choose them as to refuse them, to do them as to omit them.—And if our minds must be in such a state, wherein it is as near to choosing as refusing, and wherein it must of necessity, according to the nature of things, be as likely to commit them, as to refrain from them; where is the exceeding heinousness of choosing and committing them? If there be no harm in often being in such a state wherein the probability of doing and forbearing are exactly equal, there being an equilibrium, and no more tendency to one than the other; then, according to the nature and laws of such a contingence, it may be expected, as an *inevitable* consequence of such a disposition of things, that we should choose them as often as reject them: that it should generally so fall out is necessary, as equality in the effect is the natural consequence of the equal tendency of the cause, or of the antecedent state of things,

from which the effect arises. Why then should we b so exceedingly to blame if it does so fall out?

It is many ways apparent, that the *Arminian's* schem of liberty is utterly inconsistent with the being of an such things as either virtuous or vicious habits or dispo sitions. If Liberty of *Indifference* be essential to mor agency, then there can be no virtue in any habitual in clinations of the heart; which are contrary to indiffe ence, and imply in their nature the very destruction an exclusion of it. They suppose nothing can be virtuou in which no liberty is exercised; but how absurd is it t talk of exercising indifference under bias and prepo deration!

If *self-determining power* in the will be necessary t moral agency, praise, blame, &c. then nothing done b the will can be any further praise or blame-worthy, tha so far as the will is moved, swayed, and determined b itself, and the scales turned by the sovereign power th will has over itself. And therefore the will must no be put out of its balance already, the preponderatio must not be determined and effected before-hand; an so the self-determining act anticipated. Thus it ap pears another way, that habitual bias is inconsistent wit that liberty which *Arminians* suppose to be necessar to virtue or vice; and so it follows, that habitual bia itself cannot be either virtuous or vicious.

The same thing follows from their doctrine concern ing the Inconsistence of *necessity* with liberty, praise dispraise, &c. None will deny that bias and inclina tion may be so strong as to be invincible, and leave n possibility of the will's determining contrary to it; an so be attended with necessity. This Dr *Whitby* allow concerning the will of God, angels, and glorified saints with respect to good; and the will of devils, with re spect to evil. Therefore, if necessity be inconsisten with liberty; then, when fixed inclination is to such degree of strength, it utterly excludes all virtue, vice praise, or blame. And if so, then the nearer habits ar to this strength, the more do they impede liberty, an

o diminish praise and blame. If very strong habits estroy liberty, the lesser ones proportionably hinder it, cording to their degree of strength. And therefore will follow, that then is the act most virtuous or vicious, hen performed without any inclination or habitual bias all; because it is then performed with most liberty.

Every prepossessing fixed bias on the mind brings a egree of moral inability for the contrary; because so far s the mind is biassed and prepossessed, so much *hindrance* is there of the contrary. And therefore if moral ability be consistent with moral agency, or the nature f virtue and vice, then, so far as there is any such thing s evil disposition of heart or habitual depravity of inclination; whether covetousness, pride, malice, cruelty, or hatever else, so much the more excusable persons are, much the less have their evil acts of this kind the nature of vice. And on the contrary, whatever excellent spositions and inclinations they have, so much are they e less virtuous.

It is evident that no habitual disposition of heart, hether it be to a greater or less degree, can be in any deree virtuous or vicious, or the actions which proceed om them at all praise or blame-worthy. Because, ough we should suppose the habit not to be of such rength as wholly to take away all moral ability and self-termining power; or hinder but that, although the t be partly from bias, yet it may be in part from self-termination; yet in this case, all that is from antecent bias must be set aside, as of no consideration; and estimating the degree of virtue or vice, no more must considered than what arises from self-determining wer, without any influence of that bias, because liberty exercised in no more: so that all that is the exercise habitual inclination is thrown away, as not belonging the morality of the action, by which it appears, that exercise of these habits, let them be stronger or weak, can ever have any thing of the nature of either virue or vice.

Here, if any one should say, that notwithstanding a these things, there may be the nature of virtue and vic in the habits of the mind; because these habits may b the effects of those acts, wherein the mind exercised l berty; that however the forementioned reasons will prov that no habits, which are natural, or that are born or cre ated with us can be either virtuous or vicious; yet the will not prove this of habits, which have been acquire and established by repeated free acts.

To such an objector I would say, that this evasio will not at all help the matter. For if freedom of will b essential to the very *nature* of virtue and vice, then ther is no virtue or vice, but only in that very thing wherei this liberty is exercised. If a man, in one or mor things that he does, exercises liberty, and then by thos acts is brought into such circumstances that his libert ceases, and there follows a long series of acts or event that come to pass necessarily; those consequent acts ar not virtuous or vicious, rewardable or punishable; bu only the free acts that established this necessity; for i them alone was the man free. The following effect that are necessary, have no more of the nature of virtu or vice, than health or sickness of body have properl the nature of virtue or vice, being the effects of a cours of free acts of temperance or intemperance; or than th good qualities of a clock are of the nature of virtue which are the effects of free acts of the artificer; or th goodness and sweetness of the fruits of a garden are mo ral virtues, being the effects of the free and faithful act of the gardener. If liberty be absolutely requisite t the morality of actions, and necessity wholly inconsisten with it, as *Arminians* greatly insist, then no *necessary effects* whatsoever, let the cause be never so good or bad can be virtuous or vicious; but the virtue or vice mus be only in the *free cause.* Agreeable to this, Dr *Whit by* supposes, the necessity that attends the good an evil habits of the saints in Heaven, and damned in hell which are the consequence of their free acts in their stat of probation, are not rewardable or punishable.

On the whole it appears, that if the notions of *Armi-ians*, concerning liberty and moral agency, be true, it ill follow, that there is no virtue in any such habits or ualities as humility, meekness, patience, mercy, grati-ude, generosity, heavenly-mindedness; nothing at all raise-worthy in loving Christ above father and mother, ife and children, or our own lives; or in delight, in oliness, hungering, and thirsting after righteousness, ve to enemies, universal benevolence to mankind; and, the other hand, there is nothing at all vicious or wor-y of dispraise, in the most sordid, beastly, malignant, vilish dispositions; in being ungrateful, profane, ha-tually hating God, and things sacred and holy; or in ing most treacherous, envious, and cruel towards men. or all these things are *dispositions* and *inclinations* of e heart. And, in short, there is no such thing as any rtuous or vicious *quality of mind;* no such thing as herent virtue and holiness, or vice and sin; and the onger those habits and dispositions are, which used to called virtuous and vicious, the further they are from ing so indeed; the more violent men's lusts are, the ore fixed their pride, envy, ingratitude, and malicious-ss, still the further are they from being blame-worthy. there be a man that, by his own repeated acts or by y other means, is come to be of the most hellish dispo-ion, desperately inclined to treat his neighbours with uriousness, contempt, and malignity, the further they ould be from any disposition to be angry with him, or the least to blame him. So, on the other hand, if ere be a person who is of a most excellent spirit, strong-inclining him to the most amiable actions, admirably ek, benevolent, &c. so much is he further from any ng rewardable or commendable. On which principles e man Jesus Christ was very far from being praise-rthy for those acts of holiness and kindness which he formed, these prospensities being strong in his heart. d above all, the infinitely holy and gracious God is nitely remote from any thing commendable, his good linations being infinitely strong, and he, therefore, at

the utmost possible distance from being at liberty. An
in all cases, the stronger the inclinations of any are
virtue, and the more they love it, the less virtuous the
are; and the more they love wickedness, the less viciou
—Whether these things are agreeable to Scripture, l
every Christian, and every man who has read the Bibl
judge; and whether they are agreeable to common sens
let every one judge that has human understanding in e
ercise.

If we pursue these principles, we shall find that vi
tue and vice are wholly excluded out of the world; a
that there never was, nor never can be, any such thi
as one or the other, either in God, angels, or men. N
propensity, disposition, or habit, can be virtuous or
cious, as has been shewn; because they, so far as th
take place, destroy the freedom of the will, the found
tion of all moral agency, and exclude all capacity of e
ther virtue or vice.—And if habits and dispositions the
selves be not virtuous nor vicious, neither can the ex
cise of these dispositions be so; for the exercise of *h*
is not the exercise of *free self-determining will*, and
there is no exercise of liberty in it. Consequently,
man is virtuous or vicious, either in being well or ill-d
posed, nor in acting from a good or bad disposition.
And whether this bias or disposition be habitual or n
if it exists but a moment before the act of will, which
the effect of it, it alters not the case, as to the necess
of the effect; or if there be no previous disposition
all, either habitual or occasional, that determines the
then it is not choice that determines it. It is therefo
a contingence that happens to the man, arising from
thing in him; and is necessary, as to any inclination
choice of his; and, therefore, cannot make him eith
the better or worse, any more than a tree is better th
other trees, because it oftener happens to be sit upon
a swan or nightingale; or a rock more vicious than ot
rocks, because rattle-snakes have happened oftener
crawl over it. So that there is no virtue nor vice in g

r bad dispositions, either fixed or transient; nor any rtue or vice in acting from any good or bad previous clination; nor yet any virtue or vice in acting wholly ithout any previous inclination. Where then shall we nd room for virtue or vice?

SECTION VII.

rminian Notions of Moral Agency inconsistent with all Influence of Motive and Inducement, in either Virtuous or Vicious Actions.

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

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

Or if any think it most proper to say, that motives o alter the inclination, and give a new bias to the mind, t will not alter the case, as to the present argument.— For if motives operate by giving the mind an inclination, hen they operate by destroying the mind's indifference, nd laying it under a bias. But to do this, is to destroy he *Arminian* freedom; it is not to leave the will to its wn self-determination, but to bring it into subjection o the power of something extrinsic, which operates upon

it, sways and determines it previous to its own determi
ation ; so that what is done from motive, cannot be eith
virtuous or vicious. And besides, if the acts of the wi
are excited by motives, those motives are the *causes*
those acts of the will ; which makes the acts of the wi
necessary, as effects necessarily follow the efficiency
the cause. And if the influence and power of the m
tive causes the volition, then the influence of the moti
determines volition, and volition does not determine itsel
and so is not free, in the sense of *Arminians* (as has bee
largely shewn already) and consequently can be neith
virtuous nor vicious.

The supposition, which has already been taken notic
of as an insufficient evasion in other cases, would be, i
like manner, impertinently alledged in this case ; namel
the supposition that liberty consists in a power of su
pending action for the present, in order to deliberatio
If it should be said, Though it be true, that the will i
under a necessity of finally following the strongest mo
tive ; yet it may, for the present, forbear to act upo
the motive presented, till there has been opportunit
thoroughly to consider it, and compare its real weigh
with the merit of other motives ; I answer as follows :

Here again it must be remembered, that if determin
ing thus to suspend and consider, be that act of the wil
wherein alone liberty is exercised, then in this all virtu
and vice must consist : and the acts that follow this co
sideration, and are the effects of it being necessary, ar
no more virtuous or vicious than some good or bad event
which happen when they are fast asleep, and are th
consequences of what they did when they were awake
Therefore, I would here observe two things :—

I. To suppose that all virtue and vice in every case
consists in determining, whether to take time for co
sideration or not, is not agreeable to common sens
For, according to such a supposition, the most horri
crimes, adultery, murder, sodomy, blasphemy, &c. d
not at all consist in the horrid nature of the things them

elves, but only in the neglect of thorough consideration before they were perpetrated, which brings their viciousness to a small matter, and makes all crimes equal. If it be said, that neglect of consideration, when such heinous evils are proposed to choice, is worse than in other cases,—I answer, this is inconsistent, as it supposes the very thing to be, which, at the same time, is supposed not to be; it supposes all moral evil, all viciousness, and heinousness, does not consist merely in the want of consideration. It supposes some crimes *in themselves*, in their *own nature*, to be more heinous than others, antecedent to consideration or inconsideration, which lays the person under a previous obligation to consider in some cases more than others.

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

One thing more I would observe, concerning the inconsistence of *Arminian* notions of moral agency with the influence of motives.—I suppose none will deny that it is possible for motives to be set before the mind so powerful, and exhibited in so strong a light, and under such advantageous circumstances, as to be invincible; and such as the mind cannot but yield to. In this case, *Arminians* will doubtless say, liberty is destroyed. And if so, then if motives are exhibited with half so much power, they hinder liberty in proportion to their strength, and go half way towards destroying it. If a thousand degrees of motives abolish all liberty, then five hundred take it half away. If one degree of the influence of motive does not at all infringe or diminish liberty, then no more do two degrees; for nothing doubled, is still nothing. And if two degrees do not diminish the will's liberty, no more do four, eight, sixteen, or six thousand. For nothing, multiplied never so much comes to but no-

thing. If there be nothing in the nature of motive or mo
ral suasion, that is at all opposite to liberty, then th
greatest degree of it cannot hurt liberty; but if there b
anything in the nature of the thing, that is against liberty
then the least degree of it hurts it in some degree; an
consequently hurts and diminishes virtue. If invincibl
motives, to that action which is good, take away all th
freedom of the act, and so all the virtue of it, then th
more forceable the motives are, so much the worse, s
much the less virtue; and the weaker the motives are
the better for the cause of virtue; and none is best o
all.

Now let it be considered, whether these things ar
agreeable to common sense. If it should be allowed tha
there are some instances wherein the soul chooses with
out any motive, what virtue can there be in such a choice
I am sure there is no prudence nor wisdom in it. Suc
a choice is made for no good end; for it is for no end a
all. If it were for any end, the view of the end woul
be the motive exciting to the act; and if the act be fo
no good end, and so from no good aim, then ther
is no good intention in it; and, therefore, according t
all our natural notions of virtue, no more virtue i
it than in the motion of the smoke, which is dr
ven too and fro by the wind, without any aim or end i
the thing moved, and which knows not whither, nor why
and wherefore, it is moved.

Corol. 1. By these things it appears that the argu
ment against the *Calvinists*, taken from the use of cour
sels, exhortations, invitations, expostulations, &c. s
much insisted on by *Arminians*, is truly against them
selves. For these things can operate no other way t
any good effect, than as in them is exhibited motive an
inducement, tending to excite and determine the acts o
the will. But it follows, on their principles, that th
acts of the will, excited by such causes, cannot be vi
tuous; because so far as they are from these, they ar
not from the will's self-determining power. Hence
will follow, that it is not worth the while to offer an

rguments to persuade men to any virtuous volition or oluntary action: It is in vain to set before them the isdom and amiableness of ways of virtue, or the odious- ess and folly of ways of vice. This notion of liberty nd moral agency frustrates all endeavours to draw men o virtue by instruction or persuasion, precept or ex- mple; for though these things may induce men to what s *materially* virtuous, yet at the same time they take way the *form* of virtue, because they destroy liberty; s they, by their own power, put the will out of its quilibrium, determine and turn the scale, and take the ork of self-determining power out of its hands. And he clearer the instructions that are given, the more owerful the arguments that are used; and the more oving the persuasions or examples, the more likely ney are to frustrate their own design; because they ave so much the greater tendency to put the will out f its balance, to hinder its freedom of self-determination; nd so to exclude the very form of virtue, and the es- ence of whatsoever is praise-worthy.

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

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

Thus that horrid blasphemous consequence will certainly follow from the *Arminian* doctrine, which they charge on others; namely, that God acts an inconsistent part in using so many counsels, warnings, invitations, intreaties, &c. with sinners, to induce them to forsake sin and turn to the ways of virtue; and that all are insincere and fallacious. It will follow, from their doctrine, that God does those things when he knows at the same time that they have no manner of tendency to promote the effect he seems to aim at; yea, knows that if they have any influence, this very influence will be inconsistent with such an effect, and will prevent it. But what an imputation of insincerity would this fix on Him, who is infinitely holy and true!—So that their's is the doctrine which, if pursued in its consequences, does horribly reflect on the most High, and fix on him the charge of hypocrisy; and not the doctrine of the *Calvinist*, according to their frequent and vehement exclamations and invectives.

Corol. 2. From what has been observed in this section, it again appears, that *Arminian* principles and notions, when fairly examined and pursued in their demonstrable consequences, do evidently shut all virtue out

e world, and make it impossible that there should ever
any such thing in any case; or that any such thing
ould ever be conceived of. For, by these principles,
e very notion of virtue or vice implies absurdity and
ntradiction. For it is absurd in itself, and contrary to
mmon sense, to suppose a virtuous act of mind without
y good intention or aim; and, by their principles, it
absurd to suppose a virtuous act with a good intention
aim; for to act for an end is to act from a motive.—
that if we rely on these principles, there can be no
rtuous act with a good design and end; and it is self-
ident, there can be none without; consequently there
n be no virtuous act at all.

Corol. 3. It is manifest that *Arminian* notions of
oral agency, and *the being* of a faculty of will, cannot
nsist together; and that if there be any such thing as
ther a virtuous or vicious act, it cannot be an act of the
ll; no will can be at all concerned in it. For that act
hich is performed without inclination, without motive,
ithout end, must be performed without any concern of
e will. To suppose an act of the will without these,
plies a contradiction. If the soul in its act has no mo-
ve or end, then, in that act (as was observed before)
seeks nothing, goes after nothing, exerts no inclina-
on to any thing; and this implies that in that act it
sires nothing, and chooses nothing; so that there is
act of choice in the case; and that is as much as to
y, there is no act of will in the case;—which very ef-
ctually shuts all vicious and virtuous act out of the
iverse; inasmuch as, according to this, there can be
vicious or virtuous act wherein the will is concerned;
d according to the plainest dictates of reason, and the
ht of nature, and also the principles of *Arminians*
emselves, there can be no virtuous or vicious act where-
the will is not concerned. And therefore there is no
om for any virtuous or vicious acts at all.

Corol. 4. If none of the moral actions of intelligent
ings are influenced by either previous inclination or

motive, another strange thing will follow; and this is that God not only cannot fore-know any of the future moral actions of his creatures, but he can make no conjecture, can give no probable guess concerning them.—For all conjecture, in things of this nature, must depend on some discerning or apprehension of these two things, *previous disposition* and *motive*, which, as has been observed, *Arminian* notions of moral agency, in their real consequence, altogether exclude.

PART IV.

Therein the chief Grounds of the Reasonings of ARMINIANS, in Support and Defence of the foremention'd Notions of LIBERTY, MORAL AGENCY, &c. and against the opposite Doctrine, are considered.

SECTION I.

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

ONE main foundation of the reasons which are brought to establish the foremention'd notions of liberty, virtue, vice, &c. is a supposition that the virtuousness of the dispositions or acts of the will, consists not in the nature of these dispositions or acts, but wholly in the origin or cause of them; so that if the disposition of the mind or acts of the will be never so good, yet if the cause of the disposition or act be not our virtue, there is nothing virtuous or praise-worthy in it; and, on the contrary, if the will, in its inclination or acts, be never so bad, yet, unless it arises from something that is our vice or fault, there is nothing vicious or blame-worthy in it. Hence their grand objection and pretended demonstration or self-evidence, against any virtue and commendableness or vice and blame-worthiness, of those habits or acts of the will, which are not from some virtuous or vicious determination of the will itself.

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

If the essence of virtuousness or commendableness and of viciousness or fault, does not lie in the nature o the dispositions or acts of mind, which are said to b our virtue or our fault, but in their cause, then it is cer tain it lies no where at all. Thus, for instance, if th vice of a *vicious* act of the will, lies not in the nature o the act, but the cause; so that its being of a bad natur will not make it at all our fault, unless it arises from som faulty determination of our's, as its cause or somethin in us that is our fault; then, for the same reason neither can the viciousness of that cause lie in the natur of the thing itself, but in *its* cause; that evil determina tion of our's is not our fault, merely because it is of bad nature, unless it arises from some cause in us that i our fault. And when we are come to this higher cause still the reason of the thing holds good; though thi cause be of a bad nature, yet we are not at all to blam on that account, unless it arises from something fault in us. Nor yet can blame-worthiness lie in the natur of *this cause*, but in the cause of *that*. And thus w must drive faultiness back from step to step, from lower cause to a higher, *in infinitum:* and that is thoroughly to banish it from the world, and to allow i no possibility of existence any where in the universalit of things. On these principles, vice or moral evil cannc consist in any thing that is in *effect;* because *fault* doe not consist in the nature of things, but in their cause as well as because effects are necessary, being unavoid ably connected with their cause; therefore the caus only is to blame. And so it follows, that faultiness ca lie *only in that cause*, which is a *cause only*, and no ef fect of any thing. Nor yet can it lie in this; for the

must lie in the nature of the thing itself; not in its ing from any determination our's, nor any thing lty in us which is the cause, nor indeed from any cause all; for, by the supposition, it is no effect, and *has no use.* And thus he that will maintain it is not the na- re of habits or acts of will that makes them virtuous or lty, but the cause, must immediately run himself out his own assertion: and in maintaining it, will insensi- y contradict and deny it.

This is certain, that if effects are vicious and faulty, t from their nature or from any thing inherent in em, but because they are from a bad cause, it must be account of the *badness* of the cause; a bad effect in e will must be bad, because the cause is *bad*, or *of an il nature*, or *has badness* as a quality inherent in it: and *good* effect in the will must be *good*, by reason of the odness of the cause, or its being *of a good kind and ture.* And if this be what is meant, the very suppo- tion of fault and praise, lying not in the nature of the ing, but the cause contradicts itself, and does at least solve the essence of virtue and vice into the nature of ings, and supposes it originally to consist in that.—And a caviller has a mind to run from the absurdity, by ying, "No, the fault of the thing, which is the cause, es not in this, that the cause itself is *of an evil nature*, it that the cause is evil in that sense, that it is from nother bad cause." Still the absurdity will follow him; r, if so, then the cause before charged is at once ac- uitted, and all the blame must be laid to the higher cause nd must consist in that's being *evil* or *of an evil nature*, o now we are come again to lay the blame of the thing ame-worthy to the nature of the thing, and not to the use. And if any is so foolish as to go higher still, and scend from step to step, till he is come to that which is he first cause concerned in the whole affair, and will say, ll the blame lies in that; then, at last, he must be for- ed to own that the faultiness of the thing which he sup- oses alone blame-worthy, lies wholly *in the nature* of he thing, and not in the original or cause of it; for the

supposition is, that it has no original, it is determine by no act of our's, is caused by nothing faulty in being absolutely *without any cause.* And so the race at an end, but the evader is taken in his flight.

It is agreeable to the natural notions of mankin that moral evil, with its desert of dislike and abhorren and all its other ill-deservings, consists in a certain *formity* in the *nature* of certain dispositions of the he and acts of the will; and not in the deformity of *so thing else* diverse from the very thing itself, which serves abhorrence, supposed to be the cause of Which would be absurd, because that would be to su pose a thing that is innocent and not evil, is truly e and faulty, because another thing is evil. It implies contradiction; for it would be to suppose the very thi which is morally evil and blame-worthy, is innocent a not blame-worthy; but that something else, which is cause, is only to blame. To say that vice does not co sist in the thing which is vicious, but in its cause, is t same as to say, that vice does not consist in vice, but that which produces it.

It is true, a cause may be to blame for being t cause of vice: it may be wickedness in the cause, t it produces wickedness. But it would imply a cont diction to suppose that these two are the same in vidual wickedness. The wicked act of the cause in pr ducing wickedness, is one wickedness; and the wicke ness produced, if there be any produced, is another. And, therefore the wickedness of the latter does not in the former, but is distinct from it; and the wicke ness of both lies in the evil nature of the things whi are wicked.

The thing which makes sin hateful, is that by whi it deserves punishment; which is but the expression hatred: and that which renders virtue lovely, is the sa with that, on the account of which it is fit to recei praise and reward; which are but the expressions esteem and love. But that which makes vice hatef is its hateful nature; and that which renders virtue lov

is its amiable nature. It is a certain beauty or defor-
ty that are *inherent* in that good or evil will, which is
soul of virtue and vice (and not in the *occasion* of
which is their worthiness of esteem or disesteem,
ise or dispraise, according to the common sense of
nkind. If the cause or occasion of the rise of an
eful disposition or act of will be also hateful, suppose
ther antecedent evil will, that is entirely another sin,
t deserves punishment by itself, under a distinct con-
eration. There is worthiness of dispraise in the na-
e of an evil volition, and not wholly in some foregoing
which is its cause; otherwise the evil volition, which
he effect, is no moral evil, any more than sickness or
he other natural calamity, which arises from a cause
rally evil.

Thus, for instance, ingratitude, is hateful and worthy
dispraise, according to common sense; not because
ething as bad or worse than ingratitude, was the
se that produced it; but because it is hateful in it-
, by its own inherent deformity. So the love of vir-
is amiable and worthy of praise, not merely because
ething else went before this love of virtue in our
ds, which caused it to take place there (for instance
own choice) we choose to love virtue, and, by some
hod or other, wrought ourselves into the love of it;
because of the amiableness and condescendency of
a disposition and inclination of heart. If that was
case, that we did choice to love virtue, and so pro-
d that love in ourselves, this choice itself could be
otherwise amiable or praise-worthy, than as love to
ue, or some other amiable inclination, was exercised
implied in it. If that choice was amiable at all,
ust be so on account of some amiable quality in the
re of the choice. If we choose to love virtue, not
ve to virtue, or any thing that was good, and exer-
d no sort of good disposition in the choice, the choice
f was not virtuous, nor worthy of any praise, accord-
to common sense, because the choice was not of a
d nature.

