

his enemies laid this upon him among other things, that he had corrupted the doctrine of this church by this addition; but he cleared himself of that, as well he might, and, in a speech in the star-chamber, appealed to the original, and affirmed these words were in it. ART.
I.

The true account of this difficulty is this. When the Articles were first settled, they were subscribed by both houses upon paper; but, that being done, they were afterward ingrossed in parchment, and made up in form to remain as records. Now, in all such bodies, many alterations are often made after a minute or first draught is agreed on, before the matter is brought to full perfection; so these alterations, as most of them are small and inconsiderable, were made between the time that they were first subscribed, and the last voting of them. But the original records, which, if extant, would have cleared the whole matter, having been burnt in the fire of London, it is not possible to appeal to them; yet what has been proposed may serve, I hope, fully to clear the difficulty.

I now go to consider the Articles themselves.

ARTICLE I.

Of Faith in the Holy Trinity.

There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without bodie, parts or passions, of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness, the maker and preserver of all things both visible and invisible; and in the unity of this Godhead there be three Persons of one substance, power, and eternity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

THE natural order of things required, that the first of all articles in religion should be concerning the being and attributes of God: for all other doctrines arise out of this. But the title appropriates this to the holy Trinity; because that is the only part of the Article which peculiarly belongs to the Christian religion; since the rest is founded on the principles of natural religion.

There are six heads to be treated of, in order to the full opening of all that is contained in this Article.

1. That there is a God.
2. That there is but one God.
3. Negatively, That this God hath neither body, parts, nor passions.

4. Positively, That he is of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness.

5. That he at first created, and does still preserve all things, not only what is material and visible, but also what is spiritual and invisible.

6. The Trinity is here asserted.

These being all points of the highest consequence, it is very necessary to state them as clearly, and to prove them as fully, as may be.

The first is, *That there is a God.* This is a proposition, which in all ages has been so universally received and believed, some very few instances being only assigned of such as either have denied or doubted of it, that the very consent of so many ages and nations, of such different tempers and languages, so vastly remote from one another, has been long esteemed a good argument, to prove that either there is somewhat in the nature of man, that by a secret sort of instinct does dictate this to him: or that all mankind has descended from one common stock, and that this belief has passed down from the first man to all his posterity. If the more polite nations had only received this, some might suggest, that wise men had introduced it as a mean to govern human society, and to keep it in order: or, if only the more barbarous had received this, it might be thought to be the effect of their fear, and their ignorance: but, since all sorts, as well as all ages, of men have received it, this alone goes a great way to assure us of the being of a God.

To this two things are objected, first, That some nations, such as Soldania, Formosa, and some in America, have been discovered in these last ages, that seem to acknowledge no Deity. But to this, two things are to be opposed: 1st, That those who first discovered these countries, and have given that account of them, did not know them enough, nor understand their language so perfectly as was necessary to enable them to comprehend all their opinions: and this is the more probable, because others, that have writ after them, assure us that they are not without all sense of religion, which the first discoverers had too hastily affirmed: some prints of religion begin to be observed among those of Soldania, though it is certainly one of the most degenerated of all nations. But a second answer to this is, That those nations, of whom these reports are given out, are so extremely sunk from all that is wise or regular, great and good in human nature, so rude and untractable, and so incapable of arts and discipline, that if the reports concerning them are to be believed, and if that weakens the argument from the common consent of mankind of the one hand, it strengthens it on another; while it appears that human nature, when it wants this impression, it wants with it all that is great or orderly in it, and shews a brutality almost as low and base as is that of beasts. Some men are born without some of their senses, and others without the use of reason and memory;

and yet those exceptions do not prove that the imperfections of such persons are not irregularities against the common course of things: the monstrosity, as well as the miseries, of persons so unhappily born tend to recommend more effectually the perfection of human nature. So, if these nations, which are supposed to be without the belief of a God, are such a low and degenerated piece of human nature, that some have doubted whether they are a perfect race of men or not, this does not derogate from, but rather confirms, the force of this argument, from the general consent of all nations.