It may not be improper here to take notice of so thing said by an author that has lately made a mig noise in America. " A necessary holiness (says he is no holiness.——*Adam* could not be originally crea in righteousness and true holiness, because he m *choose* to be righteous, *before* he could be righteous And therefore he must exist, he must be created, y he must exercise thought and reflection, before he righteous." There is much more to the same effec that place, and also in p. 437, 438, 439, 440. If th things are so, it will certainly follow, that the f choosing to be righteous is no righteous choice ; th is no righteousness or holiness in it; because no cho ing to be righteous goes before it. For he plainly spe of *choosing to be righteous*, as what *must go before rig cousness ;* and that which follows the choice, being effect of true choice, can not be righteousness or holin for an effect is a thing necessary, and cannot prevent influence or efficacy of its cause ; and therefore is u voidably dependant upon the cause ; and he says, *a cessary holiness is no holiness.* So that neither ca choice of righteousness be righteousness or holiness, can any thing that is consequent on that choice, and effect of it be righteousness or holiness; nor can a thing that is without choice, be righteousness or liness. So that by his scheme, all righteousness holiness is at once shut out of the world, and door left open, by which it can ever possibly enter i the world.

I suppose the way that men came to entertain t absurd inconsistent notion with respect to *internal in nations and volitions* themselves (or notions that im it) *viz.* that the essence of their moral good or evil not in their nature, but their cause : was, that it is deed a very plain dictate of common sense, that it is with respect to all *outward actions* and sensible moti of the body ; that the moral good or evil of them d

* Scripture Doctrine of *Original Sin,* p. 180. third edition.

ot lie at all in the motions themselves; which, taken by hemselves, are nothing of a moral nature; and the esence of all the moral good or evil that concerns them, es in those internal dispositions and volitions which are he cause of them. Now, being always used to determine this without hesitation or dispute, concerning *external actions*, which are the things, that in the common se of language are signified by such phrases, as men's *ctions* or their *doings*; hence, when they came to peak of volitions and *external exercises*, and their inclinations, under the same denominations of their *actions*, what they do, they unwarily determined the case ust also be the same with these, as with *external actions*; not considering the vast difference in the nature f the case.

If any shall still object and say, Why is it not necesry that the cause should be considered, in order to dermine whether any thing be worthy of blame or raise? Is it agreeable to reason and common sense, at a man is to be praised or blamed for that which he not the cause or author of, and has no hand in?

I answer, Such phrases as *being the cause*, *being the thor*, *having a hand*, and the like, are ambiguous.—hey are most vulgarly understood for being the designg voluntary cause, or cause by antecedent choice; d it is most certain, that men are not, in this sense, e causes or authors of the first act of their wills in any se; as certain as any thing is or ever can be; for thing can be more certain than that a thing is t before it is, nor a thing of the same kind before e first thing of that kind; and so no choice before e first choice.—As the phrase, *being the author*, y be understood, not of being the producer by an ecedent act of will: but as a person may be said to the author of the act of will itself, by his being the mediate agent, or the being that *is acting*, or *in exere* in that act; if the phrase of *being the author*, is

used to signify this, then doubtless common sense re quires men's being the authors of their own acts c will, in order to their being esteemed worthy of prais or dispraise, on account of them. And common sens teaches, that they must be the authors of *external action* in the former sense, namely, their being the causes c them by an act of will or choice, in order to their bein justly blamed or praised; but it teaches no such thin with respect to the acts of the will themselves.——Bu this may appear more manifest by the things which wi be observed in the following section.

SECTION II.

The Falseness and Inconsistence of that Meta physical Notion of Action and Agency, whic seems to be generally entertained by the De fenders of the Arminian Doctrine concernin Liberty, Moral Agency, &c.

ONE thing that is made very much a ground of a gument and supposed demonstration by *Arminian* in defence of the fore-mentioned principles, concernin moral agency, virtue, vice, &c. is their metaphysical n tion of agency and action. They say, unless the soul h a self-determining power, it has no power of action, if i volitions be not caused by itself, but are excited, and d termined by some extrinsic cause, they cannot be th soul's own *acts;* and that the soul cannot be *active*, b must be wholly *passive* in those effects which it is th subject of necessarily, and not from its own determin tion.

Mr *Chubb* lays the foundation of his scheme of libe ty, and of his arguments to support it, very much in th position, that man is an agent, and capable of actior which doubtless is true; but self-determination belon

his notion of action, and is the very essence of it. Whence he infers, that it is impossible for a man to act nd be acted upon, in the same thing, at the same time; nd that nothing, that is an action, can be the effect of e action of another; and he insists, that a necessary gent, or an agent that is necessarily determined to act, a plain contradiction.

But those are a precarious sort of demonstration, hich men build on the meaning that they arbitarily affix a word; especially when that meaning is abstruse, innsistent, and entirely diverse from the original sense the word in common speech.

That the meaning of the word *action*, as Mr *Chubb* nd many others use it, is utterly unintelligible and innsistent, is manifest, because it belongs to their notion an action, that is something wherein is no passion or ssiveness; that is, (according to their sense of passiveess) it is under the power, influence, or action of no use. And this implies, that action has no cause, and no effect; for to be an effect implies passiveness, or e being subject to the power and action of its cause. nd yet they hold, that the mind's action is the effect its own determination, yea, the mind's free and vontary determination; which is the same with free oice. So that action is the effect of something preding, even a preceding act of choice; and consequent, in this effect the mind is passive, subject to the wer and action of the preceding cause, which is the regoing choice, and therefore cannot be active. So at here we have this contradiction, that action is alys the effect of foregoing choice; and therefore cant be action; because it is passive to the power of that eceding causal choice; and the mind cannot be active d passive in the same thing, at the same time. Ain, they say, necessity is utterly inconsistent with acon, and a necessary action is a contradiction; and so eir notion of action implies contingence, and excludes l necessity. And therefore their notion of action imlies, that it has no necessary dependence or connection

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

et, at the same time, it is essential to their notion of the ct, that it is what the agent is the author of freely and oluntarily, and that is by previous choice and design.

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

So that an act, according to their metaphysical notion it, is something of which there is no idea; it is noing but a confusion of the mind, excited by words thout any distinct meaning, and is an absolute nonenty; and that in two respects: (1.) There is nothing in e world that ever was, is, or can be, to answer the ings which must belong to its description, according to at they suppose to be essential to it; and, (2.) There ither is, nor ever was, nor can be, any notion or idea answer the word, as they use and explain it. For if should suppose any such notion, it would many ways stroy itself. But it is impossible any idea or notion ould subsist in the mind, whose very nature and esnce, which constitutes it, destroys it.—If some learned ilosopher who had been abroad, in giving an account of curious observations he had made in his travels, should , "He had been in *Terra del Fuego;* and there he seen an animal, which he calls by a certain name, t begat and brought forth itself, and yet had a fire dam distinct from itself; that it had an appetite, and

was hungry before it had a being: that his master, wh led him, and governed him at his pleasure, was alway governed by him, and driven by him where he pleased that when he moved, he always took a step before th first step; that he went with his head first, and yet a ways went tail foremost; and this, though he had neithe head nor tail;" it would be no impudence at all, to te such a traveller, though a learned man, that he himse had no notion or idea of such an animal as he gave a account of, and never had, nor ever would have.

As the forementioned notion of action is very incor sistent, so it is wholly diverse from the original meanin of the word. The more usual signification of it, in vu gar speech, seems to be some *motion* or *exertion of powe* that is voluntary, or that is *the effect of the will;* and i used in the same sense as *doing;* and most commonly is used to signify *outward actions.* So *thinking* is ofte distinguished from *acting;* and *desiring* and *willing* from *doing.*

Besides, this more usual and proper signification o the word *action*, there are other ways in which the wor is used, that are less proper, which yet have place i common speech. Oftentimes it is used to signify som motion or alteration in inanimate things, with relation t some object and effect. So the spring of a watch is sai to *act* upon the chain and wheels; the sun beams, to a upon plants and trees: and the fire to act upon woo Sometimes the word is used to signify motions, alter tions, and exertions of power, which are seen in corpor things, *considered absolutely;* especially when these m tions seem to arise from some internal cause which is *hi den;* so that they have a greater resemblance of tho motions of our bodies, which are the effects of natur volition or invisible exertions of will. So the ferment tion of liquor, the operations of the loadstone, and of lectrical bodies, are called the *action* of these things. A sometimes, the word *action* is used to signify the exerci of thought or of will and inclination; so meditating, lo ing, hating, inclining, disinclining, choosing, and refu

g, may be sometimes called *acting*; though more rare- (unless it be by philosophers and metaphysicans) than any of the other senses.

But the word is never used in vulgar speech in that nse, which *Arminian* divines use it in, namely, for the lf-determinate exercise of the will, or an exertion of e soul that arises without any necessary connection ith any thing foregoing. If a man does something vo- ntarily, or as the effect of his choice, then, in the most roper sense, and as the word is most originally and mmonly used, he is said to *act*; but whether that choice volition be self-determined or no, whether it be con- ected with foregoing habitual bias, whether it be the rtain effect of the strongest motive or some intrinsic use, never comes into consideration in the meaning of e word.

If the word *action* is arbitarily used by some men therwise, to suit some scheme, of metaphysic or morality, o argument can reasonably be founded on such a use of is term, to prove any thing but their own pleasure. or divines and philosophers strenuously to urge such rguments, as though they were sufficient to support nd demonstrate a whole scheme of moral philosophy nd divinity, is certainly to erect a mighty edifice on e sand, or rather on a shadow. And though it may ow perhaps, through custom, have become natural for em to use the word in this sense (if that may be cal- d a sense or meaning, which is inconsistent with itself) et this does not prove that it is agreeable to the natur- notions men have of things, or that there can be any ing in the creation that should answer such a mean- g. And though they appeal to Experience, yet the uth is, that men are so far from experiencing any such ing, that it is impossible for them to have any con- eption of it.

If it should be objected, that *action* and *passion* are oubtless words of a contrary signification; but to sup- ose that the agent, in its action, is under the power

and influence of something intrinsic, is to confound action and passion, and make them the same thing.

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

to suppose, that there are acts of the soul by which a an voluntarily moves, and acts upon objects, and pro- ces effects, which yet themselves are effects of some- ing else, and wherein the soul itself is the object of mething acting upon, and influencing that, do not at confound action and passion. The words may never- eless be properly of opposite signification: there may as true and real a difference between acting and being used to act, though we should suppose the soul to be th in the same volition, as there is between living and ing quickened, or made to live. It is no more a con- diction to suppose, that action may be the effect of me other cause, besides the agent or being that acts, an to suppose, that life may be the effect of some other use, besides the liver, or the being that lives in whom e is caused to be.

The thing which has led men into this inconsistent no- n of action, when applied to volition, as though it were sential to this internal action, that the agent should self-determined in it, and that the will should be the use of it, was probably this; that according to the se of mankind, and the common use of language, it so, with respect to men's external actions; which are at originally, and according to the vulgar use and st proper sense of the word, are called *Actions*. Men these are self-directed, self-determined, and their ls are the cause of the motions of their bodies, and e external things that are done; so that unless men them voluntarily, and of choice, and the action be de- mined by their antecedent volition, it is no action or ng of theirs. Hence some metaphysicians have been unwarily, but exceeding absurdly, to suppose the ue concerning volition itself, that that also must be ermined by the will; which is to be determined by ecedent volition as the motion of the body is, not sidering the contradiction it implies.

But it is very evident, that in the metaphysical dis- ction between *action* and *passion* (though long since come common and the general vogue) due care has

not been taken to conform language to the nature
things, or to any distinct clear ideas. As it is in innu
erable other philosophical metaphysical terms, used
these disputes, which has occasioned inexpressible di
culty, contention, error, and confusion.

And thus probably it came to be thought, that nec
sity was inconsistent with action, as these terms are
plied to volition. First, these terms *Action* and *Nec*
sity are changed from their original meaning, as sig
fying external voluntary action and constraint (in whi
meaning they are evidently inconsistent) to signify qu
other things, viz. volition itself, and certainty of ex
tence. And when the change of signification is mad
care is not taken to make proper allowances and aba
ments for the difference of sense; but still the sa
things are unwarily attributed to *Action* and *Necessi*
in the new meaning of the words, which plainly belor
ed to them in their first sense; and, on this grour
maxims are established without any real foundation,
though they were the most certain truths, and the mo
evident dictates of reason.

But however strenuously it is maintained, that what
necessary cannot be properly called *action*, and that
necessary action is a contradiction, yet it is probal
there are few *Arminian* divines, who, if thoroughly trie
would stand to these principles. They will allow, th
God is, in the highest sense, an active Being, and t
highest Fountain of life and action; and they would n
probably deny that those that are called God's acts
righteousness, holiness, and faithfulness, are truly a
properly God's acts, and God is really a holy agent
them; and yet, I trust they will not deny that God n
cessarily acts justly and faithfully, and that it is impo
sible for Him to act unrighteous and unholy.

SECTION III.

he Reasons why some think it contrary to Common sense, to suppose those Things which are necessary to be worthy of either Praise or Blame.

T is abundantly affirmed and urged by *Arminian* writers, that it is contrary to *common sense*, and the ural notions and apprehensions of mankind, to sup- e otherwise than that necessity (making no distinc- n between natural and moral necessity) is inconsistent h virtue and vice, praise and blame, reward and pun- ment. And their arguments from hence have been atly triumphed in; and have been not a little per- xing to many who have been friendly to the truth, as arly revealed in the holy Scriptures; it has seemed them indeed difficult to reconcile *Calvinistic* doctrines h the notions men commonly have of justice and equi-

And the true reasons of it seem to be these that ow:—

I. It is indeed a very plain dictate of common sense, t natural necessity is wholly inconsistent with just ise or blame. If men do things which in themselves very good, fit to be brought to pass, and very happy cts, properly against their wills, and cannot help it, do them from a necessity that is without their wills ve no concern or connection, then it is a plain dic- e of common sense, that it is none of their virtue, nor moral good in them; and that they are not worthy be rewarded or praised; or at all esteemed, honour- or loved on that account. And, on the other hand, t if, from like necessity, they do those things which themselves are very unhappy and pernicious, and do m because they cannot help it; the necessity is such t it is all one whether they will them or no; and the son why they are done, is from necessity only, and

not from their wills; it is a very plain dictate of c
mon sense, that they are not at all to blame; ther
no vice, fault, or moral evil at all in the effect done;
are they, who are thus necessitated, in any wise wor
to be punished, hated, or in the least disrespected
that account.

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

It is also a plain dictate of common sense, that if
doing things in themselves good, or avoiding things
themselves evil, is not *absolutely impossible* with suc
natural impossibility, but very *difficult* with a natu
difficulty; that is, a difficulty prior to, and not at all c
sisting in, will and inclination itself, and which wo
remain the same, let the inclination be what it wi
then a person's neglect or omission is excused *in sc
measure*, though not wholly; his sin is less aggravat
than if the thing to be done were easy; and if, inste
of difficulty and hindrance, there be a contrary natu
propensity in the state of things, to the thing to be dc
or effect to be brought to pass, abstracted from any co
sideration of the inclination of the heart; though t
propensity be not so great as to mount to a natural n
cessity; yet being some approach to it, so that the e
ing the thing be very much from this natural tender
in the state of things, and but little from a good incli
tion; then it is a dictate of common sense, that there
so much the less virtue in what is done; and so it
less praise-worthy and rewardable. The reason is eas
viz. because such a natural propensity or tendency is
approach to natural necessity; and the greater the pr
pensity, still so much the nearer is the approach to n
cessity. And, therefore, as natural necessity takes aw
or shuts out all virtue, so this propensity approaches
an abolition of virtue; that is, it diminishes it. An
on the other hand, natural difficulty, in the state

ings, is an approach to natural impossibility; and as e latter, when it is complete and absolute, wholly kes away blame; so such difficulty takes away some ame, or diminishes blame; and makes the things done be less worthy of punishment.

II. Men, in their first use of such phrases as these, *ust*, *cannot*, *cannot help it*, *cannot avoid it*, *necessary*, *able*, *impossible*, *unavoidable*, *irresistible*, &c. use em to signify a necessity of constraint or restraint, a tural necessity or impossibility; or some necessity that e will has nothing to do in; which may be, whether en will or no; and which may be supposed to be just e same, let men's inclinations and desires be what ey will. Such kind of terms in their original use, I ppose, among all nations, are relative; carrying in eir signification (as was before observed) a reference respect to some contrary will, desire or endeavour, ich, it is supposed, is or may be in the case. All men d, and begin to find in early childhood, that there are numerable things that cannot be done, which they de- e to do; and innumerable things which they are erse to, that must be, they cannot avoid them, they l be, whether they choose them or no. It is to ex- ss this necessity, which men so soon and so often find, l which so greatly and early affects them in innumer- e cases, that such terms and phrases are first formed; l it is to signify such a necessity, that they are first d, and that they are most constantly used in the nmon affairs of life; and not to signify any such taphysical, speculative, and abstract notion, as that nection in the nature or course of things, which is ween the subject and predicate of a proposition, and ich is the foundation of the certain truth of that pro- ition; to signify which, they who employ themselves philosophical inquiries into the first origin and meta- ysical relations and dependences of things, have bor- ed these terms for want of others. But we grow up m our cradles in a use of such terms and phrases en- ly different from this, and carrying a sense exceed-

ing diverse from that, in which they are commonly use in the controversy between *Arminians* and *Calvinist* And it being, as was said before, a dictate of the un versal sense of mankind, evident to us as soon as we be gin to think, that the necessity, signified by these term in the sense in which we first learn them, does excus persons, and free them from all fault or blame; hen our ideas of excusableness or faultlessness is tied to thes terms and phrases by a strong habit, which is begun i childhood, as soon as we begin to speak, and grows u with us, and is strengthened by constant use and custon the connection growing stronger and stronger.

The habitual connection which is in men's minds be tween blamelessness and those forementioned term *must*, *cannot*, *unable*, *necessary*, *impossible*, *unavoidabl* &c. becomes very strong; because, as soon as ever me begin to use reason and speech they have occasion excuse themselves, from the natural necessity signifie by these terms, in numerous instances:—*I cannot do i I could not help it.*—And all mankind have constant ar daily occasion to use such phrases in this sense, to e cuse themselves and others, in almost all the concerns life, with respect to disappointments and things that ha pen, which concern and affect ourselves and others, th are hurtful or disagreeable to us or them, or things d sirable, that we or others fail of.

That a being accustomed to an union of different idea from early childhood, makes the habitual connection e ceeding strong, as though such connection were owi to *nature*, is manifest in innumerable instances. It altogether by such an habitual connection of ideas, th men judge of the bigness or distance of the objects sight, from their appearance. Thus it is owing to su a connection early established, and growing up with person, that he judges a mountain, which he sees at te miles distance, to be no bigger than his nose, or furth of than the end of it. Having been used so long to join considerable distance and magnitude with such an a pearance, men imagine it is by a dictate of natural sens

hereas, it would be quite otherwise with one that had s eyes newly opened, who had been born blind; he ould have the same visible appearance, but natural nse would dictate no such thing, concerning the magtude or distance of what appeared.

III. When men, after they had been so habituated connect ideas of innocency or blamelessness with such rms, that the union seems to be the effect of mere nare, come to hear the same terms used, and learn to e them themselves in the forementioned new and metaysical sense, to signify quite another sort of necessity, hw has no such kind of relation to a contrary supposle will and endeavour; the notion of plain and manifest melessness, by this means, is, by a strong prejudice, ensibly and unwarily transferred to a case to which it no means belongs; the change of the use of the terms a signification which is very diverse, not being taken tice of or adverted to; and there are several reasons y it is not:—

1. The terms, as used by philosophers, are not very tinct and clear in their meaning; few use them in a ed determined sense. On the contrary, their mean- is very vague and confused; which is what commonappears to the words used to signify things intellectual d moral, and to express what Mr. *Locke* calls *mixt des.* If men had a clear and distinct understanding what is intended by these metaphysical terms, they uld be able more easily to compare them with their ginal and common sense; and so would not be so easily into delusion by no sort of terms in the world, as by rds of this sort.

2. The change of the signification of the terms is the re insensible, because the things signified, though ined very different, yet do in some generals agree. In *cessity*, that which is *vulgarly* so called, there is a ong connection between the thing said to benecessarly d something antecedent to it, in the order of nature, there is also in *philosophical necessity*. And though both kinds of necessity, the connection cannot be cal-

led by that name, with relation to an opposite will c endeavour, to which it is *superior*; which is the case i vulgar necessity; yet in both, the connection is *prio* to will and endeavour, and so, in some respect, *superior* In both kinds of necessity, there is a foundation for som certainty of the proposition that affirms the event.—Th terms used being the same, and the things signified a greeing in these and some other general circumstances and the expressions as used by philosophers being no well defined, and so of obscure and loose signification hence persons are not aware of the great difference; ha the notions of innocence or faultiness, which were s strongly associated with them, and were strictly unite in their minds, ever since they can remember, remai united with them still, as if the union were altogethe natural and necessary; and they that go about to make separation, seem to them to do great violence even t nature itself.

IV. Another reason why it appears difficult to recon cile it with reason, that men should be blamed for tha which is necessary with a moral necessity (which, as wa observed before, is a species of philosophical necessity is, that for want of due consideration, men inwardly en tertain that apprehension, that this necessity may b against men's wills and sincere endeavours. They g away with that notion, that men may truly will, and wis and strive that it may be otherwise; but that invincibl necessity stands in the way. And many think thus con cerning themselves; some, that are wicked men, thin they wish that they were good, that they loved God an holiness; but yet do not find that their wishes produc the effect.—The reasons why men think, are as follow (1.) They find what may be called an *indirect willing ness* to have a better will, in the manner before observed For it is impossible, and a contradiction to suppose th will to be directly and properly against itself. And the do not consider that this indirect willingness is entirel a different thing from properly willing the thing that i the duty and virtue required; and that there is no vir

e in that sort of willingness which they have. They not consider, that the volitions which a wicked man ay have that he loved God, are no acts of the will at against the moral evil of not loving God; but only me disagreeable consequences. But the making the quisite distinction requires more care of reflection and ought, than most men are used to. And men, through prejudice in their own favour, are disposed to think ll of their own desires and dispositions, and to account em good and virtuous, though their respect to virtue only *indirect* and *remote*, and it is nothing at all that virtuous that truly excites or terminates their inclition. (2.) Another thing that insensibly leads and guiles men into a supposition that this moral necessior impossibility is, or may be, against men's wills and e endeavours, is the derivation and formation of the rms themselves, that are often used to express it, ich is such as seems directly to point to, and holds s forth. Such words, for instance, as *unable*, *unidable*, *impossible*, *irresistible*; which carry a plain ference to a supposable power exerted, endeavours ed, resistance made, in opposition to the necessity; l the persons that hear them, not considering nor specting but that they are used in their proper sense; t sense being therefore understood, there does narally, and as it were necessarily arise in their minds a pposition, that it may be so indeed, that true desires l endeavours may take place; but that invincible nesity stands in the way, and renders them vain and to effect.

V. Another thing, which makes persons more ready suppose it to be contrary to reason, that men should exposed to the punishments threatened to sin, for ng those things which are morally necessary, or not ng those things morally impossible, is, that imagina strengthens the argument, and adds greatly to the ver and influence of the seeming reasons against it, m the greatness of that punishment. To allow that y may be justly exposed to a small punishment, would

not be so difficult. Whereas, if there were any good reason in the case, if it were truly a dictate of reason, that such necessity was inconsistent with faultiness or just punishment, the demonstration would be equally certain with respect to a small punishment, or any punishment at all, as a very great one; but it is not equally easy to the imagination. They that argue against the justice of *damning* men for those things that are thus necessary, seem to make their argument the stronger, by setting forth the greatness of the punishment in strong expressions:—*That a man should be cast into eternal burnings, that he should be made to fry in hell to all eternity for those things which he had no power to avoid, and was under a fatal, unfrustrable, invincible necessity of doing.*

SECTION IV.

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

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

on the contrary, altogether agreeable *to*, and the very voice and dictate *of* this natural and vulgar sense.

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

The common people do not ascend up in their reflections and abstractions to the metaphysical sources, relations, and dependencies of things, in order to form their notion of faultiness or blame-worthiness. They do not wait till they have decided by their refinings, what first determines the will; whether it be determined by something extrinsic, or intrinsic; whether volition determines, volitions or whether the understanding determines the will; whether there be any such thing as metaphysicians meant by contingence (if they have any meaning,) whether there be a sort of a strange unaccountable sovereignty in the will, in the exercise of which, by its own sovereign acts, it brings to pass all its own sovereign acts. They do not take any part of their notion of fault or blame from the resolution of any such questions. If this were the case, there are multitudes, yea the far greater part of mankind, nine hundred and ninety-nine out of a thousand, would live and die, without having any such notion as that of fault, ever entering into their heads, or without so much as one having any conception that any body was to be either blamed or commended for any thing. To be sure, it would be a long time before men came to have such notions.—Whereas it is manifest, they are some of the first notions that appear in children; who discover, as soon as they can think, or speak, or act at all as rational creatures, a sense

of desert. And, certainly, in forming their notion of it, they make no use of metaphysics. All the ground they go upon, consists in these two things; *experience* and a *natural sensation* of a certain fitness or agreeableness, which there is in uniting such moral evil as is above described, *viz. a being* or *doing wrong with the will*, and resentment in others, and pain inflicted on the person in whom this moral evil is. Which *natural sense* is what we call by the name of *conscience*.

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

The common people, in their notion of a faulty or praise-worthy deed or work done by any one, do suppose, that the man does it in the exercise of liberty; but then their notion of liberty is only a person's having opportunity of doing as he pleases. They have no notion of liberty consisting in the will's first acting, and so causing its own acts; and determining, and so causing its own determination, or choosing, and so causing its own choice. Such a notion of liberty is what none have, but those that have darkened their own minds with confused metaphysical speculation, and abstruse and ambiguous terms. If a man is not restrained from acting as his will determines, or constrained to act otherwise, then he has liberty, according to common notions of liberty, without taking into the idea that grand con-

radiction of all, the determinations of a man's free will being the effects of the determinations of his free will. Nor have men commonly any notion of freedom consisting in indifference. For if so, then it would be agreeable to their notion, that the greater indifference men act with, the more freedom they act with; whereas, the reverse is true. He that in acting, proceeds with the fullest inclination, does what he does with the greatest freedom, according to common sense. And so far is it from being agreeable to common sense, that such liberty as consists in indifference is requisite to praise or blame, that, on the contrary, the dictate of every man's natural sense through the world is, that the further he is from being indifferent in his acting good or evil, and the more he does either with full and strong inclination, the more is he esteemed or abhorred, commended or condemned.

II. If it were inconsistent with the common sense of mankind, that men should be either to be blamed or commended in any volitions they have or fail of, in case of moral necessity or impossibility, then it would surely also be agreeable to the same sense and reason of mankind, that the nearer the case approaches to such a moral necessity or impossibility, either through a strong antecedent moral propensity, on the one hand, * or a great antecedent opposition and difficulty on the other, the nearer does it approach to a being neither blameable nor commendable; so that acts exerted with such preceding propensity, would be worthy of proportionably less praise; and when omitted, the act being attended with such difficulty, the omission would be worthy of the less blame. It is so, as was observed before, with natural necessity and impossibility, propensity and difficulty, as it is a plain dictate of the sense of all man-

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

kind, that natural necessity and impossibility take away *all* blame and praise; and therefore, that the nearer the approach is to these, through previous propensity or difficulty, so praise and blame are proportionably *diminished.* And if it were as much a dictate of common sense, that moral necessity of doing, or impossibility of avoiding takes away *all* praise and blame, as that natural necessity or impossibility does this; then, by a perfect parity of reason, it would be as much the dictate of common sense, that an approach to moral necessity of doing, or impossibility of avoiding, diminishes praise and blame, as that an approach to natural necessity and impossibility does so. It is equally the voice of common sense, that persons are *excusable in part,* in neglecting things difficult against their wills, as that they are *excusable wholly* in neglecting things impossible against their wills. And if it made no difference, whether the impossibility were natural and against the will, or moral, lying in the will, with regard to excusableness; so neither would it make any difference, whether the difficulty, or approach to necessity be natural against the will, or moral, lying in the propensity of the will.

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

rinciple of haughtiness and maliciousness, and a violent ropensity of heart to such acts; according to the natur- sense of men, he is so far from being the less hateful nd blameable on that account, that he is so much the ore worthy to be detested and condemned, by all that bserve him.

Moreover, it is manifest that it is no part of the no- on, which mankind commonly have of a blameable or raise-worthy act of the will, that it is an act which is ot determined by any antecedent bias or motive, but by ie sovereign power of the will itself; because, if so, he greater hand such causes have in determining any cts of the will, so much the less virtuous or vicious ould they be accounted; and the less hand, the more rtuous or vicious. Whereas, the reverse is true: men o not think a good act to be the less praise-worthy, for he agent's being much determined in it by a good in- ination or a good motive, but the more. And if good nclination or motive has but little influence in deter- ining the agent, they do not think his act so much the ore virtuous, but the less. And so concerning evil cts, which are determined by evil motives or inclina- ons.

Yea, if it be supposed, that good or evil dispositions re implanted in the hearts of men, by nature itself which, it is certain, is vulgarly supposed in innumerable ses) yet it is not commonly supposed, that men are orthy of no praise or dispraise for such dispositions; though what is natural, is undoubtedly necessary, na- re being prior to all acts of the will whatsoever. Thus, r instance, if a man appears to be of a very haughty malicious disposition, and is supposed to be so by his tural temper, it is no vulgar notion, no dictate of the mmon sense and apprehension of men, that such dis- positions are no vices or moral evils, or that such persons re not worthy of disesteem, or odium and dishonour; that the proud or malicious acts which flow from such tural dispositions, are worthy of no resentment. Yea, ch vile natural dispositions, and the strength of them,

will commonly be mentioned rather as an aggravation
the wicked acts that come from such a fountain, than a
extenuation of them. It being natural for men to a
thus, is often observed by men in the height of their in
dignation: they will say, "It is his very nature: he
of a vile natural temper; it is as natural to him to a
so, as it is to breathe; he cannot help serving the devi
&c." But it is not thus with regard to hurtful mischi
vous things, that any are the subjects or occasions of, b
natural necessity, against their inclinations. In such
case, the necessity, by the common voice of mankin
will be spoken of as a full excuse.—Thus it will be sp
ken of as a full excuse.—Thus it is very plain, that com
mon sense makes a vast difference between these tw
kinds of necessity, as to the judgment it makes of the
influence on the moral quality and desert of men's a
tions.

These dictates of men's minds are so natural and n
cessary, that it may be very much doubted whether th
Arminians themselves have ever got rid of them; ye
their greatest doctors, that have gone furthest in defenc
of their metaphysical notions of liberty, and have brough
their arguments to their greatest strength, and, as the
suppose, to a demonstration, against the consistence
virtue and vice with any necessity; it is to be que
tioned, whether there is so much as one of them, bu
that, if he suffered very much from the injurious acts
a man, under the power of an invincible haughtiness an
malignancy of temper, would not, from the forementio
ed natural sense of mind, resent it far otherwise, than
as great sufferings came upon him from the wind tha
blows, and fire that burns by natural necessity; and
therwise than he would, if he suffered as much from th
conduct of a man perfectly delirious; yea, though h
first brought his distraction upon him some way by h
own fault.

Some seem to disdain the distinction that we mak
between *natural* and *moral necessity*, as though it wer
altogether impertinent in this controversy; "that whic

is necessary (say they) is necessary; it is that which must be, and cannot be prevented. And that which is impossible, is impossible, and cannot be done; and, therefore, none can be to blame for not doing it." And such comparisons are made use of, as the commanding of a man to walk who has lost his legs, and condemning and punishing him for not obeying; inviting and calling upon a man who is shut up in a strong prison to come forth, &c. But, in these things, *Arminians* are very unreasonable. Let common sense determine whether there be not a great difference between those two cases: the one, that of a man who has offended his prince, and is cast into prison; and after he has lain there awhile, the king comes to him, calls him to come forth to him; and tells him, that if he will do so, and will fall down before him, and humbly beg his pardon, he shall be forgiven and set at liberty, and also be greatly enriched and advanced to honour; the prisoner heartily repents of the folly and wickedness of his offence against his prince, is thoroughly disposed to abase himself, and accept of the king's offer; but is confined by strong walls, with gates of brass and bars of iron. The other case, is that of a man who is of a very unreasonable spirit, of a haughty, ungrateful, wilful disposition; and, moreover, has been brought up in traitorous principles; and has his heart possessed with an extreme and inveterate enmity to his lawful sovereign; and for his rebellion is cast into prison, and lies long there, loaded with heavy chains, and in miserable circumstances. At length the compassionate prince comes to the prison, orders his chains to be knocked off, and his prison-doors to be set wide open; calls to him, and tells him, if he will come forth to him, and fall down before him, acknowledge that he has treated him unworthily, and ask his forgiveness, he shall be forgiven, set at liberty, and set in a place of great dignity and profit in his court; but he is stout and stomachful, and full of haughty malignity, that he cannot be willing to accept the offer; his rooted strong pride and malice have

perfect power over him, and as it were bind him, by binding his heart; the opposition of his heart has the mastery over him, having an influence on his mind far superior to the king's grace and condescension, and to all his kind offers and promises. Now, is it agreeable to common sense, to assert and stand to it, that there is no difference between these two cases, as to any worthiness or blame in the prisoners; because, forsooth, there is a necessity in both, and the required act in each case is impossible? It is true, a man's evil dispositions may be as strong and immovable as the bars of a castle. But who cannot see that when a man in the latter case, is said to be *unable* to obey the command, the expression is used improperly, and not in the sense it has originally and in common speech?—and that it may properly be said to be in the rebel's power to come out of prison, seeing he can easily do it if he pleases; though by reason of his vile temper of heart, which is fixed and rooted, it is impossible that it should please him?

Upon the whole, I presume there is no person of good understanding, who impartially considers the things which have been observed, but will allow, that it is not evident, from the dictates of the common sense or natural notions of mankind, that moral necessity is inconsistent with praise and blame; and, therefore, if the *Arminians* would prove any such inconsistency, it must be by some philosophical and metaphysical arguments, and not common sense.

There is a grand illusion in the pretended demonstration of *Arminians* from common sense. The main strength of all these demonstrations lies in that prejudice, that arises through the insensible change of the use and meaning of such terms as *liberty*, *able*, *unable*, *necessary*, *impossible*, *unavoidable*, *invincible*, *action*, &c. from their original and vulgar sense, to a metaphysical sense, entirely diverse; and the strong connection of the ideas of blamelessness, &c. with some of these terms, by an habit contracted and established, while these terms were used in their first meaning. This prejudice and

delusion, is the foundation of all those positions, they lay down as maxims, by which most of the Scriptures, which they alledge in this controversy, are interpreted, and on which all their pompous demonstrations from Scripture and reason depend. From this secret delusion and prejudice they have almost all their advantages; it is the strength of their bulwarks, and the edge of their weapons; and this is the main ground of all the right they have to treat their neighbours in so assuming a manner, and to insult others, perhaps as wise and good as themselves, as *weak bigots, men that dwell in the dark caves of superstition, perversely set, obstinately shutting their eyes against the noon-day light, enemies to common sense, maintaining the first-born of absurdities*, &c. &c. But perhaps an impartial consideration of the things which have been observed in the preceding parts of this inquiry, may enable the lovers of truth better to judge whose doctrine is indeed *absurd, abstruse, self-contradictory*, and inconsistent with common sense, and many ways repugnant to the universal dictates of the reason of mankind.

Corol. From things which have been observed, it will follow, that it is agreeable to common sense to suppose, that the glorified saints have not their freedom at all diminished, in any respect: and that God himself has the highest possible freedom, according to the true and proper meaning of the term; and that he is in the highest possible respect, an agent, and active in the exercise of his infinite holiness: though he acts therein, in the highest degree necessarily: and his actions of this kind are in the highest, most absolutely perfect manner virtuous and praise-worthy: and are so, for that very reason, because they are most perfectly necessary.

SECTION V.

Concerning those Objections, that this Scheme of Necessity render all Means and Endeavours for the avoiding of Sin, or the obtaining Virtue and Holiness, vain, and to no Purpose; and that it makes Men no more than mere Machines in Affairs of Morality and Religion.

ARMINIANS say, if it be so, that sin and virtue come to pass by a necessity consisting in a sure connection of causes and effects, antecedents and consequents, it can never be worth the while to use any means or endeavours to obtain the one, and avoid the other; seeing no endeavours can alter the futurity of the event, which is become necessary by a connection already established.

But I desire that this matter may be fully considered; and that it may be examined with a thorough strictness, whether it will follow that endeavours and means, in order to avoid or obtain any future thing, must be more in vain, on the supposition of such a connection of antecedents and consequents, than if the contrary be supposed.

For endeavours to be in vain, is for them not to be successful; that is to say, for them not eventually to be the means of the thing aimed at, which cannot be, but in one of these two ways; either, *first*, That although the means are used, yet the event aimed at does not follow: or, *secondly*, If the event does follow, it is not because of the means, or from any connection or dependence of the event of the means, the event would have come to pass, as well without the means as with them. If either of those two things are the case, then the means are not properly successful, and are truly in vain. The successfulness or unsuccessfulness of means, in order to an effect, or their being in vain or not in vain, consists in those means being connected or not connected with the effect,

n such a manner as this, *viz.* That the effect is *with* he means, and not *without* them; or, that the being of he effect is, on the one hand, connected with means, nd the want of the effect, on the other hand, is connec- ed with the want of the means. If there be such a connection as this between means and end, the means re not in vain: the more there is of such a connection, he further they are from being in vain: and the less of uch a connection, the more they are in vain.

Now, therefore, the question to be answered (in or- der to determine whether it follows from this doctrine of he necessary connection between foregoing things and consequent ones, that means used in order to any effect, re more in vain than they would be otherwise) is, whether it follows from it, that there is less of the fore- nentioned connection between means and effect; that is, whether, on the supposition of there being a real and rue connection between antecedent things and conse- quent ones, there must be less of a connection between means and effect, than on the supposition of their being no fixed connection between antecedent things and con- sequent ones; and the very stating of this question is sufficient to answer it. It must appear to every one hat will open his eyes, that this question cannot be af- irmed, without the grossest absurdity and inconsistence. Means are foregoing things, and effects are following things; and if there were no connection between fore- going things and following ones, there could be no con- nection between means and end; and so all means would be wholly vain and fruitless. For it is by virtue of some connection only, that they become successful; it is some connection observed or revealed, or otherwise known, between antecedent things and following ones that is what directs in the choice of means. And if there were no such thing as an established connection, there could be no choice, as to means; one thing would have no more tendency to an effect, than another; there would be no such thing as tendency in the case. All those things which are successful means of other things, do

therein prove connected antecedents of them; and therefore to assert, that a fixed connection between antecedents and consequents makes means vain and useless, or stands in the way to hinder the connection between means and end, is just so ridiculous, as to say, that a connection between antecedents and consequents stands in the way to hinder a connection between antecedents and consequents.

Nor can any supposed connection of the succession of a train of antecedents and consequents, from the very beginning of all things, the connection being made already sure and necessary, either by established laws of nature, or by these together, with a degree of sovereign immediate interpositions of divine power, on such and such occasions, or any other way (if any other there be); I say, no such necessary connection of a series of antecedents and consequents can in the least tend to hinder but that the means we use may belong to the series; and so may be some of those antecedents which are connected with the consequents we aim at, in the established course of things. Endeavours which we use, are things that exist; and, therefore, they belong to the general chain of events; all the parts of which chain are supposed to be connected; and so endeavours are supposed to be connected with some effects, or some consequent things or other. And certainly this does not hinder but that the events they are connected with, may be those which we aim at, and which we choose, because we judge them most likely to have a connection with those events, from the established order and course of things which we observe, or from something in divine revelation.

Let us suppose a real and sure connection between a man's having his eyes open in the clear day-light, with good organs of sight, and seeing; so that seeing is connected with his opening his eyes, and not seeing with his not opening his eyes, and also the like connection between such a man's attempting to open his eyes, and his actually doing it, the supposed established connec-

ion between these antecedents and consequents, let the connection be ever so sure and necessary, certainly does not prove that it is in vain, for a man in such circumstances to attempt to open his eyes, in order to seeing, his aiming at that event, and the use of the means, being the effect of his will, does not break the connection, or hinder the success.

So that the objection we are upon does not lie against the doctrine of the necessity of events by a certainty of connection and consequence; on the contrary, it is truly forcible against the *Arminian* doctrine of contingence and self-determination, which is inconsistent with such a connection. If there be no connection between those events, wherein virtue and vice consist, and any thing antecedent, then there is no connection between these events and any means or endeavours used in order to them; and if so, then those means must be in vain.—The less there is of connection between the foregoing things and following ones, so much the less there is between means and end, endeavours and success; and in the same proportion are means and endeavours ineffectual and in vain.

It will follow from *Arminian* principles, that there is no degree of connection between virtue or vice, and any foregoing event or thing; or, in other words, that the determination of the existence of virtue or vice do not in the least depend on the influence of any thing that comes to pass antecedently, from which the determination of its existence is, as its cause, means, or ground; because, so far as it is so, it is not from self-determination, and, therefore, so far there is nothing of the nature of virtue or vice. And so it follows, that virtue and vice are not at all, in any degree dependant upon, or connected with any foregoing event or existence, as its cause, ground or means; and, if so, then all foregoing means must be totally in vain.

Hence it follows, that there cannot, in any consistence with the *Arminian* scheme, be any reasonable ground of so much as a conjecture concerning the conse-

quence of any means and endeavours, in order to escaping vice or obtaining virtue, or any choice or preference of means, as having a greater probability of success by some than others; either from any natural connection or dependence of the end on the means, or through any divine constitution, or revealed way of God's bestowing or bringing to pass these things, in any consequence of any means, endeavours, prayers, or deeds. Conjectures, in this latter case, depend on a supposition, that God himself is the Giver, or determining cause of the events sought; but if they depend on self-determination, their God is not the determining or disposing Author of them; and if these things are not of his disposal, then no conjecture can be made, from any revelation he has given, concerning any way or method of his disposal of them.

Yea, on these principles, it will not only follow, that men cannot have any reasonable ground of judgment or conjecture, that their means and endeavours to obtain virtue or avoid vice, will be successful, but they may be sure they will not; they may be certain that they will be in vain; and that if ever the thing, which they seek, comes to pass, it will not be at all owing to the means they use; for means and endeavours can have no effect at all, in order to obtain the end, but in one of these two ways: either (1.) Through a natural tendency and influence, to prepare and dispose the mind more to virtuous acts, either by causing the disposition of the heart to be more in favour of such acts, or by bringing the mind more into view of powerful motives and inducements; or (2.) By putting persons more in the way of God's bestowment of the benefit. But neither of these can be the case. *Not the latter;* for, as has been just now observed, it does not consist with the *Arminian* notion of self-determination, which they suppose essential to virtue, that God should be the Bestower, or (which is the same thing) the determining, disposing Author of virtue. *Not the former;* for natural influence and tendency supposes causality and connection; and supposes necessity of event, which is inconsistent with *Arminian*

berty. A tendency of means, by biassing the heart in vour of virtue, or by bringing the will under the inuence and power of motives in its determinations, are oth inconsistent with *Arminian* liberty of will, consistg in indifference, and sovereign self-determination, as as been already demonstrated.

But for the more full removal of this prejudice against ne doctrine of necessity, which has been maintained, as ough it tended to encourage a total neglect of all enleavours as vain, the following things may be considred :—

The question is not, Whether men may not thus improve this doctrine : we know that many true and wholeome doctrines are abused; but, Whether the doctrine ives any just occasion for such an improvement; or hether, on the supposition of the truth of the doctrine, uch a use of it would not be unreasonable? If any hall affirm, that it would not, but that the very nature f the doctrine is such as gives just occasion for it, it ust be on this supposition; namely, that such an inariable necessity of all things already settled, must render the interposition of all means, endeavours, conclusions, or actions of ours, in order to the obtaining any uture end whatsoever, perfectly insignificant; because ney cannot in the least alter or vary the course and seies of things, in any event or circumstance; all being lready fixed unalterably by necessity; and that therefore it is folly for men to use any means *for any end*, ut their wisdom, to save themselves the trouble of enleavours, and take their ease. No person can draw uch an inference from this doctrine, and come to such conclusion, without contradicting himself, and going ounter to the very principles he pretends to act upon; or he comes to a conclusion, and takes a course, *in rder to an end*, even *his ease*, or the saving himself rom trouble; he seeks something future, and uses eans in order to a future thing, even in his drawing up hat conclusion, that he will seek nothing, and use no eans in order to any thing in future; he seeks his fu-

ture ease, and the benefit and comfort of indolence. prior necessity, that determines all things, makes va all actions or conclusions of ours, in order to any thing future; then it makes vain all conclusions and condu of ours, in order to our future ease. The measure our ease, with the time, manner, and every circumstanc of it, is already fixed, by all-determining necessity, much as any thing else. If he says within himsel "What future happiness or misery I shall have, is al ready, in effect, determined by the necessary course an connection of things; therefore, I will save myself th trouble of labour and diligence, which cannot add to m determined degree of happiness, or diminish my misery but will take my ease, and will enjoy the comfort c sloth and negligence;" such a man contradicts himself he says, the measure of his future happiness and miser is already fixed, and he will not try to diminish the one nor add to the other: but yet, in his very conclusion, h contradicts this: for, he takes up this conclusion, *to ad to his future happiness*, by the ease and comfort of hi negligence; and to diminish his future trouble an misery, by saving himself the trouble of using means an taking pains.

Therefore persons cannot reasonably make this improvement of the doctrine of necessity, that they will go into a voluntary negligence of means for their own happiness. For the principles they must go upon, in order to this, are inconsistent with their making any improvement at all of the doctrine: for to make some improvement of it, is to be influenced by it, to come to some voluntary conclusion, in regard to their own conduct, with some view or aim: but this, as has been shewn, is inconsistent with the principles they pretend to act upon. In short, the principles are such as cannot be acted upon at all, or, in any respect, consistently; and, therefore in every pretence of acting upon them, or making any improvement at all of them, there is a self-contradiction.

As to that objection against the doctrine, which I have endeavoured to prove, that it makes men no more

an mere machines: I would say, that notwithstanding is doctrine, man is entirely, perfectly, and unspeakably fferent from a mere machine, in that he has reason and nderstanding, and has a faculty of will, and so is capae of volition and choice: and in that, his will is guided y the dictates or views of his understanding; and in at his external actions and behaviour, and, in many spects, also his thoughts, and the exercises of his mind, e subject to his will; so that he has liberty to act acrding to his choice, and do what he pleases; and by eans of these things, is capable of moral habits and oral acts, such inclinations and actions as, according to e common sense of mankind, are worthy of praise, esem, love, and reward; or, on the contrary, of disesem, detestation, indignation, and punishment.

In these things is all the difference from mere maines, as to liberty and agency, that would by any perction, dignity, or privilege, in any respect: all the difrence that can be desired, and all that can be conceived ; and indeed all that the pretensions of the *Arminians* emselves come to, as they are forced often to explain emselves though their explications overthrow and abo- h the things asserted, and pretended to be explained;) they are forced to explain a self-determining power will, by a power in the soul, to determine as it choos- or wills; which comes to no more than this, that a an has a power of choosing, and, in many instances, n do as he chooses. Which is quite a different thing om that contradiction, his having power of choosing his st act of choice in the case.

Or, if their scheme makes any other difference than is, between men and machines, it is for the worse: it so far from supposing men to have a dignity and prilege above machines, that it makes the manner of their ing determined still more unhappy. Whereas, maines are guided by an understanding cause, by the ilful hand of the workman or owner; the will of man left to the guidance of nothing, but absolute blind ntingence

SECTION VI.

Concerning that objection against the doctri which has been maintained, that it agrees wi the Stoical doctrine of Fate, and the opinio of Mr Hobbes.

WHEN *Calvinists* oppose the *Arminian* notion the freedom of will, and contingence of vo tion, and insist that there are no acts of the will, n any other events whatsoever, but what are attended wi some kind of necessity, their opposers cry out of the as agreeing with the ancient Stoics in their doctrine Fate, and with Mr Hobbes in his opinion of Necessit

It would not be worth while to take notice of so ir pertinent an objection, had it not been urged by some the chief *Arminian* writers.—There were many impo tant truths maintained by the ancient *Greek* and *Roma* philosophers, and especially the *Stoics*, that are never th worse for being held by them. The *Stoic* philosopher by the general agreement of Christian divines, and eve *Arminian* divines, were the greatest, wisest, and mo virtuous of all the heathen philosophers; and, in the doctrine and practice, came the nearest to Christianit of any of their sects. How frequently are the saying of these philosophers, in many of the writings and ser mons, even of *Arminian* divines, produced, not as argu ments of the falseness of the doctrines which they deliver ed, but as a confirmation of some of the greatest truth of the Christian religion, relating to the unity and per fections of the God-head, a future state, the duty an happiness of mankind, &c.; as observing how the ligh of nature and reason, in the wisest and best of the hea then, harmonized with, and confirms the gospel of Jesu Christ.