A second exception to this argument is, That men have not agreed in the same notions concerning the Deity: some believing two gods, a good and a bad, that are in a perpetual contest together: others holding a vast number of gods, either all equal or subaltern to one another: and some believing God to be a corporeal being, and that the sun, moon, and stars, and a great many other beings, are gods: since then, though all may acknowledge a Deity in general, they are yet subdivided into so many different conceits about it, no argument can be drawn from this supposed consent, which is not so great in reality as it seems to be. But, in answer to this, we must observe, that the constant sense of mankind agreeing in this, that there is a superior Being that governs the world, shews that this fixed persuasion has a deep root, though, the weakness of several nations being practised upon by designing men, they have in many things corrupted this notion of God. That might have arisen from the tradition of some true doctrines vitiated in the conveyance. Spirits made by God to govern the world by the order and under the direction of the Supreme Mind, might easily come to be looked on as subordinate deities: some evil and lapsed spirits might in a course of some ages pass for evil gods. The apparitions of the Deity under some figures might make these figures to be adored: and God being considered as the supreme Light, this might lead men to worship the sun as his chief vehicle: and so by degrees he might pass for the supreme God. Thus it is easy to trace up these mistakes to what may justly be supposed to be their first source and rise. But still the foundation of them all was a firm belief of a superior nature that governed the world. Mankind agreeing in that, an occasion was thereby given to bad and designing men to graft upon it such other tenets as might feed superstition and idolatry, and furnish the managers of those impostures with advantages to raise their own authority. But, how various soever the several ages and nations of the world may have been as to their more special opinions and rites, yet the general idea of a God remained still unaltered, even amidst all the changes that have happened in the particular forms and doctrines of religion.

Another argument for the being of God is taken from the visible world, in which there is a vast variety of beings

curiously framed, and that seem designed for great and noble ends. In these we see clear characters of God's eternal power and wisdom. And that is thus to be made out. It is certain, that nothing could give being to itself; so the things which we see either had their being from all eternity: or were made in time: and either they were from all eternity in the same state, and under the same revolutions of the heavens, as they are at present: or they fell into the order and method, in which they do now roll, by some happy chance, out of which all the beauty and usefulness of the creation did arise. But, if all these suppositions are manifestly false, then it will remain, that if things neither were from all eternity as they now are, nor fell into their present state by chance, then there is a superior Essence that gave them being, and that moulded them as we see they now are. The first branch of this, that they were not as now they are from all eternity, is to be proved by two sorts of arguments; the one intrinsic, by demonstrating this to be impossible; the other moral, by shewing that it is not at all credible. As to the first, it is to be considered, that a successive duration made up of parts, which is called time, and is measured by a successive rotation of the heavens, cannot possibly be eternal. For if there were eternal revolutions of Saturn in his course of thirty years, and eternal revolutions of days as well as years, of minutes as well as hours, then the one must be as infinite as the other; so that the one must be equal to the other, both being infinite; and yet the latter are some millions of times more than the other, which is impossible. Further; of every past duration, as this is true, that once it was present; so this is true, that once it was to come; this being a necessary affection of every thing that exists in time: if then all past durations were all once future, or to be, then we cannot conceive such a succession of durations eternal, since once every one of them was to come. Nor can all this, or any part of it, be turned against us, who believe that some beings are immortal, and shall never cease to be; for all those future durations have never actually been, but are still produced of new, and so continued in being. This argument may seem to be too subtle, and it will require some attention of mind to observe and discover the force of it; but, after we have turned it over and over again, it will be found to be a true demonstration. The chief objection that lies against it is, that, in the opinion of those who deny that there are any indivisible points of matter, and that believe that matter is infinitely divisible, it is not absurd to say, that one infinite is more than another: for the smallest crum of matter is infinite, as well as the whole globe of the earth: and, therefore, the revolutions of Saturn may be infinite, as well as the revolutions of days, though the one be vastly more numerous than the other. But there is this difference betwixt the succession of time, and the composition of matter; that those, who deny