And it is very remarkable, concerning Dr *Whitby* that although he alledges the agreement of the *Stoic*

with us, wherein he supposes they maintained the like doctrine with us, as an argument against the truth of our doctrine; yet, this very Dr *Whitby* alledges the agreement of the *Stoics* with the *Arminians*, wherein he supposes they taught the same doctrine with them, as an argument for the truth of their doctrine.* So that when the *Stoics* agree with them, this (it seems) is a confirmation of their doctrine, and a confutation of ours, as shewing that our opinions are contrary to the natural sense and common reason of mankind: nevertheless, when the *Stoics* agree with us, it argues no such thing in our favour; but, on the contrary, is a great argument against us, and shews our doctrine to be heathenish.

It is observed by some *Calvinistic* writers, that the *Arminians* symbolize with the *Stoics*, in some of those doctrines wherein they are opposed by the *Calvinists*; particularly in their denying an original innate, total corruption and depravity of heart; and in what they held of man's ability to make himself truly virtuous and conformed to God;—and in some other doctrines.

It may be further observed, it is certainly no better objection against our doctrine, that it agrees, in some respects, with the doctrine of the ancient *Stoic* philosophers, than it is against theirs, wherein they differ from us, that it agrees, in some respects, with the opinion of the very worst of the heathen philosophers, the followers of *Epicurus*, that father of Atheism and Licentiousness, and with the doctrine of the *Sadducees* and *Jesuits*.

I am not much concerned to know precisely, what the ancient *Stoic* philosophers held concerning *Fate*, in order to determine what is truth; as though it were a sure way to be in the right, to take good heed to differ from them. It seems, that they differed among themselves; and probably the doctrine of *Fate*, as maintain-

* *Whitby* on the Five Points, Edit. 3. p. 326, 327.

ed by most of them, was in some respects, erroneous.—But whatever their doctrine was, if any of them held such a Fate, as is repugnant to any liberty, consisting in our doing as we please, I utterly deny such a Fate. If they held any such fate, as is not consistent with the common and universal notions that mankind have of liberty, activity, moral agency, virtue and vice; I disclaim any such thing, and think I have demonstrated that the scheme I maintain is no such scheme. If the *Stoics* by *Fate*, meant any thing of such a nature, as can be supposed to stand in the way of the advantage and benefit of the use of means and endeavours, or make it less worth while for men to desire, and seek after any thing wherein their virtue and happiness consists; I hold no doctrine that is clogged with any such inconvenience, any more than any other scheme whatsoever and by no means so much as the *Arminian* scheme of contingence, as has been shewn. If they held any such doctrine of universal fatality, as is inconsistent with any kind of liberty, that is or can be any perfection, dignity, privilege, or benefit, or any thing desirable; in any respect, for any intelligent creature, or indeed with any liberty that is possible or conceivable; I embrace no such doctrine. If they held any such doctrine of Fate, as is inconsistent with the world's being in all things subject to the disposal of an intelligent, wise Agent, that presides, not as the *soul* of the world, but as the sovereign *Lord* of the universe, governing all things by proper will, choice, and design, in the exercise of the most perfect liberty conceivable, without subjection to any constraint, or being properly under the power or influence of any thing before, above, or without himself, I wholly renounce any such doctrine.

As to Mr *Hobbes*' maintaining the same doctrine concerning Necessity;—I confess, it happens I never read Mr *Hobbes*. Let his opinion be what it will we need not reject all truth which is demonstrated by clear evidence merely because it was once held by some bad man.—

This great truth, *that Jesus is the Son of God*, was not spoiled because it was once and again proclaimed with a loud voice by the Devil. If truth is so defiled, because it is spoken by the mouth, or written by the pen of some ill-minded mischievous man, that it must never be received, we shall never know when we hold any of the most precious and evident truths by a sure tenure; and if Mr *Hobbes* has made a bad use of this truth, that is to be lamented; but the truth is not to be thought worthy of rejection on that account. It is common for the corruptions of the hearts of evil men to abuse the best things to vile purposes.

I might also take notice of its having been observed, that the *Arminians* agree with Mr *Hobbes* in many more things than the *Calvinists* *. As, in what he is said to hold concerning original sin, in denying the necessity of supernatural illumination, in denying infused grace, in denying the doctrine of justification by faith alone, and other things.

SECTION VII.

Concerning the Necessity of the Divine Will.

SOME may possibly object against what has been supposed of the absurdity and inconsistence of a self-determining power in the will, and the impossibility of its being otherwise, than that the will should be determined in every case by some motive, and by a motive which (as it stands in the view of the understanding) is of superior strength to any appearing on the other side; that if these things are true, it will follow, that not only the will of created minds, but the will of *God himself* is ne-

* Dr. *Gill*, in his Answer to Dr. *Whitby*. Vol. III, p. 183, &c.

cessary in all its determinations. Concerning which, says the author of the *Essay on the Freedom of the Will in God, and in the Creature*, (p. 85, 86.) "What strange doctrine is this, contrary to all our ideas of the dominion of God? Does it not destroy the glory of his liberty of choice, and take away from the Creator, Governor, and Benefactor of the world, that most free and sovereign Agent, all the glory of this sort of freedom? Does it not seem to make him a kind of mechanical medium of fate, and introduce Mr *Hobbes*' doctrine of fatality and necessity, into all things that God hath to do with? Does it not seem to represent the blessed God as a Being of vast understanding, as well as power and efficiency, but still to leave him without a will to choose among all the objects within his view? In short, it seems to make the blessed God a sort of Almighty Minister of Fate, under its universal and supreme influence; as it was the professed sentiment of some of the antients, that Fate was above the gods."

This is declaiming, rather than arguing; and an application to men's imaginations and prejudices, rather than to mere reason.—But I would calmly endeavour to consider, Whether there be any reason in this frightful representation?—But, before I enter upon a particular consideration of the matter, I would observe this: That it is reasonable to suppose, it should be much more difficult to express or conceive things according to exact metaphysical truth, relating to the nature and manner of the existence of things in the divine understanding and will, and the operation of these faculties (if I may so call them) of the divine mind, than in the human mind; which is infinitely more within our view, and nearer to a proportion to the measure of our comprehension, and more commensurate to the use and import of human speech. Language is indeed very deficient, in regard of terms to express precise truth concerning our own minds, and their faculties and operations.—— Words were first formed to express external things; and those that are applied to express things internal and

piritual, are almost all borrowed, and used in a sort of igurative sense. Whence they are, most of them, attended with a great deal of ambiguity and unfixedness n their signification, occasioning innumerable doubts, ifficulties, and confusions, in enquiries and controveries, about things of this nature. But language is much ess adapted to express things in the mind of the incomprehensible Deity, precisely as they are.

We find a great deal of difficulty in conceiving exactly the nature of our own souls; and notwithstanding all he progress which has been made, in past and present ges, in this kind of knowledge, whereby our metaphyics, as it relates to these things, is brought to greater erfection than once it was; yet, here is still work enough left for future enquiries and researches, and room r progress still to be made, for many ages and generaons; but we had need to be infinitely able metaphycians, to conceive with clearness, according to strict, roper, and perfect truth, concerning the nature of the ivine essence, and the modes of the action and operaon of the powers of the divine mind.

It may be noted particularly, that though we are obliged to conceive of some things in God as consequent nd dependent on others, and of some things pertaining the divine nature and will as the foundation of others, nd so before others in the order of nature; as, we must onceive of the knowledge and holiness of God as prior, the order of nature, to his happiness; the perfection f his understanding, as the foundation of his wise purposes and decrees; the holiness of his nature, as the use and reason of his holy determinations; and yet, hen we speak of cause and effect, antecedent and conquent, fundamental and dependent, determining and etermined, in the first Being, who is self-existent, inependent, of perfect and absolute simplicity and immubility, and the first cause of all things; doubtless there ust be less propriety in such representations, than when e speak of derived dependent beings, who are com-

pounded, and liable to perpetual mutation and succession.

Having premised this, I proceed to observe concerning the forementioned author's exclamation, about the *necessary determination of God's will*, in all things, by what he sees to be *fittest* and *best*.

That all the seeming force of such objections and exclamations must arise from an imagination, that there is some sort of privilege or dignity in being without such a moral necessity, as will make it impossible to do any other than always choose what is wisest and best; although there were some disadvantage, meanness, and subjection, in such a necessity; a thing by which the will was confined, kept under, and held in servitude by something, which, as it were, maintained a strong and invincible power and dominion over it, by bonds that held him fast, and that he could by no means deliver himself from. Whereas, this must be all mere imagination and delusion. It is no disadvantage or dishonour to a being, necessarily to act in the most excellent and happy manner, from the necessary perfection of his own nature. This argues no imperfection, inferiority, or dependence, nor any want of dignity, privilege, or ascendency *. It is not inconsistent with the absolute and

---

* "It might have been objected, with more plausibleness, that the Supreme Cause cannot be free, because he must needs do always what is best in the whole. But this would not at all serve Spinoza's purpose; for this is a necessity, not of nature and of fate, but of fitness and wisdom; a necessity consistent with the greatest freedom, and most perfect choice. For the only foundation of this necessity is such an unalterable rectitude of will, and perfection of wisdom, as makes it impossible for a wise being to act foolishly." *Clark's Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God.* Edit. 6, p. 64.

"Though God is a most perfect free agent, yet he cannot but do always what is best and wisest in the whole. The reason is evident, because perfect wisdom and goodness are as steady and certain principles of action, as necessity itself; and an infinitely wise and good being, indued with the most perfect liberty, can no more choose to act in contradiction to wisdom and goodness, than a necessary agent can act contrary to the necessity by which it is acted; it being as great

most perfect sovereignty of God. The sovereignty of God is his ability and authority to do whatever pleases him; whereby *He doth according to his will in the armies of heaven, and amongst the inhabitants of the earth,*

---

an absurdity and impossibility in choice, for infinite wisdom to choose to act unwisely, or infinite goodness to choose what is not good, as it would be in nature, for absolute necessity to fail of producing its necessary effect. There was, indeeed, no necessity in nature, that God should at first create such beings as he has created, or indeed any being at all; because he is in Himself infinitely happy and all-sufficient. There was, also, no necessity in nature, that he should preserve and continue things in being, after they were created; because he would be self-sufficient without their continuance, as he was before their creation. But it was fit, wise, and good, that infinite wisdom should manifest, and infinite goodness communicate itself; and therefore it was necessary, in the sense of necessity I am now speaking of, that things should be made *at such a time* and continued *so long* and indeed with various perfections in such degrees, as infinite wisdom and goodness saw it wisest and best that they should." *Ibid.* p. 112, 113.

"It is not a fault, but a perfection of our nature, to desire, will, and act, according to the last result of a fair examination.—This is so far from being a restraint or diminution of freedom, that it is the very improvement and benefit of it; it is not an abridgement, it is the end and use of our liberty; and the further we are removed from such a determination, the nearer we are to misery and slavery. A perfect indifference in the mind, not determinable by its last judgment, of the good or evil that is thought to attend its choice, would be so far from being an advantage and excellency of any intellectual nature, that it would be as great an imperfection, as the want of indifferency to act, or not to act, till determined by the will, would be an imperfection, on the other side.—It is as much a perfection, that desire or the power of preferring should be determined by good, as that the power of acting should be determined by the will: and the certainer such determination is, the greater the perfection. Nay, were we determined by any thing but the last result of our own minds, judging of the good or evil of any action, we were not free. This very end of our freedom being, that we might attain the good we choose; and, therefore, every man is brought under a necessity by his constitution, as an intelligent being, to be determined in willing by his own thought and judgment, what is best for him to do; else he would be under the determination of some other than himself, which is want of liberty. And to deny that a man's will, in every determination, follows his own judgment, is to say, that a man wills and acts for an end that he would not have, at the same time that he wills and acts for it. For if he prefers it in his

and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What dost thou? The following things belong to the *sovereignty* of God; *viz.* (1.) Supreme, Universal, and Infinite *Power;* whereby he is able to do what he

present thoughts, before any other, it is plain he then thinks better of it, and would have it before any other; unless he can have, and not have it; will, and not will it, at the same time; a contradiction too manifest to be admitted.—If we look upon those superior beings above us, who enjoy perfect happiness, we shall have reason to judge that they are more steadily determined in their choice of good than we; and yet we have no reason to think they are less happy, or less free, than we are. And if it were fit for such poor finite creatures as we are, to pronounce what Infinite Wisdom and Goodness could do, I think we might say, that God himself cannot choose what is not good. *The freedom of the Almighty hinders not his being determined by what is best.*—But to give a right view of this mistaken part of liberty, let me ask, Would any one be a changeling, because he is less determined by wise determination than a wise man? is it worth the name of Freedom to be at liberty to play the fool, and draw shame and misery upon a man's self? If to break loose from the conduct of reason, and to want that restraint of examination and judgment, that keeps us from doing or choosing the worse, be liberty, true liberty, mad men and fools are the only free men. Yet, I think, no body would choose to be mad, for the sake of such liberty, but he that is mad already." Locke *Hum. Und.* Vol. I, edit. 7, p. 215, 216,

"This Being, having all things always necessarily in view, must always, and eternally will, according to his infinite comprehension of things; that is, must will all things that are wisest and best to be done. There is no getting free of this consequence. If it can will at all, it must will this way. To be capable of knowing, and not capable of willing, is not to be understood. And to be capable of willing, otherwise than what is wisest and best, contradicts that knowledge which is infinite. Infinite Knowledge must direct the will without error. *Here then is the origin of moral Necessity; and that is really, of freedom.*—Perhaps it may be said, when the Divine will is determined, from the consideration of the eternal apitudes of things, it is as necessarily determined, as if it were physically impelled, if that were possible. But it is unskilfulness to suppose this an objection. The great principle is once established, *viz.* That the Divine Will is determined by the eternal reason and apitudes of things, instead of being physically impelled; and after that, the more strong and necessary this determination is the more perfect, the Deity must be allowed to be: it is this that makes him an amiable and adorable Being, whose Will and Power are constantly, immutably determined, by the consideration of what is wisest and best; instead of a surd Being, with power, but without discerning and reason. *It is*

cases, without controul, without any confinement of
t power, without any subjection, in the least measure,
any other power; and so without any hindrance or
straint, that it should be either impossible, or at all diffi-
lt, for him to accomplish his will; and without any depen-
nce of his power on any other power, from whence it
ould be derived, or which it should stand in any need
; so far from this, that all other power is derived from him,
d is absolutely dependent on him. (2.) That He has
preme *authority;* absolute and most perfect right to do
at he wills, without subjection to any superior authori-
or any derivation of authority from any other, or
itation by any distinct independent authority, either
perior, equal or inferior; he being the head of all do-
nion, and Fountain of all authority; and also without
traint by any obligation, implying either subjection,
rivation, or dependence, or proper limitation. (3.)
at his *will* is supreme, underived, and independent
any thing without himself; being in every thing de-
mined by his own counsel, having no other rule but
own wisdom; his will not being subject to, or re-
ined by the will of any other, and other wills being
fectly subject to his. (4.) That his *wisdom,* which
ermines his will, is supreme, perfect, underived, self-
ficient and independent: so that it may be said, as in
iah xl. 14, *With whom took He counsel? And who*
tructed Him and taught him in the path of Judgment,
taught him knowledge, and shewed him the way of
derstanding?—There is no other divine sovereignty
this, and this is properly *absolute sovereignty;* no
er is desirable; nor would any other be honourable

---

beauty of this Necessity, that it is strong as fate itself, with all the ad-
age of reason and goodness.—It is strange, to see men contend, that
Deity is not free, because he is necessarily rational, immutably
d and wise; when a man is allowed still the perfecter being, the
e fixedly and constantly his will is determined by reason and
h." "Enquiry into the Nature of the Human Soul." Edit. 3,
. II. p. 403, 404.

or happy; and indeed, there is no other conceivable possible. It is the glory and greatness of the divi Sovereign, that God's will is determined by his own i finite all-sufficient wisdom in every thing; and in n thing at all is either directed by any inferior wisdom, by no wisdom; whereby it would become senseless arb trariness, determining and acting without reason, desig or end

If God's will is steadily and surely determined in eve thing by *supreme* wisdom, then it is in every thing n cessarily determined to that which is most wise. An certainly, it would be a disadvantage and indignity to otherwise; for if the divine will was not necessarily d termined to that, which in every case is wisest and bes it must be subject to some degree of undesigning co tingence; and so in the same degree liable to evil. T suppose the divine will liable to be carried hither a thither at random, by the uncertain wind of blind co tingence, which is guided by no wisdom, no motive, intelligent dictate whatsoever, (if any such thing we possible) would certainly argue a great degree of impe fection and meanness, infinitely unworthy of the Deit If it be a disadvantage for the divine will to be attend with this moral necessity, then the more free from it, a the more left at random, the greater dignity and adva tage; and, consequently, to be perfectly free from t direction of understanding, and universally and entire left to senseless unmeaning contingence, to act absolut ly at random, would be the supreme glory.

It no more argues any dependence of God's wi that his supremely wise volition is necessary, than argues a dependence of his being, that his existence necessary. If it be something too low for the Suprem Being to have his will determined by moral necessity, as necessarily, in every case, to will in the highest d gree holily and happily, then why is it not also som thing too low for him to have his existence, and the i finite perfection of his nature, and his infinite happine determined by necessity? It is no more to God's di

nour to be necessarily wise, than to be necessarily ly. And, if neither of them be to his dishonour, then is not to his dishonour necessarily to act holily and isely. And if it be not dishonourable to be necessarily ly and wise, in the highest possible degree, no more it mean and dishonourable, necessarily to act holily d wisely in the highest possible degree; or, which is e same thing, to do that, in every case, which, above l other things, is wisest and best.

The reason why it is not dishonourable to be necesrily most holy, is, because holiness in itself is an exllent and honourable thing. For the same reason, it no dishonour to be necessarily most wise, and, in ery case, to act most wisely, or do the thing which is e wisest of all; for wisdom is also in itself excellent d honourable.

The forementioned author of the *Essay on the Freem of Will*, &c. as has been observed, represents that ctrine of the Divine Will's being in every thing nessarily determined by superior fitness, as making the essed God a kind of Almighty minister and mechanical edium of fate: and he insists (p. 92, 94) that this oral necessity and impossibility is, in effect, the same ing with physical and natural necessity and impossibiy: and in p. 54, 55, he says, "The scheme which termines the will always and certainly by the underanding, and the understanding by the appearance of ings, seems to take away the true nature of vice and rtue. For the sublimest of virtues and the vilest of ces, seem rather to be matters of fate and necessity, wing naturally and necessarily from the existence, the cumstances, and present situation of persons and ings: for this existence and situation necessarily makes ch an appearance to the mind; from this appearance ws a necessary perception and judgment, concerning ese things; this judgment necessarily determines the ll: and thus, by this chain of necessary causes, virtue d vice would loose their nature, and become natural

ideas and necessary things, instead of moral and free
tions."

And yet this same author allows (p. 30, 31), Tha
perfectly wise being will constantly and certainly choo
what is most fit; and says, (p. 102, 103) "I grant, a
always have granted, that wheresoever there is such a
tecedent superior fitness of things, God acts according
it; so as never to contradict it; and, particularly, in
his judicial proceedings as a Governor and Distribut
of rewards and punishments." Yea, he says expressl
(p. 42.) "That it is not possible for God to act othe
wise than according to this fitness and goodness i
things."

So that according to this author, putting these sever
passages of this Essay together, there is *no virtue, n
any thing of a moral nature*, in the most sublime an
glorious acts and exercises of God's holiness, justice, an
faithfulness; and he never does any thing which is i
itself supremely worthy, and, above all other things, f
and excellent, but only as a kind of mechanical mediu
of fate; and in *what he does as the Judge and moral G
vernor of the world*, he exercises no moral excellency
exercising no freedom in these things, because he act
by moral necessity, which is, in effect, the same wit
physical or natural necessity; and, therefore, he onl
acts by an Hobbistical fatality; *as a Being indeed o
vast understanding, as well as a power and efficiency* (a
he said before) *but without a will to choose, being a kin
of Almighty Minister of Fate, acting under a suprem
influence.* For he allows, that in all these things, God'
Will is determined constantly and certainly by a supe
rior fitness, and that it is not possible for him to ac
otherwise. And if these things are so, what glory o
praise belongs to God for doing holily and justly, o
taking the most fit, holy, wise, and excellent course, i
any one instance? Whereas according to the Scrip
tures, and also the common sense of mankind, it does
not, in the least, derogate from the honour of any being,
that, through the moral perfection of his nature, he ne

cessarily acts with supreme wisdom and holiness: but, on the contrary, his praise is the greater. Herein consists the height of his glory.

The same author (p. 56) supposes that herein appears the excellent *character of a wise and good man, that though he can choose contrary to the fitness of things, yet he does not; but suffers himself to be directed by fitness;* and that, in this conduct, *he imitates the blessed God.* And yet, he supposes it is contrariwise with the blessed God; not that he suffers himself to be directed by fitness, when *he can choose contrary to the fitness of things;* as he says (p. 42)—*That it is not possible for God to act otherwise than according to his fitness, where there is any fitness or goodness in things;* yea, he supposes (p. 31), That if a man *were perfectly wise and good, he could not do otherwise than be constantly and certainly determined by the fitness of things.*

One thing more I would observe, before I conclude this section; and that is, that if it derogates nothing from the glory of God, to be necessarily determined by superior fitness in some things, then neither does it to be thus determined in all things; from any thing in the nature of such necessity, as at all detracting from God's freedom, independence, absolute supremacy, or any dignity or glory of his nature, state, or manner of acting; or as implying any infirmity, restraint, or subjection; and if the thing be such as well consists with God's glory, and has nothing tending at all to detract from it, then we need not be afraid of ascribing it to God in too many things, lest thereby we should detract from God's glory too much.

SECTION VIII.

Some further Objections against the Moral Necessity of God's Volition considered.

THE author last cited, as has been observed, owns that God, being perfectly wise, will constantly and certainly choose what appears most fit, where there is a superior fitness and goodness in things; and that it is not possible for him to do otherwise. So that it is in effect confessed, that in those things where there is any real preferableness, it is no dishonour, nothing in any respect unworthy of God, for him to act from necessity; notwithstanding all that can be objected from the agreement of such a necessity, with the fate of the *Stoics*, and the necessity maintained by Mr *Hobbes*. From which it will follow, that if it were so, that in all the different things, among which God chooses, there were evermore a superior fitness or preferableness on one side, then it would be no dishonour, or any thing, in any respect unworthy or unbecoming of God, for his will to be necessarily determined in every thing; and if this be allowed, it is giving up entirely the argument, from the unsuitableness of such a necessity to the liberty, supremacy, independence, and glory of the divine Being; and a resting the whole weight of the affair on the decision of another point wholly diverse; *viz. Whether it be so indeed*, that in all the various possible things, which are in God's view, and may be considered as capable objects of his choice, there is not evermore a preferableness in one thing above another. This is denied by this author; who supposes, that in many instances, between two or more possible things, which come within the view of the divine mind, there is a perfect indifference and equality, as to fitness or tendency, to attain any good end which God can have in view, or to answer any of his designs.

low, therefore, I would consider whether this be evident.

The arguments brought to prove this, are of two inds :—(1.) It is urged, that, in many instances, we ust suppose there is absolutely no difference between arious possible objects of choice, which God has in iew ; and (2.) That the difference between many things so inconsiderable, or of such a nature, that it would e unreasonable to suppose it to be of any consequence ; r to suppose that any of God's wise designs, would not e answered in one way as well as the other. Therere,

I. The first thing to be considered is, Whether there re any instances wherein there is a perfect likeness, and bsolutely no difference, between different objects of hoice, that are proposed to the divine understanding ?

Here, in the *first* place, it may be worthy to be condered, whether the contradiction there is in the *terms* f the question proposed, does not give reason to susect, that there is an inconsistency in the *thing* supposed. t is enquired, Whether different objects of choice may ot be absolutely without difference ? If they are ablutely without difference, then how are they different bjects of choice ? If there be absolutely no difference, any respect, then there is no variety or distinction ; r distinction is only by some difference ; and if there e no variety among proposed objects of choice, then ere is no opportunity for variety of choice, or differnce of determination ; for that determination of a thing, hich is not different in any respect, is not a different etermination, but the same. That this is no quibble, ay appear more fully anon.

The arguments to prove that the Most High, in some stances, chooses to do one thing rather than another, here the things themselves are perfectly without differnce, are two.

1. That the various parts of infinite time and space, bsolutely considered, are perfectly alike, and do not dir at all one from another ; and that therefore, when

God determined to create the world in such a part of infinite duration and space, rather than others, he determined to create the world in such a part of infinite duration and space, rather than others, he determined and preferred, among various objects between which there was no preferableness, and absolutely no difference.

Answer. This objection supposes an infinite length of time before the world was created, distinguished by successive parts, properly and truly so; or a succession of limited and unmeasurable periods of time, following one another, in an infinitely long series; which must needs be a groundless imagination. The eternal duration, which was before the world, being only the eternity of God's existence; which is nothing else but his immediate, perfect, and invariable possession of the whole of his unlimited life, together and at once; *vitæ interminabilis, tota simul & perfecta possessio*; which is so generally allowed, that I need not stand to demonstrate it *

" * If all created beings were taken away, all possibility of any mutation or succession of one thing to another, would appear to be also removed. Abstract succession in eternity is scarce to be understood. What is it that succeeds? One minute to another, perhaps, *velut unda supervenit undam*. But when we imagine this, we fancy that the minutes are things separately existing. This is the common notion; and yet it is a manifest prejudice. Time is nothing but the existence of created successive beings, and eternity the necessary existence of the Deity. Therefore, if this necessary being hath no change or succession in his nature, his existence must of course be unsuccessive. We seem to commit a double oversight in this case; *first*, we find succession in the necessary nature and existence of the Deity himself; which is wrong, if the reasoning above be conclusive;—and *then* we ascribe this succession to eternity, considered abstractedly from the Eternal Being; and suppose it, one knows not what a thing subsisting by itself, and flowing one minute after another. This is the work of pure imagination, and contrary to the reality of things. Hence the common metaphorical expressions—*Time runs a pace, let us lay hold on the present minute*, and the like. The philosophers themselves mislead us by their illustration. They compare eternity to the motion of a point running on for ever, and making a traceless infinite line. Here the point is supposed a thing actually subsisting, representing the present minute; and then they ascribe motion or succession to it;

So this objection supposes an extent of space beyond the limits of the creation, of an infinite length, breadth and depth, truly and properly distinguished into different measureable parts, limited at certain stages, one beyond another, in an infinite series; which notion of absolute and infinite space is doubtless as unreasonable as that now mentioned, of absolute and infinite duration. It is as improper to imagine, that the immensity and omnipresence of God is distinguished by a series of miles and leagues, one beyond another; as that the infinite duration of God is distinguished by months and years, one after another. A diversity and order of distinct parts, limited by certain periods, is as conceivable, and does as naturally obtrude itself on our imagination, in one case as the other; and there is equal reason in each case to suppose, that our imagination deceives us.—It is equally improper, to talk of months and years of the divine existence, and miles squares of Deity; and we equally deceive ourselves, when we talk of the world's being differently fixed, with respect to either of these sorts of measures I think, we know not what we mean, if we say, the world might have been differently placed from what it is, in the broad expanse of infinity; or, that it might have been differently fixed in the long line of eternity; and all arguments and objections, which are built on the imaginations we are apt to have of infinite extension or duration, are buildings founded on shadows, or castles in the air.

2. The second argument, to prove that the Most High wills one thing rather than another, without any superior fitness or preferableness in the thing pre-

---

hat is, they ascribe motion to a mere non-entity, to illustrate to us a successive eternity, made up of finite successive parts.——If once we allow an all-perfect mind, which hath an eternal, immutable, and infinite comprehension of all things, always (and allow it we must) the distinction of past and future vanishes with respect to such a mind. In a word, if we proceed step by step, as above, the eternity or existence of the Deity will appear to be *vitæ interminabilis, tota, simul & perfecta possessio;* how much soever this may have been a paradox hitherto. *Enquiry into the Nature of the Human Soul.* Vol. II, p. 409, 410, 411, edition 3.

ferred, is God's actually placing, in different parts of the world, particles, or atoms of matter, that are perfectly equal and alike. The forementioned author says, (p. 78, &c.) "If one would descend to the minute specific particulars, of which different bodies are composed, we should see abundant reason to believe, that there are thousands of such little particles, or atoms of matter, which are perfectly equal and alike, and could give no distinct determination to the will of God where to place them." He there instances, in particles of water, of which there are such immense numbers, which compose the rivers and oceans of this world, and the infinite myriads of the luminous and fiery particles which compose the body of the Sun; so many, that it would be very unreasonable to suppose no two of them should be exactly equal and alike.

Answer. (1.) To this I answer: That as we must suppose matter to be infinitely divisible, it is very unlikely that any two, of all these particles, are exactly equal and alike; so unlikely, that it is a thousand to one, yea, an infinite number to one, but it is otherwise; and that although we should allow a great similarity between the different particles of water and fire, as to their general nature and figure; however small we suppose those particles to be, it is infinitely unlikely, that any two of them should be exactly equal in dimensions and quantity of matter. If we should suppose a great many globes of the same nature with the globe of the earth, it would be very strange, if there were any two of them that had exactly the same number of particles of dust and water in them. But infinitely less strange than that two particles of light should have just the same quantity of matter. For a particle of light, according to the doctrine of the infinite divisibility of matter, is composed of infinitely more assignable parts than there are particles of dust and water in the globe of the earth; and as it is infinitely unlikely, that any two of these particles should be *equal*, so it is, that they should be alike

n other respects; to instance in the configuration of heir surfaces. If there were very many globes of the ature of the earth, it would be very unlikely that any wo should have exactly the same number of particles f dust, water, and stone, in their surfaces, and all post- d exactly alike, one with respect to another, without ny difference, in any part discernible either by the na- ed eye or microscope, but infinitely less strange, than that wo particles of light should be perfectly of the same figure. For there are infinitely more assignable real parts on he surface of a particle of light, than there are parti- les of dust, water, and stone on the surface of the ter- estrial globe.

Answer. (2.) But then, supposing that there are two articles or atoms of matter perfectly equal and alike, hich God has placed in different parts of the creation as I will not deny it to be possible for God to make two odies perfectly alike, and put them in different places) et it will not follow, that two different or distinct acts, r effects of the divine power have exactly the same fit- ess or the same ends. For these two different bodies are ot different or distinct, in any other respects than those herein they *differ*; they are two in no other respects han those wherein there is a difference. If they are erfectly equal and alike *in themselves*, then they can e distinguished, or be distinct, only in those things hich are called *circumstances*; as place, time, rest, notion, or some other present or past circumstances or elations; for it is difference only that constitutes dis- inction. If God makes two bodies, *in themselves* every way equal and alike, and agreeing perfectly in all other ircumstances and relations, but only *their place*, then n this only is there any distinction or duplicity. The igure is the same, the measure is the same, the solidity, nd resistence are the same, and every thing the same; ut only the place. Therefore, what the will of God de- ermines, is this, namely, that there should be the same igure, the same extension, the same resistance, &c.

in two different places. And for this determination h has some reason. There is some end, for which such determination and act has a peculiar fitness, above a other acts. Here is no one thing determined withou an end, and no one thing without a fitness for that end superior to any thing else. If it be the pleasure of Go to cause the same resistance, and the same figure, to b in two different places and situations, we can no mor justly argue from it, that here must be some determina tion or act of God's will, that is wholly without motiv or end, then we can argue, that whenever, in any case it is a man's will to speak the same words, or make the same sounds at two different times : there must be some determination or act of his will, without any motive o end. The difference of place, in the former case, proves no more than the difference of the time does in the other. If any one should say, with regard to the former case, that there must be something determined without an end; viz. that of those two similar bodies, this in particular should be made in this place, and the other in the other, and should enquire, Why the Creator did not make them in a transposition, when both are alike, and each would equally have suited either place? The enquiry supposes something that is not true ; namely, that the two bodies differ and are distinct in other respects besides their place. So that with this distinction *inherent* in them, they might, in their first creation, have been transposed, and each might have begun its existence in the place of the other.

Let us, for clearness sake, suppose, that God had, at the beginning, made two globes, each of an inch diameter, both perfect spheres, and perfectly solid, without pores, and perfectly alike in every respect, and placed them near one to another, one towards the right hand, and the other towards the left, without any difference as to time, motion, or rest, past or present, or any circumstance, but only their place ; and the question should be asked, why God in their creation placed them so ? Why that which is made on the right hand, was not made on the left, and

vice versa? Let it be well considered, whether there be any sense in such a question; and whether the enquiry does not suppose something false and absurd. Let it be considered, what the Creator must have done otherwise than he did, what different act of will or power he must have exerted, in order to the thing proposed. All that could have been done, would have been to have made two spheres, perfectly alike, in the same places where he has made them, without any difference of the things made, either in themselves or in any circumstances; so that the whole effect would have been without any difference, and, therefore, just the same. By the supposition, the two spheres are different in no other respect but their place; and therefore, in other respects, they are the same. Each has the same roundness; it is not a distinct rotundity, in any other respect but its situation. There are also the same dimensions, differing in nothing but their place; and so of their resistance, and every thing else that belongs to them.

Here, if any choose to say, "That there is a difference in another respect, *viz.* that they are not NUMERICALLY the same; that it is thus with all the qualities that belong to them; that it is confessed, they are, in some respects, the same; that is, they are both exactly like; but yet *numerically* they differ. Thus the roundness of one is not the same *numerical*, *individual* roundness with that of the other." Let this be supposed; then the question about the determination of the divine will in the affair, is, Why did God will that this *individual* roundness should be at the right hand, and the other *individual* roundness at the left? Why did not he make them in a contrary position? Let any rational person consider, whether such questions be not words without a meaning; as much as if God should see fit for some ends, to cause the same sounds to be repeated, or made at two different times; the sounds being perfectly the same in every other respect, but only one was a minute after the other; and it should be asked upon it, Why God caused these sounds, numerically different,

one to succeed the other in such a manner? Why h did not make that individual sound, which was in th first minute to be in the second,—and the individua sound of the last minute to be in the first?—which en quiries would be even ridiculous; as, I think, every per son must see at once, in the case proposed of two sounds being only the same repeated, absolutely without any difference, but that one circumstance of time. If th Most High sees it will answer some good end, that the same sound should be made by lightning at two distinc times, and therefore wills that it should be so, must i needs therefore be, that herein there is some act of God's will without any motive or end? God saw fit often, a distinct times, and on different occasions, to say the very same words to Moses; namely, those, *I am Jehovah.*— And would it not be unreasonable to infer, as a certain consequence, from this, that here must be some act or acts of the divine will, in determining and disposing these words exactly alike, at different times, wholly without aim or inducement? But it would be no more unreasonable than to say, that there must be an act of God's without any inducement, if he sees it best, and for some reasons, determines that there shall be the same resistance, the same dimensions, and the same figure, in several distinct places.

If, in the instance of the two spheres, perfectly alike, it be supposed possible that God might have made them in a contrary position; that which is made at the right hand, being made at the left; then I ask, Whether it is not evidently equally possible, if God had made but one of them, and that in the place of the right hand globe, that he might have made that numerically different from what it is, and numerically different from what he did make it, though perfectly alike, and in the same place, and at the same time, and in every respect, in the same circumstances and relations? Namely, Whether he might not have made it numerically the same with that which he has now made at the left hand; and so

ve left that which is now created at the right hand, a state of non-existence? And, if so, Whether it ould not have been possible to have made one in that ace, perfectly like these, and yet numerically differing om both? And let it be considered, whether from this tion of numerical difference in bodies, perfectly equal d alike, which numerical difference is something in- rent in the bodies themselves, and diverse from the fference of place or time, or any circumstance whatso- er, it will not follow, that there is an infinite number numerically different possible bodies, perfectly alike, nong which God chooses, by a self-determining power, en he goes about to create bodies.

Therefore, let us put the case thus: Supposing that od, in the beginning, had created but one perfectly id sphere in a certain place, and it should be enquired, hy God created that individual sphere, in that place, that time? And why he did not create another sphere rfectly like it, but numerically different, in the same ce, at the same time? or why he chose to bring into ing there, that very body, rather than any of the in- ite number of other bodies, perfectly like it, either of ich he could have made there as well, and would have swered his end as well? Why he caused to exist, at that ce and time, that individual roundness, rather than y other of the infinite number of individual rotundities, t like it? Why that individual resistance, rather than y other of the infinite number of possible resistances, t like it? And it might as reasonably be asked, Why, en God first caused it to thunder, he caused that indi- ual sound then to be made, and not another just like it? hy did he make choice of this very sound, and reject the infinite number of other possible sounds just like but numerically differing from it, and all differing one m another? I think, every body must be sensible the absurdity and nonsense of what is supposed in h enquiries; and, if we calmly attend to the matter, shall be convinced, that all such kind of objections as

I am answering, are founded on nothing but the imperfection of our manner of conceiving things, and the obscureness of language, and great want of clearness and precision in the signification of terms.

If any shall find fault with this reasoning, that it is going a great length into metaphysical niceties and subtilities; I answer, the objection which they are in reply to, is a metaphysical subtilty, and must be treated according to the nature of it *.

II. Another thing alleged is, that innumerable things which are determined by the divine will, and chosen and done by God rather than others, differs from those things are not chosen in so inconsiderable a manner, that it would be unreasonable to suppose the difference to be of any consequence, or that there is any superior fitness or goodness, that God can have respect to in the determination.

To which I answer, It is impossible for us to determine, with any certainty or evidence, that because the difference is very small, and appears to us of no consideration, therefore there is absolutely no superior goodness, and no valuable end, which can be proposed by the Creator and Governor of the world, in ordering such a difference. The forementioned author mentions many instances. One is, there being one atom in the whole universe more or less. But, I think, it would be unreasonable to suppose that God made one atom in vain or without any end or motive. He made not one atom but what was a work of his Almighty Power, as much as the whole globe of the earth, and requires as much of a constant exertion of Almighty Power to uphold it; and was made and is upheld understandingly and on design, as much as if no other had been made but that; and it would be as unreasonable to suppose, that

* "For men to have recourse to subtilities, in raising difficulties and then complain that they should be taking off by minutely examining these subtilities, is a strange kind of procedure." *Nature of the Human Soul.* Vol. 2, p. 331.

he made it without any thing really aimed at in so doing, as much as to suppose, that he made the planet Jupiter without aim or design.

It is possible, that the most minute effects of the Creator's power, the smallest assignable difference between the things which God has made, may be attended, in the whole series of events, and the whole compass and extent of their influence, with very great and important consequences. If the laws of motion and gravitation, laid down by Sir *Isaac Newton*, hold universally, there is not one atom, nor the least assignable part of an atom, but what has influence, every moment, throughout the whole material universe, to cause every part to be otherwise than it would be, if it were not for that particular corporeal existence; and however the effect is insensible for the present, yet it may, in length of time, become great and important.

To illustrate this, let us suppose two bodies moving the same way, in straight lines, perfectly parallel one to another; but to be diverted from this parallel course, and drawn one from another, as much as might be by the attraction of an atom, at the distance of one of the furthest of the fixed stars from the earth; these bodies being turned out of the lines of their parallel motion, will, by degrees, get further and further distant, one from the other; and though the distance may be imperceptible for a long time, yet at length it may become very great. So the revolution of a planet round the sun being retarded or accelerated, and the orbit of its revolution made greater or less, and more or less elliptical, and so its periodical time longer or shorter, no more than may be by the influence of the least atom, might, in length of time, perform a whole revolution sooner or later than otherwise it would have done; which might make a vast alteration with regard to millions of important events. So the influence of the least particle may, for ought we know, have such effect on something in the constitution of some human body, as to cause another thought to arise in the

mind at a certain time, than otherwise would have been; which, in length of time, (yea, and that not very great) might occasion a vast alteration through the whole world of mankind; and so innumerable other ways might be mentioned, wherein the least assignable alteration may possibly be attended with great consequences.

Another *argument*, which the forementioned author brings against a necessary determination of the divine will, by a superior fitness, is, that such doctrine derogates from the *freeness* of God's *grace* and *goodness*, in choosing the objects of his favour and bounty, and from the *obligation* upon men to *thankfulness* for special benefits. P. 89, &c.

In answer to this objection, I would observe,

1. That it derogates no more from the goodness of God, to suppose the exercise of the benevolence of his nature to be determined by wisdom, than to suppose it determined by chance, and that his favours are bestowed altogether at random, his will being determined by nothing but perfect accident, without any end or design whatsoever; which must be the case, as has been demonstrated, if volition be not determined by a prevailing motive. That which is owing to perfect contingence, wherein neither previous inducement, nor antecedent choice has any hand, is not owing more to goodness or benevolence, than that which is owing to the influence of a wise end.

2. It is acknowledged, that if the motive that determines the will of God, in the choice of the objects of his favours, be any moral quality in the object, recommending that object to his benevolence above others, his choosing that object is not so great a manifestation of the freeness and sovereignty of his grace, as if it were otherwise. But there is no necessity of supposing this, in order to our supposing that he has some wise end in view, in determining to bestow his favours on one person rather than another. We are to distinguish between the *merit of the object of God's favour*, or a moral

qualification of *the object* attracting that favour and recommending to it, and the *natural fitness* of such a determination *of the act of God's goodness*, to answer some wise design of his own, some end in the view of God's Omniscience.—It is God's own act that is the proper and immediate object of his volition.

3. I suppose that none will deny, but that, in some instances, God acts from wise design in determining the particular subjects of his favours: none will say, I presume, that when God distinguishes, by his bounty, particular societies or persons, he never in any instance, exercises any wisdom in so doing, aiming at some happy consequence; and, if it be not denied to be so in some instances, then I would enquire, Whether, in these instances, God's goodness is less manifested than in those wherein God has no aim or end at all? And whether the subjects have less cause of thankfulness? And if so, who shall be thankful for the bestowment of distinguishing mercy, with that enhancing circumstance of the distinctions being made without an end? How shall it be known when God is influenced by some wise aim, and when not? It is very manifest, with respect to the apostle *Paul*, that God had wise ends in choosing him to be a Christian and an Apostle, who had been a persecutor, &c. The apostle himself mentions one end, in 1 Tim. i. 15, 16:—"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. Howbeit, for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first, Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them who should hereafter believe on Him to life everlasting." But yet the apostle never looked on it as a diminution of the freedom and riches of divine grace in his election, which he so often and so greatly magnifies. This brings me to observe,

4. Our supposing such a moral necessity in the acts of God's will, as has been spoken of, is so far from necessarily derogating from the riches of God's grace to such as are the chosen objects of his favour, that in many instances, this moral necessity may arise from good-

ness, and from the great degree of it. God may choose this object rather than another, as having a superior fitness to answer the ends, designs, and inclinations of his goodness; being more sinful, and so more miserable and necessitous than others; the inclinations of Infinite Mercy and benevolence may be more gratified, and the gracious design of God's sending his Son into the world, may be more abundantly answered, in the exercises of mercy towards such an object, rather than another.

One thing more I would observe, before I finish what I have to say on the head of the necessity of the acts of God's will; and that is, that something much more like a servile subjection of the divine Being to fatal necessity, will follow from *Arminian* principles, than from the doctrines which they oppose. For they (at least most of them) suppose, with respect to all events that happen in the moral world, depending on the volitions of moral agents, which are the most important events of the universe, to which all others are subordinate; I say, they suppose, with respect to these, that God has a certain foreknowledge of them, antecedent to any purposes or decrees of his about them; and if so they have a fixed certain futurity, prior to any designs or volitions of his and independent on them, and to which his volitions must be subject, as he would wisely accommodate his affairs to this fixed futurity of the state of things in the moral world. So that here, instead of a moral necessity of God's will arising from, or consisting in the infinite perfection and blessedness of the divine Being, we have a fixed unalterable state of things, properly distinct from the perfect nature of the divine mind, and the state of the divine will and design, and entirely independent on these things, and which they have no hand in, because they are prior to them; and which God's will is truly subject to, being obliged to conform or accommodate himself to it, in all his purposes and decrees, and in every thing he does in his disposals and government of the world,—the moral world being the end of the natural; so that all is in vain, that is not accommo-

dated to that state of the moral world, which consists in, or depends upon the acts and state of the wills of moral agents, which had a fixed futurition from eternity.—Such a subjection to necessity as this, would truly argue an inferiority and servitude, that would be unworthy of the Supreme Being; and is much more agreeable to the notion which many of the Heathen had of Fate, as above the gods, than that moral necessity of fitness and wisdom which has been spoken of; and is truly repugnant to the absolute sovereignty of God, and inconsistent with the supremacy of his will; and really subjects the will of the Most High to the will of his creatures, and brings him into dependence upon them.

SECTION IX.

Concerning that Objection against the Doctrine which has been maintained, that it makes God the Author of Sin.

IT is urged by *Arminians*, that the doctrine of the necessity of men's volitions, or their necessary connection with antecedent events and circumstances, makes the first cause, and supreme order of all things, the Author of Sin; in that he has so constituted the state and course of things, that sinful volitions become necessary, in consequence of his disposal. Dr *Whitby*, in his Discourse on the Freedom of the Will*, cites one of the ancients, as on his side, declaring that this opinion of the necessity of the will, "absolves sinners, as doing nothing of their own accord which was evil, and would cast all the blame of all the wickedness committed in the world upon God, and upon his Providence, if that were admit-

* On the Five Points, p. 361.

ted by the assertors of this fate; whether he himself di necessitate them to do these things, or ordered matter so, that they should be constrained to do them by som other cause." And the doctor says, in another place * "In the nature of the thing, and in the opinion of ph losophers, *causa deficiens, in rebus necessariis, ad cau sam per se efficientem reducenda est.* In things ne cessary, the deficient cause must be reduced to the ef ficient; and in this case the reason is evident; becaus the not doing what is required, or not avoiding what i forbidden, being a defect, must follow from the positio of the necessary cause of that deficiency."

Concerning this, I would observe the following things:—

1. If there be any difficulty in this matter, it is no thing peculiar to this scheme: it is no difficulty or dis advantage, wherein it is distinguished from the scheme of *Arminians;* and, therefore, not reasonably objected by them.

Dr Whitby supposes, that if sin necessarily follows from God's withholding assistance, or if that assistance be not given, which is absolutely necessary to the avoiding of evil, then, in the nature of the thing, God must be as properly the author of that evil, as if it were the efficient cause of it; from whence, according to what he himself says of the devils and damned spirits, God must be the proper author of their perfect unrestrained wickedness: he must be the efficient cause of the great pride of the devils, and of their perfect malignity against God, Christ, his saints, and all that is good, and of the insatiable cruelty of their disposition; for he allows that God has so forsaken them, and does so withhold his assistance from them, that they are incapacitated from doing good, and determined only to evil†. Our doctrine, in its consequence, makes God the author of men's sin in this

* Ibid p. 486.
† On the Five Points, p. 302, 305.

world, no more and in no other sense, than his doctrine, n its consequence, makes God the author of the hellish ride and malice of the Devils: and doubtless the lat- er is as odious an effect as the former.

Again: if it will follow at all that God is the author f sin, from what has been supposed of a sure and infal- ible connection between antecedents and consequents, will *follow because of this, viz.* that for God to be au- hor or orderer of those things which he knows before and, will infallibly be attended with such a consequence, s the same thing, in effect, as for him to be the author f that consequence; but, if this be so, this is a difficul- y which equally attends the doctrine of *Arminians* them- elves; at least, of those of them who allow God's cer- ain fore-knowledge of all events; for on the supposition f such a fore-knowledge, this is the case with respect to very sin that is committed; God knew, that if he or- ered and brought to pass such and such events, such ns would infallibly follow. As for instance, God cer- ainly foreknew, long before Judas was born, that if he rdered things so, that there should be such a man born, t such a time and at such a place, and that his life hould be preserved, and that he should, in divine Pro- idence, be led into acquaintance with Jesus; and that is heart should be so influenced by God's spirit or pro- idence, as to be inclined to be a follower of Christ; and hat he should be one of those twelve, which should be hosen constantly to attend him as his family; and that is health should be preserved, so that he should go up o Jerusalem, at the last passover in Christ's life; and should be so ordered, that Judas should see Christ's ind treatment of the woman which anointed him at ethany, and have that reproof from Christ, which he d at that time, and see and hear other things which xcited his enmity against his Master, and other circum- ances should be ordered, as they were ordered; it ould be what would most certainly and infallibly fol- w, that Judas would betray his Lord, and would soon ter hang himself, and die impenitent, and be sent to ell for his horrid wickedness.

Therefore, this supposed difficulty ought not to b brought as an objection against the scheme which h been maintained, as disagreeing with the Arminia scheme, seeing it is no difficulty owing to such a dis greement; but a difficulty wherein the Arminians sha with us. That must be unreasonably made an objectio against our differing from them, which we should n escape or avoid at all by agreeing with them.

Therefore I would observe,

II. They who object, that this doctrine makes Go the author of sin, ought distinctly to explain what the mean by that phrase *the author of sin*. I know th phrase, as it is commonly used, signifies something ver ill. If by *the author of sin*, be meant *the sinner, th agent*, or *actor of sin*, or *the doer of a wicked thing*; s it would be a reproach and blasphemy, to suppose Go to be the author of sin. In this sense, I utterly den God to be the author of sin; rejecting such an imputa tion on the Most High, as what is infinitely to be abhor red; and deny any such thing to be the consequence o what I have laid down. But if, by *the author of sin*, i meant the permitter, or not a hinderer of sin; and, a the same time, a disposer of the state of events, in such a manner, for wise, holy, and most excellent ends an purposes, that sin, if it be permitted or not hindered will most certainly and infallibly follow; I say, if this be all that is meant, by being the author of sin, I do not deny that God is the author of sin, (though I dislike and reject the phrase, as that which by use and custom is apt to carry another sense) it is no reproach for the Most High to be thus the author of sin. This is not to be the actor of sin, but, on the contrary, *of holiness*. What God doth herein is holy; and a glorious exercise of the infinite excellency of his nature; and, I do not deny, that God's being thus the author of sin, follows from what I have laid down; and, I assert, that it equally follows from the doctrine which is maintained by most of the Arminian divines.