indivisibles, say that no one point can be assigned: for, if points could be assigned or numbered, it is certain that they could not be infinite; for an infinite number seems to be a contradiction: but, if the series of mankind were infinite, since this is visibly divided into single individuals, as the units in that series, then here arises an infinite number composed of units or individuals that can be assigned. The same is to be said of minutes, hours, days, and years: nor can it be said with equal reason, that every portion of time is divisible to infinity, as well as every parcel of matter. It seems evident, that there is a present time; and that past, present, and to come, cannot be said to be true of any thing all at once: therefore the objection against the assigning points in matter does not overthrow the truth of this argument. But if it is thought that this is rather a sleight of metaphysics that entangles one, than a plain and full conviction, let us turn next to such reasonings as are more obvious, and that are more easily apprehended.

The other moral arguments are more sensible as well as they are of a more complicated nature; and proceed thus: The history of all nations, of all governments, arts, sciences, and even instituted religions, the peopling of nations, the progress of commerce and of colonies, are plain indications of the novelty of the world; no sort of trace remaining, by which we can believe it to be ancients than the books of Moses represent it to be. For, though some nations, such as the Egyptians and the Chineses, have boasted of a much greater antiquity, yet it is plain, we hear of no series of history for all those ages; so that what they had relating to them, if it is not wholly a fiction, might have been only in astronomical tables, which may be easily run backwards as well as forward. The very few eclipses which Ptolemy could hear of is a remarkable instance of the novelty of history; since the observing such an extraordinary accident in the heavens, in so pure an air, where the sun was not only observed, but adored, must have been one of the first effects of learning or industry. All these characters of the novelty of the world have been so well considered by Lucretius, and other atheists, that they gave up the point, and thought it evident that this present frame of things had certainly a beginning.

The solution that those men, who found themselves driven from this of the world's being eternal, have given to this difficulty, by saying that all things have run by chance into the combinations and channels in which we see nature run, is so absurd, that it looks like men who are resolved to believe any thing, how absurd soever, rather than to acknowledge religion. For what a strange conceit is it, to think that chance could settle on such a regular and useful frame of things, and continue so fixed and stable in it, and that chance could do so

much at once, and should do nothing ever since! The constancy of the celestial motions; the obliquity of the zodiac, by which different seasons are assigned to different climates; the divisions of this globe into sea and land, into hills and vales; the productions of the earth, whether latent, such as mines, minerals, and other fossils; or visible, such as grass, grain, herbs, flowers, shrubs, and trees; the small beginnings, and the curious compositions of them: the variety and curious structure of insects; the disposition of the bodies of perfecter animals; and, above all, the fabric of the body of man, especially the curious discoveries that anatomy and microscopes have given us; the strange beginning and progress of those; the wonders that occur in every organ of sense, and the amazing structure and use of the brain, are all such things, so artificial, and yet so regular, and so exactly shaped and fitted for their several uses, that he, who can believe all this to be chance, seems to have brought his mind to digest any absurdity.

That all men should resemble one another in the main things, and yet that every man should have a peculiar look, voice, and way of writing, is necessary to maintain order and distinction in society: by these we know men, if we either see them, hear them speak in the dark, or receive any writing from them at a distance; without these, the whole commerce of life would be one continued course of mistake and confusion. This, I say, is such an indication of wisdom, that it looks like a violence to nature to think it can be otherwise.

The only colour, that has supported this monstrous conceit, that things arise out of chance, is, that it has long passed current in the world, that great varieties of insects do arise out of corrupted matter. They argue, that, if the sun's shining on a dunghill can give life to such swarms of curious creatures, it is but a little more extraordinary, to think that animals and men might have been formed out of well-disposed matter, under a peculiar aspect of the heavens. But the exacter observations, that have been made in this age by the help of glasses, have put an end to this answer, which is the best that Lucretius and other atheists found to rest in. It is now fully made out, that the production of all insects whatsoever is in the way of generation: heat and corruption do only hatch those eggs that insects leave to a prodigious quantity every where. So that this, which is the only specious thing in the whole plea for atheism, is now given up by the universal consent of all the inquirers into nature.

And now to bring the force of this long argument to a head: If this world was neither from all eternity in the state in which it is at present, nor could fall into it by chance or accident, then it must follow that it was put into the state in which we now see it by a Being of vast power and wisdom. This is the great and solid argument on which religion rests;

and it receives a vast accession of strength from this, that we plainly see matter has not motion in or of itself: every part of it is at quiet till it is put in motion that is not natural to it; for many parts of matter fall into a state of rest and quiet; so that motion must be put in them by some impulse or other. Matter, after it has passed through the highest refinings and rectifyings possible, becomes only more capable of motion than it was before; but still it is a passive principle, and must be put in motion by some other being. This has appeared so necessary even to those who have tried their utmost force to make God as little needful as possible in the structure of the universe, that they have yet been forced to own, that there must have been once a vast motion given to matter by the Supreme Mind.

A third argument for the being of a God is, that, upon some great occasions, and before a vast number of witnesses, some persons have wrought miracles: that is, they have put nature out of its course, by some words or signs, that of themselves could not produce those extraordinary effects: and therefore such persons were assisted by a power superior to the course of nature; and by consequence there is such a Being, and that is God. To this the atheists do first say, that we do not know the secret virtues that are in nature: the loadstone and opium produce wonderful effects: therefore, unless we knew the whole extent of nature, we cannot define what is supernatural and miraculous, and what is not so. But, though we cannot tell how far nature may go, yet of some things we may, without hesitation, say, they are beyond natural powers. Such were the wonders that Moses wrought in Egypt and in the wilderness, by the speaking a few words, or the stretching out of a rod. We are sure these could not by any natural efficiency produce those wonders. And the like is to be said of the miracles of Christ, particularly of his raising the dead to life again, and of his own resurrection. These we are sure did not arise out of natural causes. The next thing atheists say to this, is, to dispute the truth of the facts: but of that I shall treat in another place, when the authority of revealed religion comes to be proved from those facts. All that is necessary to be added here, is, that if facts, that are plainly supernatural, are proved to have been really done, then here is another clear and full argument, to prove a Being superior to nature, that can dispose of it at pleasure: and that Being must either be God, or some other invisible being that has a strength superior to the settled course of nature. And if invisible beings, superior to nature, whether good or bad, are once acknowledged, a great step is made to the proof of the Supreme Being.

There is another famed argument taken from the idea of God; which is laid thus: that, because one frames a notion of infinite perfection, therefore there must be such a Being, from

ART.
I.

whom that notion is conveyed to us. This argument is also managed by other methods, to give us a demonstration of the being of a God. I am unwilling to say any thing to derogate from any argument that is brought to prove this conclusion; but, when he, who insists on this, lays all other arguments aside, or at least slights them as not strong enough to prove the point, this naturally gives jealousy, when all those reasons, that had for so many ages been considered as solid proofs, are neglected, as if this only could amount to a demonstration. But, besides, this is an argument that cannot be offered by any to another person, for his conviction; since, if he denies that he has any such idea, he is without the reach of the argument. And if a man will say that any such idea, which he may raise in himself, is only an aggregate that he makes of all those perfections, of which he can form a thought, which he lays together, separating from them every imperfection that he observes to be often mixed with some of those perfections: if, I say, a man will affirm this, I do not see that the inference from any such thought that he has formed within himself, can have any great force to persuade him that there is any such Being. Upon the whole, it seems to be fully proved, that there is a Being that is superior to matter, and that gave both being and order to it, and to all other things. This may serve to prove the being of a God. It is fit in the next place to consider, with all humble modesty, what thoughts we can, or ought to have of the Deity.