That it is most certainly so, that God is in such a

nner the disposer and orderer of sin, is evident, if any edit is to be given to the Scriptures; as well as because it is impossible, in the nature of things, to be herwise. In such a manner God ordered the obstiny of Pharoah, in his refusing to obey God's commands, let the people go." Exod. iv. 21: "I will harden his art, and he shall not let the people go." Chap. vii. 2—5: Aaron, thy brother shall speak unto Pharaoh, that he nd the children of Israel out of his land. And I will harn Pharaoh's heart, and multiply my signs and my wonrs in the land of Egypt. But Pharaoh shall not arken unto you; that I may lay mine hand upon gypt, by great judgments," &c. Chap. ix. 12: "And e Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and he hearned not unto them, as the Lord had spoken unto oses." Chap. x. 1, 2; "And the Lord said unto oses, Go in unto Pharaoh; for I have hardened his art, and the heart of his servants, that I might shew ese my signs before him, and that thou mayest tell it the ears of thy son, and thy son's son, what things I ve wrought in Egypt, and my signs which I have ne amongst them, that ye may know that I am the rd." Chap. xiv. 4: "And I will harden Pharaoh's art, that he shall follow after them; and I will be noured upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host." Ver. 8. And the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of gypt, and he pursued after the children of Israel." nd it is certain, that in such a manner God, for wise d good ends, ordered that event, Joseph being sold o Egypt by his brethren. Gen. xlv. 5: "Now, erefore, be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, t ye sold me hither; for God did send me before you preserve life." Ver. 7, 8: "God did send me before u to preserve a posterity in the earth, and to save ur lives by a great deliverance: so that now it was t you that sent me hither, but God." Psal. cvii. 17; He sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was d for a servant." It is certain, that thus God orderthe sin and folly of Sihon, king of the Amorites, in using, to let the people of Israel pass by him peacea-

bly. Deut. ii. 30. "But Sihon, king of Heshbo would not let us pass by him; for the Lord thy G hardened his spirit, and made his heart obstinate, th he might deliver him into thine hand. It is certai that God thus ordered the sin and folly of the kings Canaan, that they attempted not to make peace wi Israel, but, with a stupid boldness and obstinacy, s themselves violently to oppose them and their Go Josh. xi. 20; "For it was of the Lord to harden the hearts, that they should come against Israel in battl that he might destroy them utterly, and that they mig have no favour; but that he might destroy them, as t Lord commanded Moses." It is evident, that thus Go ordered the treacherous rebellion of Zedekiah again the king of Babylon. Jer. lii. 3; "For through th anger of the Lord it came to pass in Jerusalem and Ju dah, until he had cast them out from his presence, tha Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon." So Kings xxiv. 20. And it is exceeding manifest, that Go thus ordered the rapine and unrighteous ravages of Ne buchadnezzar, in spoiling and ruining the nations roun about. Jer. xxv. 9; "Behold, I will send and take a the families of the north, saith the Lord, and Nebuchad nezzar my servant, and will bring them against this land and against all the nations round about; and will utter ly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, an an hissing, and perpetual desolations." Chap. xliii. 10 11; "I will send and take Nebuchadnezzar, the kin of Babylon, my servant; and I will set his throne upon these stones that I have hid, and he shall spread his royal pavilion over them. And when he cometh, h shall smite the land of Egypt, and deliver such as ar for death to death, and such as are for captivity to cap tivity, and such as are for the sword to the sword. Thus God represents himself as sending for Nebuchad nezzar, and taking of him and his armies, and bringing him against the nations, which were to be destroyed by him, to that very end, that he might utterly destroy them, and make them desolate; and as appointing th

rk that he should do, so particularly, that the very sons were designed, that he should kill with the ord; and those that should be killed with famine and tilence, and those that should be carried into captivi- and that in doing all these things, he should act as servant; by which, less cannot be intended, than t he should serve his purposes and designs. And in r. xxvii. 4, 5, 6, God declares, how he would cause thus to serve his designs, viz. by bringing this to s in his sovereign disposals, as the great Possessor Governor of the Universe, that disposes all things as pleases him. "Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, God of Israel; I have made the earth, the man, and beast, that are upon the ground, by my great power, my stretched out arm; and have given it unto whom eemed meet unto me; and now I have given all se lands into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar MY SER-VT, and the beasts of the field have I given also to serve ." And Nebuchadnezzar is spoken of as doing these igs, by having his *arms strengthened* by God, and ing *God's sword put into his hands, for this end.* ek. xxx. 24, 25, 26. Yea, God speaks of his terri- ravaging and wasting the nations, and cruelly des- ying all sorts, without distinction of sex or age, as weapon in God's hand, and the instrument of his ignation, which God makes use of to fulfil his own rposes, and execute his own vengeance. Jer. li. 20, "Thou art my battle-axe, and weapons of war. r with thee will I break in pieces the nations, and h thee I will destroy kingdoms, and with thee I will ak in pieces the horse and his rider, and with thee I l break in pieces the chariot and his rider; with thee will I break in pieces man and woman; and with e will I break in pieces old and young; and with e will I break in pieces the young man and the maid," It is represented, that the designs of Nebuchad- zzar, and those that destroyed Jerusalem, never could e been accomplished, had not God determined them, vell as they. Lam. iii. 37: "Who is he that saith,

and it cometh to pass, and the Lord commanded it not?" And yet the king of Babylon's thus destroying the nations, and especially the Jews, is spoken of as his great wickedness, for which God finally destroyed him. Isa. xiv. 4, 5, 6, 12; Hab. ii. 5—12; and Jer. l. and li. It is most manifest, that God, to serve his own designs, providentially ordered Shimei's cursing David. 2 Sam. xvi. 10, 11: "The Lord hath said unto him, curse David—Let him curse, for the Lord hath bidden him."

It is certain, that God thus, for excellent, holy, gracious, and glorious ends, ordered the fact which they committed, who were concerned in Christ's death; and that therein they did but fulfil God's designs. As, I trust, no Christian will deny, it was the design of God that Christ should *be crucified*, and that for this end he came into the world. It is very manifest, by many Scriptures, that the whole affair of Christ's crucifixion, with its circumstances, and the treachery of *Judas*, that made way for it, was ordered in God's providence, in pursuance of his purpose; notwithstanding the violence that is used with those plain Scriptures, to obscure and pervert the sense of them. Acts ii. 23: "Him being delivered, by the determinate counsel and fore-knowledge of God*, ye have taken, and with wicked hands, have crucified and slain." Luke xxii. 21, 22: "But behold the hand of him that betrayeth me, is with me on the table; and truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined†."

---

* "Grotius, as well as Beza, observes, That the Greek word progonsis, must here signify degree; and Elsner has shewn that it has that signification, in approved Greek writers; and it is certain that the Greek word ekdotos, signifies one given up into the hands of an enemy." Doddridge in Loc.

† "As this passage is not liable to the ambiguities, which some have apprehended in Acts ii. 23, and iv. 38. (which yet seem on the whole to be parallel to it, in their most natural construction) I look upon it as an evident proof, that these things are, in the language of Scripture, said to be determined or decreed (or exactly bounded and marked out by God, as the Greek word *orizo* most naturally signifies (which he sees in fact will happen, in consequence of his volitions) without any necessitating agency; as well as these events, of which he is properly the author." *Doddrige* in *Loc.*

Acts iv. 27, 28: "For of a truth, against the holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." Acts iii. 17, 18: "And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers; but these things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled." So that what these murderers of Christ did, is spoken of as what God brought to pass or ordered, and that by which he fulfilled his own word.

In Rev. xvii. 17, "The agreeing of the kings of the earth to give their kingdom to the beast, though it was a very wicked thing in them, is spoken of as *a fulfilling God's will*, and what *God hath put into their hearts to do*." It is manifest that God sometimes permits sin to be committed, and at the same time orders things so, that if he permits the fact, it will come to pass, because on some accounts, he sees it needful and of importance, that it should come to pass. Matt. xviii. 7: "It must needs be, that offences come; but wo to that man by whom the offence cometh." With 1 Cor. xi. 19, "For there must also be heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you."

Thus it is certain and demonstrable, from the holy Scriptures, as well as the nature of things, and the principles of *Arminians*, that God permits sin; and at the same time, so orders things, in his Providence, that it certainly and infallibly will come to pass, in consequence of his permission.

I proceed to observe in the next place,

III. That there is a great difference between God's being concerned thus, by his *permission*, in an event and act, which, in the inherent subject and agent of it, is sin (though the event will certainly follow on his permission) and his being concerning in it by *producing* it and exerting the act of sin; or between his being the *order* of its certain existence, by *not hindering* it, under certain cir-

cumstances, and his being the proper *actor* or *author* of it, by a *positive agency* or *efficiency*. And this notwithstanding what Dr. *Whitby* offers about a saying of philosophers, that *causa deficiens in rebus necessariis, ad causam per se efficientem reducenda est.* As there is a vast difference between the sun's being the cause of the lightsomeness and warmth of the atmosphere, and brightness of gold and diamonds, by its presence and positive influence; and its being the occasion of darkness and frost in the night, by its motion, whereby it descends below the horizon. The motion of the sun is the occasion of the latter kind of events; but it is not the proper cause, efficient or producer of them; though they are necessarily consequent on that motion, under such circumstances; no more is any action of the divine Being the cause of the evil of men's wills. If the sun were the proper *cause* of cold and darkness, it would be the *fountain* of these things, as it is the fountain of light and heat, and then something might be argued from the nature of cold and darkness, to a likeness of nature in the sun; and it might be justly inferred, that the sun itself is dark and cold, and that his beams are black and frosty. But from its being the cause no otherwise than by its departure, no such thing can be inferred, but the contrary; it may justly be argued, that the sun is a bright and hot body, if cold and darkness are found to be the consequence of its withdrawment; and the more constantly and necessarily these effects are connected with, and confined to its absence, the more strongly does it argue the sun to be the fountain of light and heat. So, inasmuch as sin is not the fruit of any positive agency or influence of the Most High, but, on the contrary, arises from the withholding of his action and energy, and, under certain circumstances, necessarily follows on the want of his influence; this is no argument that he is sinful, or his operation evil, or has any thing of the nature of evil; but, on the contrary, that He, and his agency, are altogether good and holy, and that He is the Fountain of all holiness. It would be strange arguing, indeed, because men

never commit sin, but only when God leaves them *to themselves*, and necessarily sin, when he does so, and therefore their sin is not *from themselves*, but from God; and so, that God must be a sinful Being; as strange as it would be to argue, because it is alway dark when the sun is gone, and never dark when the sun is present, that therefore all darkness is from the sun, and that his disk and beams must needs be black.

IV. It properly belongs to the Supreme and Absolute Governor of the Universe, to order all important events within his dominion, by his wisdom; but the events in the moral world are of the most important kind; such as the moral actions of intelligent creatures, and their consequences.

These events will be ordered by something. They will either be disposed by wisdom, or they will be disposed by chance; that is, they will be disposed by blind and undesigning causes, if that were possible, and could be called a disposal. Is it not better, that the good and evil which happens in God's world, should be ordered, regulated, bounded, and determined by the good pleasure of an infinitely wise Being, who perfectly comprehends within his understanding and constant view, the universality of things, in all their extent and duration, and sees all the influence of every event, with respect to every individual thing and circumstance, throughout the grand system, and the whole of the eternal series of consequences; than to leave these things to fall out by chance, and to be determined by those causes which have no understanding or aim? Doubtless, in these important events, there is a better and a worse, as to the time, subject, place, manner, and circumstances of their coming to pass, with regard to their influence on the state and course of things; and if there be, it is certainly best that they should be determined to that time, place, &c. which is best; and therefore it is in its own nature fit, that wisdom, and not chance, should order these things. So that it belongs to the Being who is the possessor of infinite wisdom, and is the Creator and Owner of the whole

system of created existences, and has the care of all; I say, it belongs to him, to take care of this matter; and he would not do what is proper for him, if he should neglect it; and it is so far from being unholy in him to undertake this affair, that it would rather have been unholy to neglect it; as it would have been a neglecting what fitly appertains to him; and so it would have been a very unfit and unsuitable neglect.

Therefore, the sovereignty of God doubtless extends to this matter; especially considering, that if it should be supposed to be otherwise, and God should leave men's volitions, and all moral events, to the determination and disposition of blind unmeaning causes, or they should be left to happen perfectly without a cause; this would be no more consistent with liberty, in any notion of it, and particularly not in the *Arminian* notion of it, than if these events were subject to the disposal of divine Providence, and the will of man were determined by circumstances which are ordered and disposed by divine wisdom; as appears by what has already been observed; but it is evident, that such a providential disposing and determining men's moral actions, though it infers a moral necessity of those actions, yet it does not in the least infringe the real liberty of mankind; the only liberty that common sense teaches to be necessary to moral agency, which, as has been demonstrated, is not inconsistent with such necessity.

On the whole, it is manifest, that God may be, in the manner which has been described, the order and disposer of that event, which, in the inherent subject and agent, is moral evil; and yet his so doing may be no moral evil. He may will the disposal of such an event, and its coming to pass for good ends, and his will not be an immoral or sinful will, but a perfect holy will; and he may actually, in his providence, so dispose and permit things, that the event may be certainly and infallibly connected with such disposal and permission, and his act therein not be an immoral or unholy, but a perfect holy act. Sin may be an evil thing, and yet that there should be such a disposal and permission, as that it should come to pass,

may be a good thing. This is no contradiction or inconsistence. Joseph's brethren selling him into Egypt, considered it only as it was acted by them, and with respect to their views and aims which were evil, was a very bad thing; but it was a good thing, as it was an event of God's ordering, and considered with respect to his views and aims which were good. Gen. l. 20. "As for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good." So the crucifixion of Christ, if we consider only those things which belong to the event as it proceeded from his murderers, and are comprehended within the compass of the affair considered as their act, their principles, dispositions, views, and aims; so it was one of the most heinous things that ever was done; in many respects the most horrid of all acts; but consider it, as it was willed and ordered of God, in the extent of his designs and views, it was the most admirable and glorious of all events; and God's willing the event was the most holy volition of God, that ever was made known to men; and God's act in ordering it, was a divine act, which, above all others, manifests the moral excellency of the divine Being.

The consideration of these things may help us to a sufficient answer to the cavils of *Arminians*, concerning what has been supposed by many *Calvinists;* of a distinction between a *secret* and *revealed* will of God, and their diversity one from the other; supposing that the *Calvinists* herein ascribe inconsistent wills to the Most High; which is without any foundation. God's *secret* and *revealed* will, or, in other words, his *disposing* and *perceptive* will may be diverse, and exercised in dissimilar acts, the one in disapproving and opposing, the other in willing and determining, without any inconsistence. Because, although these dissimilar exercises of the divine will may, in some respects, relate to the same things, yet in strictness they have different and contrary objects, the one evil and the other good. Thus, for instance, the crucifixion of Christ was a thing contrary to the re-

vealed or perceptive will of God; because, as it was viewed and done by his malignant murderers, it was a thing infinitely contrary to the holy nature of God, and so necessarily contrary to the holy inclination of his heart revealed in his law. Yet this does not at all hinder but that the crucifixion of Christ, considered with all those glorious consequences, which were within the view of the divine Omniscience, might be indeed, and therefore might appear to God to be a glorious event; and consequently be agreeable to his will, though his will may be secret, *i. e.* not revealed in God's law; and thus considered, the crucifixion of Christ was not evil but good. If the secret exercises of God's will were of a kind that is dissimilar, and contrary to his revealed will, respecting the same, or like objects; if the objects of both were good or both evil; then, indeed to ascribe contrary kinds of volition or inclination to God, respecting these objects, would be to ascribe an inconsistent will to God; but to ascribe to Him different and opposite exercises of heart, respecting different objects, and objects contrary one to another, is so far from supposing God's will to be *inconsistent* with itself, that it cannot be supposed *consistent* with itself any other way; for any being to have a will of choice respecting good, and, at the same time, a will of rejection and refusal respecting evil, is to be very consistent; but the contrary, *viz.* to have the same will towards these contrary objects, and to choose and love both good and evil, at the same time, is to be very inconsistent.

There is no inconsistence in supposing, that God may hate a thing as it is in itself, and considered simply as evil, and yet that it may be his will it should come to pass, considering all consequences. I believe, there is no person of good understanding, who will venture to say, he is certain that it is impossible it should be best, taking in the whole compass and extent of existence, and all consequences in the endless series of events, that there should be such a thing as moral evil in the

world.* And, if so, it will certainly follow, that an infinitely wise Being, who always chooses what is best, must choose that there should be such a thing; and, if

---

* Here are worthy to be observed some passages of a late noted writer of our nation, that nobody who is acquainted with him, will suspect to be very favourable to *Calvinism*. "It is difficult (says he) to handle the *necessity of evil* in such a manner, as not to stumble such as are not above being alarmed at propositions which have an uncommon sound. But if philosophers will but reflect calmly on the matter, they will find, that consistently with the unlimited power of the Supreme Cause it may be said, that in the best ordered system, *evils* must have place."—*Turnbull's Principles of Moral Philosophy*, p. 327, 328. He is there speaking of *moral* evils, as may be seen.

Again: the same author, in his *second volume*, entitled *Christian Philosophy*, p. 35, has these words: "If the Author and Governor of all things be infinitely *perfect*, then whatever is, is right; of all possible systems he hath chosen the *best*: and, consequently, there is *no absolute evil* in the universe.———This being the case, all the seeming *imperfections* or *evils* in it are such only in a *partial* view; and, with respect to the *whole* system, they are *goods*.

Ibid. p. 37, "*Whence then comes evil?* is the question that hath, in all ages, been reckoned the *Gordian* knot in philosophy. And, indeed, if we own the existence of evil in the world in an *absolute* sense, we diametrically contradict what hath been just now proved of God. For if there be any *evil* in the system, that is not good with respect to the *whole*, then is the *whole* not good, but evil; or at best, very imperfect; and an *author* must be as his *workmanship* is; as is the effect, such is the cause. But the solution of this difficulty is at hand; *That there is no evil in the universe.* What! are there no pains, no imperfections? Is there no misery, no vice in the world? or are not these evils? Evils indeed they are; that is, those of one sort are hurtful, and those of the other sort are equally hurtful, and abominable; but they are *not* evil or mischievous with respect to the *whole*."

Ibid. p. 42, "But He is, at the same time, said to *create* evil, darkness, confusion; and yet to do no evil, but to be the Author of good only. He is called the Father of *Lights*, the Author of *every perfect and good gift*, *with whom there is no variableness nor shadow of turning*, who *tempteth no man*, but *giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not*, and yet, by the prophet *Isaiah*, He is introduced, saying of himself, *I form light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil; I, the Lord, do all these things.* What is the meaning, the plain language of all this, but that the Lord delighteth in goodness, and (as the Scripture speaks) evil is *his strange work*? He intends and pursues the universal *good* of his creation; and the *evil* which happens, is not permitted for its own sake, or through any pleasure in evil, but because it is requisite to the *greater good* pursued.

so, then such a choice is not an evil, but a wise and holy choice; and if so, then that providence which is agreeable to such a choice, is a wise and holy providence.—Men do will sin as sin, and so are the authors and actors of it; they love it as sin, and for evil ends and purposes. God does not will sin as sin, or for the sake of any thing evil; though it be his pleasure so to order things, that He permitting sin will come to pass; for the sake of the great good that by his disposal shall be the consequence. His willing to order things so that evil should come to pass, for the sake of the contrary good, is no argument that He does not hate evil, as evil; and if so, then it is no reason why he may not reasonably forbid evil as evil, and punish it as such.

The *Arminians* themselves must be obliged, whether they will or no, to allow a distinction of God's will, amounting to just the same thing that *Calvinists* intend by their distinction of a *secret and revealed will.* They must allow a distinction of those things which God thinks best should be, considering all circumstances and consequences, and so are agreeable to his disposing will, and those things which he loves, and are agreeable to his nature, in themselves considered. Who is there that will dare to say, That the hellish pride, malice, and cruelty of devils are agreeable to God, and what he likes and approves? And yet, I trust, there is no Christian divine but what will allow, that it is agreeable to God's will so to order and dispose things concerning them, so to leave them to themselves, and give them up to their own wickedness, that this perfect wickedness should be a necessary consequence. Be sure Dr *Whitby*'s words do plainly suppose and allow it*.

These following things may be laid down as maxims of plain truth, and indisputable evidence:—

1. That God is a *perfectly happy* Being, in the most absolute highest sense possible.

---

* *Whitby* on the Five Points, edition 2, p. 300, 305, 309.

2. That it will follow from hence, that God is free from every thing that is *contrary to happiness*; and so, that in strict propriety of speech, there is no such thing as any pain, grief, or trouble in God.

3. When any intelligent being is really crossed and disappointed, and things are contrary to what he truly desires, he is the *less pleased*, or has less *pleasure*, his *pleasure* and *happiness is diminished*, and he suffers what is disagreeable to him, or is the subject of something that is of a nature contrary to joy and happiness, even pain and grief*.

From this last axiom, it follows, that if no distinction is to be admitted between God's hatred of sin, and his will with respect to the event and the existence of sin, as the all-wise Determiner of all events, under the view of all consequences through the whole compass and series of things; I say, then it certainly follows, that the coming to pass of every individual act of sin is truly, all things considered, contrary to his will, and that his will is really crossed in it; and this in proportion as He hates it; and as God's hatred of sin is infinite, by reason of the infinite contrariety of his holy nature to sin; so his will is infinitely crossed in every act of sin that happens; which is as much as to say, He endures that which is infinitely disagreeable to Him, by means of every act of sin that He sees committed; and, therefore, as appears by the preceding positions, He endures, truly and really, infinite grief or pain from every sin; and so He must be infinitely crossed, and suffer infinite pain every day, in millions and millions of instances; He must continually be the subject of an immense number of real, and truly infinitely great crosses and vexations;

---

* Certainly, it is not less absurd and unreasonable to talk of God's will and desires being truly and properly crossed, without his suffering any uneasiness, or any thing grievous or disagreeable, than it is to talk of something that may be called a revealed will, which may, in some respect, be different from a secret purpose; which purpose may be fulfilled, when the other is opposed.

which would be to make him infinitely the most miserable of all Beings.

If any objector should say, All that these things amount to is, that God *may do evil that good may come;* which is justly esteemed immoral and sinful in men; and therefore may be justly esteemed inconsistent with the moral perfections of God. I answer, That for God to dispose and permit evil, in the manner that has been spoken of, is not to do evil that good may come; for it is not to do evil at all.—In order to a thing's being morally evil, there must be one of these things belonging to it: Either it must be a thing *unfit* and *unsuitable* in its own nature; or it must have a *bad tendency;* or it must proceed from an *evil disposition*, and be done for an evil end. But neither of these things can be attributed to God's ordering and permitting such events, as the immoral acts of creatures, for good ends. (1.) It is not *unfit in its own nature*, that He should do so; for it is in its own nature *fit*, that *infinite wisdom*, and not blind chance, should dispose moral good and evil in the world; and it is *fit*, that the Being who has *infinite wisdom*, and is the Maker, Owner, and Supreme Governor of the World, should take care of that matter; and therefore, there is no *unfitness* nor unsuitableness in his doing it. It may be unfit, and so immoral, for any other being to go about to order this affair; because they are not possessed of a wisdom, that in any manner fits them for it; and, in any other respects, they are not fit to be trusted with this affair; nor does it belong to them, they not being the owners and lords of the universe.

We need not be afraid to affirm, that if a wise and good man knew, with absolute certainty, it would be best, all things considered, that there should be such a thing as moral evil in the world, it would not be contrary to his wisdom and goodness for him to choose that it should be so. It is no evil desire to desire good, and to desire that which, all things considered, is best; and it is no unwise choice to choose that *that* should be, which is best should be; and to choose the ex-

stence of that thing concerning which this is known, *viz.* that it is best it should be, and so is known in the whole to be most worthy to be chosen. On the contrary, it would be a plain defect in wisdom and goodness for him not to choose it; and the reason why he might not order it, if he were able, would not be because he might not desire it, but only the ordering of that matter does not belong to him. But it is no harm for Him who is, by right, and in the greatest propriety, the Supreme Orderer of all things, to order every thing in such a manner, as it would be a point of wisdom in Him to choose that they should be ordered. If it would be a plain defect of wisdom and goodness in a Being, not to choose that that should be, which He certainly knows it would, all things considered, be best should be (as was but now observed) then it must be impossible for a Being who has no defect of wisdom and goodness, to do otherwise than choose it should be; and that, for this very reason, because He is perfectly wise and good; and if it be agreeable to perfect wisdom and goodness for him to choose that it should be, and the ordering of all things supremely and perfectly belongs to him, it must be agreeable to infinite wisdom and goodness to order that it should be. If the choice is good, the ordering and disposing things according to that choice must also be good. It can be no harm in one to whom it belongs *to do his will in the armies of heaven, and amongst the inhabitants of the earth*, to execute a good volition. If this will be good, and the object of his will be, all things considered, good and best, then the choosing or willing it is not willing evil that good may come; and if so, then his ordering, according to that will is not doing evil, that good may come.