That Supreme Being must have its essence of itself necessarily and eternally; for it is impossible that any thing can give itself being; so it must be eternal. And, though eternity in a succession of determinate durations was proved to be impossible, yet it is certain that something must be eternal; either matter, or a Being superior to it, that has not a duration defined by succession, but is a simple essence, and eternally was, is, and shall be, the same. There is nothing contradictory to itself in this notion: it is indeed above our capacity to form a clear thought of it; but it is plain it must be so, and that this is only a defect in our nature and capacity, that we cannot distinctly apprehend that which is so far above us. Such a Being must have also necessary existence in its notion; for whatsoever is infinitely perfect must necessarily exist; since we plainly perceive that necessary existence is a perfection, and that contingent existence is an imperfection, which supposes a being that is produced by another, and that depends upon it: and, as this superior Being did exist from all eternity, so it is impossible, it should cease to be; since nothing that once has actually a being can ever cease to be, but by an act of a superior Being annihilating it. But there being nothing superior to the Deity, it is impossible that it should ever cease to be: what was self-existent from all eternity, must also be so to all eternity; and it is as im-

ART.
I.

possible that a simple essence can annihilate itself, as that it can make itself.

So much concerning the first and capital article of all religion, the existence and being of a God; which ought not to be proved by any authorities from scripture, unless from the recitals that are given in it concerning miracles, as was already hinted at. But as to the authority of such passages in scripture, which affirm that there is a God, it is to be considered, that before we can be bound to submit to them, we must believe three propositions antecedent to that; 1. That there is a God. 2. That all his words are true. 3. That these are his words. What, therefore, must be believed before we acknowledge the scriptures cannot be proved out of them. It is then a strange assertion, to say, that the being of a God cannot be proved by the light of nature, but must be proved by the scriptures; since our being assured that there is a God is the first principle upon which the authority of the scriptures depends.

The second proposition in the Article is, That *there is but one God*. As to this, the common argument, by which it is proved, is the order of the world; from whence it is inferred, that there cannot be more gods than one, since, where there are more than one, there must happen diversity and confusion. This is by some thought to be no good reason; for if there are more gods, that is, more beings infinitely perfect, they will always think the same thing, and be knit together with an entire love. It is true, in things of a moral nature, this must so happen: for beings infinitely perfect must ever agree. But in physical things, capable of no morality, as in creating the world sooner or later, and the different systems of beings, with a thousand other things that have no moral goodness in them, different beings infinitely perfect might have different thoughts. So this argument seems still of great force to prove the unity of the Deity. The other argument from reason, to prove the unity of God, is from the notion of a Being infinitely perfect. For a superiority over all other beings comes so naturally into the idea of infinite perfection, that we cannot separate it from it. A Being therefore, that has not all other beings inferior and subordinate to it, cannot be infinitely perfect; whence it is evident, that there is but one God. But, besides all this, the unity of God seems to be so frequently and so plainly asserted in the scripture, that we see it was the chief design of the whole Old Testament, both of Moses and the prophets, to establish it, in opposition to the false opinions of the heathen concerning a diversity of gods. This is often repeated in the most solemn words, as; *Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God is one Deut. vi. 4.

* שמע ישראל יהוה אלהינו יהוה אחד 'Hear, Israel, Jehovah, our God, is one Jehovah.' On this passage the Jews lay great stress; and it is one

ART. I. God.' It is the first of the Ten Commandments, 'Thou shalt have no other gods but me.' And all things in heaven and earth are often said to be made by this one God. Negative words are also often used, 'There is none other God but one: besides me there is none else, and I know no other':* the going after other gods is reckoned the highest and the most unpardonable act of idolatry. The New Testament goes on in the same strain. Christ speaks of the only *true God*, and that he alone ought to be worshipped and served; all the apostles do frequently affirm the same thing: they make the believing of one God, in opposition to the many Gods of the heathens, the chief article of the Christian religion; and they lay down this as the chief ground of our obligation to mutual love and union among ourselves, That 'there is one God, one Lord, one faith, one baptism.' Now, since we are sure that there is but one Messias, and one doctrine delivered by him, it will clearly follow that there must be but one God.