2. It is not of a bad tendency, for the Supreme Being thus to order and permit that moral evil to be, which is best should come to pass; for that it is of good tendency, is the very thing supposed in the point now in question.—Christ's crucifixion, though a most horrid act in

them that perpetrated it, was of most glorious tendency as permitted and ordered of God.

3. Nor is there any need of supposing, it proceeds from any evil disposition or aim; for by the supposition, what is aimed at is good, and good is the actual issue, in the final result of things.

SECTION X.

Concerning Sin's first Entrance into the World.

THE things which have already been offered, may serve to obviate or clear many of the objections which might be raised concerning sin's first coming into the world; as though it would follow from the doctrine maintained, that God must be the author of the first sin, through his so disposing things, that it should necessarily follow from his permission, that the sinful act should be committed, &c. I need not, therefore, stand to repeat what has been said already, about such a necessity not proving God to be the author of sin, in any ill sense, or in any such sense as to infringe any liberty of man, concerned in his moral agency or capacity of blame, guilt, and punishment.

But, it should nevertheless be said, supposing the case so, that God, when he had made man, might so order his circumstances, that from these circumstances, together with his withholding further assistance and divine influence, his sin would infallibly follow, why might not God as well have first made man with a fixed prevailing principle of sin in his heart?

I answer, (1.) It was meet, if sin did come into existence, and appear in the world, it should arise from the imperfection which properly belongs to a creature, as such, and should appear so to do, that it might appear not to be from God as the efficient or fountain: but

this could not have been, if man had been made at first with sin in his heart; nor unless the abiding principle and habit of sin were first introduced by an evil act of the creature. If sin had not arose from the imperfection of the creature, it would not have been so visible, that it did not arise from God, as the positive cause and real force of it.—But it would require room that cannot be here allowed, fully to consider all the difficulties which have been started, concerning the first entrance of sin into the world;

And therefore,

2. I would observe, that objections against the doctrine that has been laid down in opposition to the *Arminian* notion of liberty, from these difficulties, are altogether impertinent; because no additional difficulty is incurred by adhering to a scheme in this manner differing from theirs, and none would be removed or avoided, by agreeing with and maintaining theirs. Nothing that the *Arminians* say about the contingence or self-determining power of man's will, can serve to explain, with less difficulty, how the first sinful volition of mankind could take place, and man be justly charged with the blame of it. To say, the will was self-determined, or determined by free choice, in that sinful volition; which is to say, that the first sinful volition was determined by a foregoing sinful volition; is no solution of the difficulty. It is an odd way of solving difficulties, to advance greater, in order to it. To say, two and two makes nine; or, that a child begat his father, solves no difficulty; no more does it to say, the first sinful act of choice was before the first sinful act of choice, and chose and determined it, and brought it to pass. Nor is it any better solution to say, the first sinful volition chose, determined, and produced itself; which is to say, it was before it was. Nor will it go any further towards helping us over the difficulty to say, the first sinful volition arose accidentally, without any cause at all; any more than it will solve that difficult question, *How the world*

could be made out of nothing! To say, it came into being out of nothing, without any cause, as has been already observed; and if we should allow that that could be, that the first evil volition should arise by perfect accident, without any cause; it would relieve no difficulty about God's laying the blame of it to man; for how was man to blame for perfect accident, which had no cause, and which, therefore, he (to be sure) was not the cause of, any more than if it came by some external cause? —Such kind of solutions are no better, than if some person, going about to solve some of the strange mathematical paradoxes, about infinitely great and small quantities; as, that some infinitely great quantities are infinitely greater than some other infinitely great quantities: and also that some infinitely small quantities are infinitely less than others, which yet are infinitely little; in order to a solution, should say, that mankind have been under a mistake, in supposing a greater quantity to exceed a smaller; and that a hundred, multiplied by ten, makes but a single unit.

SECTION XI.

Of a supposed Inconsistence of those Principles with God's Moral Character.

THE things which have been already observed, may be sufficient to answer most of the objections, and silence the great exclamations of *Arminians* against the *Calvinists*, from the supposed inconsistence of *Calvinistic* principles with the moral perfections of God, as exercised in his government of mankind. The consistence of such a doctrine of necessity as has been maintained, with the fitness and reasonableness of God's commands, promises and threatenings, rewards and punishments, has been particularly considered; the cavils of our op-

ponents, as though our doctrine of necessity made God the author of sin, have been answered; and also their objection against these principles, as inconsistent with God's sincerity, in his counsels, invitations, and persuasions, has been already obviated, in what has been observed, respecting the consistence of what *Calvinists* suppose, concerning the secret and revealed will of God; by that it appears, there is no repugnance in supposing it may be the secret will of God, that his ordination and permission of events should be such, that it shall be a certain consequence, that a thing never will come to pass; which yet it is man's duty to do, and so God's perceptive will that he should do; and this is the same thing as to say, God may sincerely command and require him to do it; and if he may be sincere in commanding him, he may, for the same reason, be sincere in counselling, inviting, and using persuasions with him to do it. Counsels and invitations are manifestations of God's perceptive will, or of what God loves, and what is in itself, and as man's act, agreeable to his heart; and not of his disposing will, and what he chooses as a part of his own infinite scheme of things. It has been particularly shewn (Part III, Section IV.) that such a necessity as has been maintained, is not inconsistent with the propriety and fitness of divine commands; and for the same reason, not inconsistent with the sincerity, invitations, and counsels, in the Corollary at the end of that Section. Yea, it hath been shewn (Part III, Section VII, Corol. 1) that this objection of *Arminians*, concerning the sincerity and use of divine exhortations, invitations, and counsels, is demonstrably against themselves.

Notwithstanding, I would further observe, that the difficulty of reconciling the sincerity of counsels, invitations, and persuasions with such an antecedent known fixedness of all events, as has been supposed, is not peculiar to this scheme, as distinguished from that of the generality of *Arminians*, which acknowledge the absolute foreknowledge of God; and, therefore, it would be un-

reasonably brought as an objection against my differing from them. The main seeming difficulty in the case is this, That God, in counselling, inviting, and persuading, makes a shew of aiming at, seeking, and using endeavours for the thing exhorted and persuaded to; whereas, it is impossible for any intelligent being truly to seek, or use endeavours for a thing, which he at the same time knows, most perfectly, will not come to pass; and that it is absurd to suppose, he makes the obtaining of a thing his end, in his calls and counsels, which he at the same time, infallibly knows will not be obtained by these means. Now, if God knows this, in the utmost certainty and perfection, the way by which he comes by this knowledge makes no difference. If he knows it is by the necessity which he sees in things, or by some other means, it alters not the case. But it is in effect allowed by *Arminians* themselves, that God's inviting and persuading men to do things, which he, at the same time, certainly knows will not be done, is no evidence of insincerity; because they allow, that God has a certain foreknowledge of all men's sinful actions and omissions; and as this is thus implicitly allowed by most *Arminians*, so all that pretend to own the Scriptures to be the word of God, must be constrained to allow it.—God commanded and counselled *Pharoah* to let his people go, and used arguments and persuasions to induce him to it: he laid before him arguments taken from his infinite greatness and almighty power (Exod. vii. 16) and forewarned him of the fatal consequences of his refusal, from time to time (chap. vii. 1, 2, 20, 21; chap. ix. 1—5, 13—17; and x. 3, 6.) He commanded Moses, and the elders of Israel, to go and beseech Pharaoh to let the people go; and at the same time told them, he knew surely that he would not comply to it. Exod. iii. 18, 19: "And thou shalt come, thou and the elders of Israel unto the king of Egypt, and you shall say unto him, The Lord God of the Hebrews hath met with us; and now let us go, we beseech thee, three days journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice unto the Lord our God; and, I am sure,

that the king of Egypt will not let you go." So our blessed Saviour, the evening wherein he was betrayed, knew that Peter would shamefully deny him before the morning; for he declares it to him with asseverations, to shew the certainty of it; and tells the disciples, that all of them should be offended because of him that night (Matthew xxvi. 31—35; Mark xiii. 38; Luke xxii. 31. 34; John xvi. 32;) and yet it was their duty to avoid these things; they were very sinful things, which God had forbidden, and which it was their duty to watch and pray against; and they were obliged to do so from the counsels and persuasions Christ used with them, at that very time, so to do (Matthew xxvi. 41) "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation." So that whatever difficulty there can be in this matter, it can be no objection against any principles which have been maintained in opposition to the principles of *Arminians;* nor does it any more concern me to remove the difficulty than it does them, or indeed all, that call themselves Christians, and acknowledge the divine authority of the Scriptures. Nevertheless, this matter may possibly (God allowing) be more particularly and largely considered, in some future discourse, on the doctrine of *Predestination.*

But I would here observe, that however the defenders of that notion of liberty of will, which I have opposed, exclaim against the doctrine of *Calvinists*, as tending to bring men into doubts concerning the moral perfections of God, it is their scheme, and not the scheme of *Calvinists*, that indeed is justly chargeable with this; for it is one of the most fundamental points of their scheme of things, that a freedom of will, consisting in self-determination, without all necessity, is essential to *moral agency.* This is the same thing as to say, that such a determination of the will, without all necessity, must be in all intelligent beings, in those things, wherein they are *moral agents*, or in their *moral acts;* and from this it will follow, that God's will is not necessarily determined, in any thing he does, as a *moral agent*, or in

any of his acts that are of a *moral nature*; so that in all things, wherein he acts *holily*, *justly*, and *truly*, he does not act necessarily; or his will is not necessarily determined to act holily and justly; because, if it were necessarily determined, he would not be a *moral agent* in thus acting; his will would be attended with necessity; which, they say, is inconsistent with *moral agency*,—"He can act no othewise. He is at no liberty in the affair. He is determined by unavoidable invincible necessity; therefore such agency is no moral agency; yea, no agency at all, properly speaking,—a necessary agent is no agent: He being passive, and subject to necessity, what he does is no act of his, but an effect of a necessity prior to any act of his." This is agreeable to their manner of arguing. Now then, what is become of all our proof of the moral perfections of God? How can we prove, that God certainly will, in any one instance, do that which is just and holy, seeing his will is determined in the matter by no necessity? We have no other way of proving that any thing *certainly* will be, but only by the necessity of the event. Where we can see no necessity, but that the thing may be, or may not be, there we are unavoidably left at a loss. We have no other way properly and truly to demonstrate the moral perfections of God, but the way that Mr *Chubb* proves them, in p. 252, 261, 262, 263, of his Tracts, *viz.* That God must necessarily perfectly know what is most worthy and valuable in itself, which, in the nature of things, is best and fittest to be done; and, as this is the most eligible in itself, He being omniscient, must see it to be so; and being both omniscient and self-sufficient, cannot have any temptation to reject it; and so must necessarily will that which is best; and thus, by this necessity of the determination of God's will to what is good and best, we demonstrably establish God's moral character.

Corol. From things which have been observed, it appears, that most of the arguments from Scripture,

which *Arminians* make use of to support their scheme, are no other then *begging the question.* For in these their arguments, they determine in the first place, that without such a freedom of will as they hold, men cannot be proper moral agents, nor the subjects of command, counsel, persuasion, invitation, promises, threatenings, expostulations, rewards, and punishments; and that without such freedom, it is to no purpose for men to take any care, or use any diligence, endeavours, or means, in order to their avoiding sin, or becoming holy, escaping punishment or obtaining happiness; and having supposed these things, which are grand things in question in the debate, then they heap up Scriptures, containing commands, counsels, calls, warnings, persuasions, expostulations, promises, and threatenings (as doubtless they may find enough such: the Bible is confessedly full of them, from the beginning to the end); and then they glory, how full the Scripture is on their side, how many more texts there are that evidently favour their scheme, than such as seem to favour the contrary. But let them first make manifest the things in question, which they suppose and take for granted, and shew them to be consistent with themselves; and produce clear evidence of their truth; and they have gained their point, as all will confess, without bringing one Scripture, for none denies, that there are commands, counsels, promises, threatenings, &c. in the Bible; but unless they do these things, their multiplying such texts of Scripture is insignificant and vain.

It may further be observed, that such Scriptures as they bring, are really against them, and not for them. As it has been demonstrated, that it is their scheme, and not ours, that is inconsistent with the use of motives, and persuasives, or any moral means whatsoever, to induce men to the practice of virtue, or abstaining from wickedness; their principles, and not ours, are repugnant to moral agency, and inconsistent with moral government, with law or precept, with the nature of vir-

tue or vice, reward or punishment, and with every thing whatsoever of a moral nature, either on the part of the moral governor, or in the state, actions, or conduct of the subject.

SECTION XII.

Of a supposed Tendency of these Principles to Atheism and Licentiousness.

IF any object against what has been maintained, that it tends to Atheism, I know not on what grounds such an objection can be raised, unless it be, that some Atheists have held a doctrine of necessity, which they suppose to be like this. But if it be so, I am persuaded the *Arminians* would not look upon it just, that their notion of freedom and contingence should be charged with a tendency to all the errors that ever any embraced, who have held such opinions. The *Stoic* philosophers, whom the *Calvinists* are charged with agreeing with were no Atheists; but the greatest Theists, and nearest a-kin to Christians, in their opinions concerning the unity and the perfections of the Godhead, of all the Heathen philosophers; and *Epicurus*, that chief father of Atheism, maintained no such doctrine of necessity; but was the greatest maintainer of contingence.

The doctrine of necessity, which supposes a necessary connection of all events, on some antecedent ground and reason of their existence, is the only medium we have to prove the being of a God; and the contrary doctrine of contingence, even as maintained by *Arminians* (which certainly implies or infers, that events may come into existence, or begin to be, without dependence on any thing foregoing, as their cause, ground, or reason) takes away all proof of the being of God; which proof is sum-

marily expressed by the apostle, in Rom. i. 20. And this is a tendency to *Atheism* with a witness. So that, indeed, it is the doctrine of *Arminians*, and not of the *Calvinists*, that is justly charged with a tendency to *Atheism*; it being built on a foundation that is the utter subversion of every demonstrative argument for the proof of a Deity; as has been shewn, in Part II, Section III.

Whereas it has often been said, that the *Calvinistic* doctrine of necessity saps the fonndations of all religion and virtue, and tends to the greatest licentiousness of practice;—this objection is built on the pretence, that our doctrine renders vain all means and endeavours, in order to be virtuous and religious. Which pretence has been already particularly considered in the 5th Section of this Part; where it has been demonstrated, that this doctrine has no such tendency; but that such a tendency is truly to be charged on the contrary doctrine; inasmuch as the notion of contingence, which their doctrine implies, in its certain consequences, overthrows all connection, in every degree, between endeavour and event, means and end.

Besides, if many other things, which have been observed to belong to the *Arminian* doctrine, or to be plain consequences of it, be considered, there will appear just reason to suppose that, it is that which must rather tend to licentiousness. Their doctrine excuses all evil inclinations, which men find to be natural; because in such inclinations, they are not self-determined, as such inclinations are not owing to any choice or determination of their own wills; which leads men wholly to justify themselves in all their wicked actions, so far as natural inclination has had a hand in determining their wills to the commission of them. Yea, these notions, which suppose moral necessity and inability to be inconsistent with blame or moral obligation, will directly lead men to justify the vilest acts and practices, from the strength of their wicked inclinations of all sorts; strong inclinations inducing a moral necessity; yea, to excuse every

degree of evil inclination, so far as this has evidently prevailed, and been the thing which has determined their wills; because, so far as antecedent inclination determined the will, so far the will was without liberty of indifference and self-determination; which, at last, will come to this, that men will justify themselves in all the wickedness they commit. It has been observed already, that this scheme of things does exceedingly diminish the guilt of sin, and the difference between the greatest and smallest offences*; and if it be pursued in its real consequences, it leaves room for no such thing as either virtue or vice, blame or praise in the world. † And then again, how naturally does this notion of the sovereign self-determining power of the will, in all things, virtuous or vicious, and whatsoever deserves either reward or punishment, tend to encourage men to put of the work of religion and virtue, and turning from sin to God; it being that which they have a sovereign power to determine themselves to, just when they please; or if not, they are wholly excusable in going on in sin, because of their inability to do any other.

If it should be said, that the tendency of this doctrine of necessity to licentiousness, appears, by the improvement many at this day actually make of it, to justify themselves in their dissolute courses, I will not deny that some men do unreasonably abuse this doctrine, as they do many other things, which are true and excellent in their own nature; but I deny that this proves the doctrine itself has any tendency to licentiousness. I think, the tendency of doctrines, by what now appears in the world, and in our nation in particular, may much more justly be argued, from the general effect which has been seen to attend the prevailing of the principles of *Arminians*, and the contrary principles; as both have had their

---

* Part III, Section VI.

† Part III, Section VI. Ibid. Section VII. Part IV, Section I. Part III, Section III. *Corol.* 1, after the first head.

turn of general prevalence in our nation. If it be indeed, as is pretended, that *Calvinistic* doctrines undermine the very foundation of all religion and morality, enervate and disannul all rational motives to holy and virtuous practice; and that the contrary doctrines give the inducements to virtue and goodness their proper force, and exhibit religion in a rational light, tending to recommend it to the reason of mankind, and enforce it in a manner that is agreeable to their natural notions of things,—I say, if it be thus, it is remarkable, that virtue and religious practice should prevail most, when the former doctrines, so inconsistent with it, prevailed almost universally; and that ever since the latter doctrines, so happily agreeing with it, and of so proper and excellent a tendency to promote it, have been gradually prevailing, vice, prophaneness, luxury, and wickedness of all sorts, and contempt of all religion, and every kind of seriousness and strictness of conversation, should proportionably prevail; and that these things should thus accompany one another, and rise and prevail one with another, now for a whole age together. It is remarkable, that this happy period (discovered by the free enquiries and superior sense and wisdom of this age) against the pernicious effects of *Calvinism*, so inconsistent with religion, and tending so much to banish all virtue from the earth, should, on so long a trial, be attended with no good effect; but that the consequence should be the reverse of amendment; that, in proportion as the remedy takes place, and is thoroughly applied, so the disease should prevail; and the very same dismal effect take place, to the highest degree, which *Calvinistic* doctrines are supposed to have so great a tendency to; even the banishing of religion and virtue, and the prevailing of unbounded licentiousness of manners. If these things are truly so, they are very remarkable, and matter of very curious speculation.

SECTION XIII.

Concerning that Objection against the Reasoning, by which the Calvinistic Doctrine is supported, that it is metaphysical and abstruse.

IT has often been objected against the defenders of *Calvinistic* principles, that in their reasonings, they run into nice scholastic distinctions, and abstruse metaphysical subtilities, and set these in opposition to common sense; and it is possible, that, after the former manner, it may be alleged against the reasoning by which I have endeavoured to confute the *Arminian* scheme of liberty and moral agency, that it is very abstracted and metaphysical.—Concerning this, I would observe the following things:

I. If that be made an objection against the foregoing reasoning, that it is *metaphysical*, or may properly be reduced to the science of *metaphysics*, it is a very impertinent objection; whether it be so or no, is not worthy of any dispute or controversy. If the reasoning be good, it is as frivolous to enquire what science it is properly reduced to, as what language it is delivered in; and for a man to go about to confute the arguments of his opponent, by telling him, his arguments are *metaphysical*, would be as weak as to tell him, his arguments could not be substantial, because they were written in French or Latin. The question is not, Whether what is said be metaphysics, physics, logic, or mathematics, Latin, French, English, or Mohawk? But, whether the reasoning be good, and the arguments truly conclusive? The arguments are no more metaphysical, than those which we use against the Papists, to disapprove their doctrine of transubstantiation; alleging, it is inconsistent with the notion of corporeal identity, that it should be in ten thousand places at the same time. It is by metaphysical arguments only we are able to prove, that

the rational soul is not corporeal; that lead or sand cannot think; that thoughts are not square or round, or do not weigh a pound. The arguments by which we prove the being of God, if handled closely and distinctly, so as to shew their clear and demonstrative evidence, must be metaphysically treated. It is by metaphysics only, that we can demonstrate, that God is not limited to a place, or is not mutable; that he is not ignorant or forgetful; that it is impossible for him to lie, or be unjust; and there is one God only, and not hundreds or thousands; and, indeed, we have no strict demonstration of any thing, excepting mathematical truths, but by metaphysics. We can have no proof, that is properly demonstrative of any one proposition, relating to the being and nature of God, his creation of the world, the dependence of all things on him, the nature of bodies or spirits, the nature of our own souls, or any of the great truths of morality and natural religion, but what is metaphysical. I am willing my arguments should be brought to the test of the strictest and justest reason, and that a clear, distinct, and determinate meaning of the terms I use, should be insisted on; but let not the whole be rejected, as if all were confuted, by fixing on it the epithet, *metaphysical.*

II. If the reasoning, which has been made use of, be in some sense metaphysical, it will not follow, that therefore it must needs be abstruse, unintelligible, and a-kin to the jargon of the schools. I humbly conceive, the foregoing reasoning, at least to those things which are most material belonging to it, depends on no abstruse, definitions or distinctions, or terms without a meaning, or of very ambiguous and undetermined signification, or any points of such abstraction and subtility, as tends to involve the attentive understanding in clouds and darkness. There is no high degree of refinement and abstruse speculation, in determining, that a thing is not before it is, and so cannot be the cause of itself; or that the first act of free choice, has not another act of

free choice going before that, to excite or direct it; or in determining, that no choice is made while the mind remains in a state of absolute indifference; that preference and equilibrium never co-exist; that therefore no choice is made in a state of liberty, consisting in indifference; and that so far as the will is determined by motives, exhibited and operating previous to acts of the will, so far it is not determined by the act of the will itself; that nothing can begin to be, which before was not, without a cause, or some antecedent ground or reason, why it then begins to be; that effects depend on their causes, and are connected with them; that virtue is not the worse, nor sin the better, for the strength of inclination, with which it is practised, and the difficulty which thence arises of doing otherwise; that when it is already infallibly known, that the thing will be, it is not a thing contingent whether it will ever be or no; or that it can be truly said, notwithstanding, that it is not necessary it should be, that it either may be, or may not be; and the like might be observed of many other things which belong to the foregoing reasoning.

If any shall still stand to it, that the foregoing reasoning is nothing but metaphysical sophistry; and that it must be so, that the seeming force of the arguments all depends on some fallacy and wile that is hid in the obscurity which always attends a great degree of metaphysical abstraction and refinement; and shall be ready to say, "Here is indeed something that tends to confound the mind, not to satisfy it; for who can ever be truly satisfied in it, that men are fitly blamed or commended, punished or rewarded for those volitions which are not from themselves, and of whose existence they are not the causes? Men may refine, as much as they please, and advance their abstract notions, and make out a thousand seeming contradictions to puzzle our understanding; yet there can be no satisfaction in such doctrine as this; the natural sense of the mind of man will always resist it *." I humbly conceive, that such an objector,

* A certain noted author of the present age says, The arguments

if he has capacity, humility, and calmness of spirit sufficient impartially, and thoroughly to examine himself,

---

for *necessity* are nothing but *quibbling or logomachy, using words without a meaning, or begging the question.*——I do not know what kind of necessity any authors, he may have reference to, are advocates for; or whether they have managed their arguments well or ill. As to the arguments I have made use of, if they are *quibbles* they may be shewn so; such knots are capable of being untied, and the trick and cheat may be detected and plainly laid open. If this be fairly done, with respect to the grounds and reasons I have relied upon, I shall have just occasion for the future, to be silent, if not to be ashamed of my argumentations. I am willing my proofs should be thoroughly examined; and if there be nothing but *begging the question*, or mere logomachy, or dispute of words, let it be made manifest, and shewn how the seeming strength of the argument depends on my *using words without a meaning*, or arises from the ambiguity of terms, or my making use of words in an indeterminate and unsteady manner; and that the weight of my reasons rest mainly on such a foundation; and then, I shall either be ready to retract what I have urged, and thank the man that has done the kind part, or shall be justly exposed for my obstinacy.

The same author is abundant in appealing in this affair, from what he calls *logomachy and sophistry* to *experience.*——A person can experience only what passes in his own mind. But yet as we may well suppose that all men have the same human faculties; so a man may well argue from his own experience to that of others, in things that shew the nature of those faculties, and the manner of their operation. But then one has as good right to allege his experience as another. As to my own experience I find that in innumerable things I can do as I will; that the motions of my body in many respects, instantaneously follow the acts of my will concerning those motions; and that my will has some command of my thoughts; and that the acts of my will are my own, *i. e.* that they are acts of will, the volitions of my own mind; or, in other words, that what I will, I will. Which, I presume, is the sum of what others experience in this affair. But as to finding by experience, that my will is originally determined by itself; or that, my will first choosing what volition there shall be, the chosen volition accordingly follows; and that this is the first rise of the determination of my will in any affair; or that any volition rises in my mind contingently; I declare, I know nothing in myself by experience of this nature; and nothing that ever I experienced, carries the least appearance or shadow of any such thing, or gives me any more reason to suppose or suspect any such thing, than to suppose that my volitions existed twenty years before they existed. It is true, I find myself possessed of my volitions, before I can see the effectual power of any cause to produce them (for the power and efficacy of the cause is not seen but by the effect) and

will find that he knows not really what he would be at, and indeed his difficulty is nothing but a mere prejudice, from an inadvertent customary use of words, in a meaning that is not clearly understood, nor carefully reflected upon.—Let the objector reflect again, if he has candour and patience enough, and does not scorn to be at the trouble of close attention in the affair.—He would have a man's volition be *from himself.* Let it be *from himself*, most primarily and originally of any way conceivable (that is, from his own choice) how will that help the matter, as to his being justly blamed or praised, unless that choice itself be blame or praise-worthy?—And how is the choice itself (an ill choice, for instance) blame-worthy, according to these principles, unless that be from himself too, in the same manner, that is, from his own choice? But the original and first determining choice in the affair is not from his choice, his choice is not the cause of it. And if it be from himself some other way, and not from his choice, surely that will not help the matter. If it be not from himself of choice, then it is himself voluntarily; and if so, he is surely no more to blame than if it were not from himself at all. It is a vanity to pretend it is a sufficient answer to this, to say, that it is nothing but metaphysical refinement and subtility and so attended with obscurity and uncertainty.

If it be the natural sense of our minds, that what is blame-worthy in a man must be from himself, then it doubtless is also, that it must be something *bad* in himself, a *bad choice*, or *bad disposition.* But then our natural sense is, that this bad choice or disposition is evil in itself, and the man blame-worthy for it, on its own

---

this, for ought I know, may make some imagine, that volition has no cause, or that it produces itself. But I have no more reason from hence to determine any such thing, than I have to determine that I gave myself my own being, or that I came into being accidentally without a cause, because I first found myself possessed of being, before I had knowledge of a cause of my being.

account, without taking into our notion of its blame-worthiness, another bad choice or disposition going before this, from whence this arises; for that is a ridiculous absurdity, running us into an immediate contradiction, which our natural sense of blame-worthiness has nothing to do with, and never comes into the mind, nor is supposed in the judgment we naturally make of the affair; as was demonstrated before, natural sense does not place the moral evil of volitions and dispositions in the cause of them, but the nature of them. An evil thing being from a man, or from something antecedent in him, is not essential to the original notion we have of blame-worthiness; but it is its being the choice of the heart, as appears by this, that if a thing be from us, and not from our choice, it has not the natural, blame-worthiness or ill-desert, according to our natural sense. When a thing is from a man, in that sense, that it is from his will or choice, he is to blame for it, because his will is in it; so far as the will is in it, blame is in it, and no further. Neither do we go any further in our notion of blame to enquire, Whether the bad will be FROM a bad will?—there is no consideration of the original of that bad will; because, according to our natural apprehension, blame originally consists in it. Therefore, a thing being from a man, is a secondary consideration, in the notion of blame or ill desert. Because those things, in our external actions, are most properly said to be from us, which are from our choice; and no other external actions, but those that are from us in this sense, have the nature of blame; and they indeed, not so properly because they are from us, as because we are *in them*, *i. e.* our wills are in them; not so much because they are from some property of ours, as because they are our properties.

However, all these external actions being truly from us, as their cause, and we being so used, in ordinary speech, and in the common affairs of life, to speak of men's actions and conduct that we see, and that affect human society, as deserving ill or well, as worthy of

blame or praise ; hence it is come to pass, that philosophers have incautiously taken all their measures of good and evil, praise and blame, from the dictates of common sense, about these *overt acts* of men, to the running of every thing into the most lamentable and dreadful confusion ; and, therefore, I observe,

III. It is so far from being true (whatever may be pretended) that the proof of the doctrine which has been maintained, depends on certain abstruse, unintelligible, metaphysical terms and notions; and that the *Arminian* scheme, without needing such clouds and darkness for its defence, is supported by the plain dictates of common sense ; that the very reverse is most certainly true, and that to a great degree. It is fact, that they, and not we, have confounded things with metaphysical, unintelligible notions and phrases, and have drawn them from the light of plain truth, into the gross darkness of abstruse metaphysical propositions, and words without a meaning. Their pretended demonstrations depend very much on such unintelligible metaphysical phrases, as self-determination, and sovereignty of the will; and the metaphysical sense they put on such terms, as necessity, contingency, action, agency, &c. quite diverse from their meaning as used in common speech ; and which, as they use them, are without any consistent meaning, or any distinct consistent ideas ; as far from it as any of the abstruse terms and perplexed phrases of the Peripatetic philosophers, or the most unintelligible jargon of the schools, or the cant of the wildest fanatics. Yea, we may be bold to say, these metaphysical terms, on which they build so much, are what they use without knowing what they mean themselves ; they are pure metaphysical sounds, without any ideas whatsoever in their minds to answer them ; inasmuch as it has been demonstrated, that there cannot be any notion in the mind consistent with these expressions, as they pretend to explain them ; because their explanations destroy themselves. No such notions as imply self-contradiction and self-abolition, and this a great many ways, can subsist in the mind ; as

there can be no idea of a whole which is less than any of its parts, or of solid extension without dimensions, or of an effect which is before its cause.——*Arminians* improve these terms, as terms of art, and, in their metaphysical meaning, to advance and establish those things which are contrary to common sense in a high degree. Thus, instead of the plain, vulgar notion of liberty, which all mankind, in every part of the face of the earth, and in all ages, have, consisting in opportunity to do as one pleases, they have introduced a new strange liberty, consisting in indifference, contingence, and self-determination; by which they involve themselves and others in great obscurity, and manifold gross inconsistence. So, instead of placing virtue and vice, as common sense places them very much, in fixed bias and inclination, and greater virtue and vice in stronger and more established inclination, these, through their refinings and abstruse notions, suppose a liberty, consisting in indifference, to be essential to all virtue and vice. So they have reasoned themselves, not by metaphysical distinctions, but by metaphysical confusion, into many principles about moral agency, blame, praise, reward, and punishment, which are, as has been shewn, exceeding contrary to the common sense of mankind; and perhaps to their own sense, which governs them in common life.

THE

CONCLUSION.

WHETHER the things which have been alleged, are liable to any tolerable answer in the ways of calm, intelligible, and strict reasoning, I must leave others to judge; but I am sensible they are liable to one sort of answer. It is not unlikely, that some, who value themselves on the supposed rational and generous principles of the modern fashionable divinity, will have their indignation and disdain raised at the sight of this discourse, and on perceiving what things are pretended to be proved in it; and if they think it worthy of being read, or of so much notice as to say much about it, they may probably renew the usual exclamations, with additional vehemence and contempt, about the fate of the Heathen, Hobbes's Necessity, and making men mere machines; accumulating the terrible epithets of fatal, unfrustrable, inevitable, irresistible, &c. and it may be, with the addition of horrid and blasphemous; and perhaps much skill may be used to set forth things, which have been said, in colours which shall be shocking to the imaginations, and moving to the passions of those who have either too little capacity, or too much confidence of the opinions they have imbibed, and contempt of the contrary, to try the matter by any serious and circumspect examination*. Or difficulties may be started and

* A writer of the present age, whom I have several times had occasion to mention, speaks once and again of those who hold the doctrine of *necessity*, as scarcely worthy of the name of *Philosophers*.—I do not know whether he has respect to any particular notion of necessity, that some may have maintained; and, if so, what doctrine of necessity is it that he means.—Whether I am worthy of the name of a Philosopher, or not, would be a question little to the present purpose. If any, and ever so many, should deny it, I should not think

insisted on, which do not belong to the controversy; because, let them be more or less real, and hard to be resolved, they are not what are owing to any thing distinguishing of this scheme from that of the *Arminians*, and would not be removed nor diminished by renouncing the former, and adhering to the latter. Or some particular things may be picked out, which they may think will sound harshest in the ears of the generality; and these may be glossed and descanted on, with tart and contemptuous words; and from thence, the whole treated with triumph and insult.

It is easy to see, how the decision of most of the points in controversy, between *Calvinists* and *Arminians*, depends on the determination of this grand article, concerning *the Freedom of the Will requisite to moral agency*; and that by clearing and establishing the *Calvinistic* doctrine in this point, the chief arguments are obviated, by which *Arminian* doctrines in general are supported, and the contrary doctrines demonstratively confirmed. Hereby it becomes manifest, that God's moral government over mankind, his treating them as moral agents, making them the objects of his commands, counsels, calls, warnings, expostulations, promises, threatenings, rewards, and punishments, is not inconsistent with a *determining disposal* of all events, of every kind, throughout the universe, *in his providence*, either by positive efficiency or permission. Indeed, such an *universal determining providence* infers some kind of necessity of all events, such a necessity as implies an infallible previous fixedness of the futurity of the event; but no other necessity of moral events, or volitions of intelligent agents,

---

it worth the while to enter into a dispute on that question; though at the same time, I might expect some better answer should be given to the arguments brought for the truth of the doctrine; I maintain; and I might further reasonably desire, that it might be considered, whether it does not become those, who are *truly worthy* of the name of Philosophers, to be sensible, that there is a difference between *argument* and *contempt*; yea, and a difference between the contemptibleness of the *person* that argues, and the inconclusiveness of the *arguments* he offers.

is needful in order to this, than *moral necessity;* which does as much ascertain the futurity of the event as any other necessity. But, as has been demonstrated, such a necessity is not at all repugnant to moral agency, and a reasonable use of commands, calls, rewards, punishments, &c. Yea, not only are objections of this kind against the doctrine of an universal *determining Providence*, removed by what has been said; but the truth of such a doctrine is demonstrated. As it has been demonstrated, that the futurity of all future events is established by previous necessity, either natural or moral, so it is manifest, that the sovereign Creator and Disposer of the world has ordered this necessity, by ordering his own conduct, either in designedly acting, or forbearing to act. For as the being of the world is from God, so the circumstances in which it had its being at first, both negative and positive, must be ordered by him, in one of these ways: and all the necessary consequences of these circumstances, must be ordered by him; and God's active and positive interpositions, after the world was created, and the consequences of these interpositions; also every instance of his forbearing to interpose, and the sure consequences of this forbearance, must all be determined according to his pleasure; and therefore every event, which is the consequence of any thing whatsoever, or that is connected with any foregoing thing or circumstance, either positive or negative, as the ground or reason of its existence, must be ordered of God; either by a designing efficiency and interposition, or a designed forbearing to operate or interpose. But, as has been proved, all events whatsoever are necessarily connected with something foregoing, either positive or negative, which is the ground of its existence. It follows, therefore, that the whole series of events is thus connected with something in the state of things, either positive or negative, which is *original* in the series; *i. e.* something which is connected with nothing preceding that, but God's own immediate conduct, either his acting or forbearing to act. From whence it follows, that as God

designedly orders his own conduct, and its connected consequences, it must necessarily be, that he designedly orders all things.

The things, which have been said, obviate some of the chief objections of *Arminians* against the *Calvinistic*, doctrine of the *total depravity and corruption of man's nature*, whereby his heart is wholly under the power of sin, and he is utterly unable, without the interposition of sovereign grace, savingly to love God, believe in Christ, or do any thing that is truly good and acceptable in God's sight; for the main objection against this doctrine is, that it is inconsistent with the freedom of man's will, consisting in indifference and self-determining power: because it supposes man to be under a necessity of sinning, and that God requires things of him, in order to his avoiding eternal damnation, which he is unable to do; and that this doctrine is wholly inconsistent with the sincerity of counsels, invitations, &c. Now, this doctrine supposes *no other necessity* of sinning, than a moral necessity; which, as has been shewn, does not at all excuse sin; and supposes *no other inability* to obey any command, or perform any duty, even the most spiritual and exalted, but a moral inability, which, as has been proved, does not excuse persons in the non-performance of any good thing, or make them not to be the proper objects of commands, counsels, and invitations. And, moreover, it has been shewn, that there is not, and never can be, either in existence, or so much as in idea, any such freedom of will, consisting in indifference and self-determination, for the sake of which, this doctrine of original sin is cast out; and that no such freedom is necessary, in order to the nature of sin, and a just desert of punishment.

The things which have been observed, do also take off the main objections of *Arminians* against the doctrine of efficacious grace; and, at the same time, prove the grace of God in a sinner's conversion (if there be any grace or divine influence in the affair) to efficacious, yea, and irresistible too, if by irresistible is meant, that

which is attended with a moral necessity, which it is impossible should ever be violated by any resistance. The main objection of *Arminians* against this doctrine is, that it is inconsistent with their self-determining freedom of will; and that it is repugnant to the nature of virtue, that it should be wrought in the heart by the determining efficacy and power of another, instead of its being owing to a self-moving power; that, in that case, the good which is wrought, would not be our virtue, but rather God's virtue; because it is not the person in whom it is wrought, that is the determining author of it, but God that wrought it in him. But the things which are the foundation of these objections, have been considered: and it has been demonstrated, that the liberty of moral agents does not consist in self-determining power: and that there is no need of any such liberty, in order to the nature of virtue: nor does it at all hinder, but that the state or act of the will may be the virtue of the subject, though it be not from self-determination, but the determination of an intrinsic cause: even so as to cause the event to be morally necessary to the subject of it; and as it has been proved, that nothing in the state or acts of the will of man is contingent; but that, on the contrary, every event of this kind is necessary, by a moral necessity; and has also been now demonstrated, that the doctrine of an universal determining Providence, follows from that doctrine of necessity, which was proved before; and so that God does decisively, in his providence, order all the volitions of moral agents, either by positive influence or permission; and it being allowed, on all hands, that what God does in the affair of man's virtuous volitions, whether it be more or less, is by some positive influence, and not by mere permission, as in the affair of a sinful volition; if we put these things together, it will follow, that God's assistance or influence must be determining and decisive, or must be attended with a moral necessity of the event; and so, that God gives virtue, holiness, and conversion to sinners, by an influence which determines the effect,

in such a manner, that the effect will infallibly follow by a moral necessity; which is what *Calvinists* mean by efficacious and irresistible grace.

The things which have been said, do likewise answer the chief objections against the doctrine of God's universal and absolute decree, and afford infallible proof of this doctrine; and of the doctrine of *absolute, eternal, personal election* in particular. The main objections against these doctrines are, that they infer a necessity of the volitions of moral agents, and of the future moral state and acts of men; and so are not consistent with those eternal rewards and punishments, which are connected with conversion and impenitence; nor can be made to agree with the reasonableness and sincerity of the precepts, calls, counsels, warnings, and expostulations of the word of God; or with the various methods and means of grace, which God uses with sinners, to bring them to repentance; and the whole of that moral government, which God exercises towards mankind; and that they infer an inconsistence between the *secret* and *revealed will of God;* and make God the author of sin. But all these things have been obviated in the preceding discourse; and the certain truth of these doctrines, concerning God's eternal purposes, will follow from what was just now observed concerning God's universal providence; how it infallibly follows from what has been proved, that God orders all events, and the volitions of moral agents amongst others, by such a decisive disposal, that the events are infallibly connected with his disposal; for if God disposes all events, so that the infallible existence of the events is decided by his providence, then he, doubtless, thus orders and decides things knowingly, and on design. God does not do what he does, nor order what he orders, accidentally and unawares; either without or beside his intention; and if there be a foregoing design of doing and ordering as he does, this is the same with a purpose or decree; and as it has been shewn, that nothing is new to God, in any respect, but all things are perfectly and equally in his view from eternity; hence

it will follow, that his designs or purposes are not things formed anew, founded on any new views or appearances, but are all eternal purposes; and as it has been now shewn, how the doctrine of determining efficacious grace certainly follows from things proved in the foregoing discourse; hence will necessarily follow the doctrine of particular, eternal, absolute election. For if men are made true saints, no otherwise than as God makes them so, and distinguishes them from others, by an efficacious power and influence of his, that decides and fixes the event; and God thus makes some saints, and not others, on design or purpose, and (as has been now observed) no designs of God are new; it follows, that God thus distinguished from others, all that ever become true saints, by his eternal design or decree. I might also shew, how God's certain foreknowledge must suppose an absolute decree, and how such a decree can be proved to a demonstration from it; but that this discourse may not be lengthened out too much, that must be omitted for the present.

From these things it will inevitably follow, that however Christ in some sense may be said to die for all, and to redeem all visible Christians, yea, the whole world by his death; yet there must be something *particular* in the design of his death, with respect to such as he intended should actually be saved thereby. As appears by what has been now shewn, God has the actual salvation or redemption of a certain number in his proper absolute design, and of a certain number only; and therefore such a design only can be prosecuted in any thing God does, in order to the salvation of men. God pursues a proper design of the salvation of the elect in giving Christ to die, and prosecutes such a design with respect to no other, most strictly speaking; for it is impossible, that God should prosecute any other design than only such as he has; he certainly does not, in the highest propriety and strictness of speech, pursue a design that he has not.—And, indeed, such a particularity and limitation of redemption will as infallibly follow, from the doctrine of God's foreknowledge, as from that of the de-

cree; for it is as impossible, in strictness of speech, that God should prosecute a design, or aim at a thing, which He at the same time most perfectly knows will not be accomplished, as that he should use endeavours for that which is beside his decree.

By the things which have been proved, are obviated some of the main objections against the doctrine of the infallible and necessary *perseverance* of saints, and some of the main foundations of this doctrine are established. The main prejudices of *Arminians* against this doctrine seem to be these:—They suppose such a necessary, infallible, perseverance to be repugnant to the freedom of the will; that it must be owing to man's own self-determining power, that he *first becomes* virtuous and holy; and so, in like manner, it must be left a thing contingent, to be determined by the same freedom of will, whether he will persevere in virtue and holiness; and that otherwise his continuing stedfast in faith and obedience would not be his virtue, or at all praise-worthy and rewardable; nor could his perseverance be properly the matter of divine commands, counsels, and promises, nor his apostacy be properly threatened, and men warned against it. Whereas, we find all these things in scripture; there we find stedfastness and perseverance in true Christianity, represented as the virtue of the saints, spoken of as praise-worthy in them, and glorious rewards promised to it; and also find, that God makes it the subject of his commands, counsels, and promises; and the contrary, of threatenings and warnings. But the foundation of these objections has been removed, in its being shewn that moral necessity and infallible certainty of events is not inconsistent with these things; and that as to freedom of will lying in the power of the will to determine itself, there neither is any such thing, nor need any of it, in order to virtue, reward, commands, counsels, &c.

As the doctrines of efficacious grace and absolute election do certainly follow from things, which have been proved in the preceding discourse, so some of the main foundations of the doctrine of perseverance, are thereby

established. If the beginning of true faith and holiness, and a man's becoming a true saint at first, does not depend on the self-determining power of the will, but on the determining efficacious grace of God, it may well be argued, that it is also with respect to men's being continued saints, or persevering in faith and holiness. The conversion of a sinner being not owing to a man's self-determination, but to God's determination; and eternal election, which is absolute, and depending on the sovereign will of God; and not on the free will of man, as is evident from what has been said; and it being very evident from the scriptures, that the eternal election, which there is of saints to faith and holiness, is also an election of them to eternal salvation; hence their appointment to salvation must also be absolute, and not depending on their contingent, self-determining will. From all which it follows, that it is absolutely fixed in God's decree, that all true saints persevere to actual eternal salvation.

But I must leave all these things to the consideration of the fair and impartial reader; and when he has maturely weighed them, I would propose it to his consideration, Whether many of the first Reformers, and others that succeeded them, whom God in their day made the chief pillars of his church, and greatest instruments of their deliverance from error and darkness, and of the support of the cause of piety among them, have not been injured, in the contempt with which they have been treated by many late writers, for their teaching and maintaining such doctrines as are commonly called *Calvinistic?* Indeed, some of these new writers, at the same time that they have represented the doctrines of these antient and eminent divines, as in the highest degree ridiculous, and contrary to common sense, in an ostentation of a very generous charity, have allowed that they were honest, well-meaning men; yet, it may be some of them, as though it were in great condescension and compassion to them, have allowed, that they did pretty well for the day which they lived in, and considering the great dis-

advantages they laboured under; when, at the same, time, their manner of speaking has naturally and plainly suggested to the minds of their readers, that they were persons, who, through the lowness of their genius and greatness of the bigotry, with which their minds were shackled, and thoughts confined, living in the gloomy caves of Superstition, fondly embraced and demurely and zealously taught the most absurd, silly, and monstrous opinions, worthy of the greatest contempt of gentlemen, possessed of that noble and generous freedom of thought, which happily prevails in this age of light and enquiry. When, indeed, such is the case, that we might, if so disposed, speak as big words as they, and on far better grounds; and really all the *Arminians* on earth might be challenged without arrogance or vanity, to make these principles of theirs, wherein they mainly differ from their father, whom they so much despise, consistent with common sense; yea, and perhaps to produce any doctrine ever embraced by the blindest bigot of the church of *Rome*, or the most ignorant *Mussulman*, or extravagant enthusiast, that might be reduced to more demonstrable inconsistencies, and repugnancies to common sense, and to themselves; though their inconsistencies indeed may not lie so deep, or be so artfully vailed by a deceitful ambiguity of words, and an indeterminate signification of phrases.—I will not deny, that these gentlemen, many of them, are men of great abilities, and have been helped to higher attainments in philosophy than those antient divines, and have done great service to the Church of God in some respects; but I humbly conceive, that their differing from their fathers, with such magisterial assurance, in these points in divinity, must be owing to some other cause than superior wisdom.

It may also be worthy of consideration, whether the great alteration which has been made in the state of things in our nation, and some other parts of the Protestant world, in this and the past age, by the exploding so general *Calvinistic* doctrines; that is so often spoken of as worthy to be greatly rejoiced in by the friends of truth,

learning, and virtue, as an instance of the great increase of light in the Christian Church; I say, it may be worthy to be considered, whether this be indeed a happy change, owing to any such cause as an increase of true knowledge and understanding in things of religion; or whether there is not reason to fear, that it may be owing to some worse cause.

I desire it may be considered, whether the boldness of some writers may not be worthy to be reflected on, who have not scrupled to say, that if these and those things are true (which yet appear to be the demonstrable dictates of reason, as well as the certain dictates of the mouth of the Most High) then God is unjust and cruel, guilty of manifest deceit and double dealing, and the like. Yea, some have gone so far, as confidently to assert, that if any book which pretends to be Scripture, teaches such doctrines, that alone is sufficient warrant for mankind to reject it, as what cannot be the word of God. Some, who have not gone so far, have said, that if the Scriptures seems to teach any such doctrines, so contrary to reason, we are obliged to find out some other interpretation of those texts, where such doctrines seem to be exhibited. Others express themselves yet more modestly, they express a tenderness and religious fear, least they should receive and teach any thing that should seem to reflect on God's moral character, or be a disparagement to his methods of administration in his moral government; and therefore express themselves as not daring to embrace some doctrines, though they seem to be delivered in Scripture, according to the more obvious and natural construction of the words. But indeed, it would shew a truer modesty and humility, if they would more entirely rely on God's wisdom and discerning, who knows infinitely better than we, what is agreeable to his own perfections, and never intended to leave these matters to the decision of the wisdom and discerning of men; but, by his own unerring instruction, to determine for us what the truth is; knowing how little our judgment is to be depended on, and

extremely prone, vain, and blind men are to err in such matters.

The truth of the case is, that if the Scripture plainly taught the opposite doctrines to those that are so much stumbled at, viz. the *Arminian* doctrine of free-will, and others depending thereon, it would be the greatest of all difficulties that attend the Scriptures, incomparably greater than its containing any, even the most mysterious of those doctrines of the first reformers, which our late Free-Thinkers have so superciliously exploded.—Indeed, it is a glorious argument of the divinity of the holy Scriptures, that they teach such doctrines, which in one age and another, through the blindness of men's minds, and strong prejudices of their hearts, are rejected, as most absurd and unreasonable, by the wise and great men of the world; which yet, when they are most carefully and strictly examined, appear to be exactly agreeable to the most demonstrable, certain, and natural dictates of reason. By such things it appears, that the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and God does, as is said in 1 Cor. i. 19, 20, "For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise; I will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise! Where is the scribe! Where is the disputer of this world! Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" And as it used to be in time past, so it is probable it will be in time to come, as it is there written, in Ver. 27, 28, "But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen; yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are, that no flesh should glory in his presence." Amen.

THE END.