So the unity of the Divine Essence is clearly proved both from the order and government of the world, from the idea of infinite perfection, and from those express declarations that are made concerning it in the scriptures; which last is a full proof to all such as own and submit to them.

The third head in this Article is that which is negatively expressed, that *God is without body, parts, or passions*. In general, all these are so plainly contrary to the ideas of infinite perfection, and they appear so evidently to be imperfections, that this part of the Article will need little explanation. We do plainly perceive that our bodies are clogs to our minds; and all the use, that even the purest sort of body, in an estate conceived to be glorified, can be of to a mind, is to be an instrument of local motion, or to be a repository of ideas for memory and imagination: but God, who is every where, and is one pure and simple act, can have no such use for a body. A mind dwelling in a body is in many respects superior to it; yet in some respects is under it. We, who feel how an act of our mind can so direct the motions of our body that a thought sets our limbs and joints a going, can, from thence, conceive how that the whole extent of matter should receive such motions as the acts of the Supreme Mind give it; but yet not as a body united to it, or that the Deity either needs such a body, or can receive any trouble from it. Thus far the apprehension of the thing is very plainly made

of the four passages which they write on their phylacteries. On the word Elohim, Simeon Ben Joachi says, 'Come and see the mystery of the word Elohim: there are three degrees, and each degree is by itself alone, and yet they are all one, and joined together in one, and are not divided from each other.'—*Bagster's Comprehensive Bible*.—*Note on the passage*.—[Ed.]

* The passage stands thus in Isa. xlv. 6. 'Thus saith the Lord, the King of Israel, and his redeemer the Lord of Hosts; I am the first and I am the last; and beside me there is no God.' These titles are in the New Testament given to the Lord Jesus Christ, Rev. i. 8, 11—13, 17, 18. and xxii. 12, 13, 16.—[Ed.]

ART. I. out to us. Our thoughts put some parts of our body in a present motion, when the organization is regular, and all the parts are exact, and when there is no obstruction in those vessels or passages, through which that heat and those spirits, do pass, that cause the motion. We do in this perceive, that a thought does command matter; but our minds are limited to our bodies, and these do not obey them, but as they are in an exact disposition and a fitness to be so moved. Now these are plain imperfections; but, removing them from God, we can from thence apprehend that all the matter in the universe may be so entirely subject to the Divine Mind, that it shall move and be whatsoever and wheresoever he will have it to be. This is that which all men do agree in.

But many of the philosophers thought that matter, though it was moved and moulded by God at his pleasure, yet was not made by him, but was self-existent, and was a passive principle, but coexistent to the Deity, which they thought was the active principle: from whence some have thought, that the belief of two gods, one good and another bad, did spring: though others imagine that the belief of a bad god did arise from the corruption of that tradition concerning fallen angels, as was before suggested. The philosophers could not apprehend that things could be made out of nothing, and therefore they believed that matter was co-eternal with God. But it is as hard to apprehend how a mind, by its thought, should give motion to matter, as how it should give it being. A being not made by God is not so easily conceivable to be under the acts of his mind, as that which is made by him. This conceit plainly destroys infinite perfection, which cannot be in God, if all beings are not from him, and under his authority; besides that, successive duration has been already proved inconsistent with eternity. This opinion of the world's being a body to God, as the mind that dwells in it, and actuates it, is the foundation of atheism: for if it be once thought that God can do nothing without such a body, then, as this destroys the idea of infinite perfection, so it makes way to this conceit, that since matter is visible, and God invisible, there is no other God, but the vast extent of the universe. It is true, God has often shewed himself in visible appearances; but that was only his putting a special quantity of matter into such motions, as should give a great and astonishing idea of his nature, from that appearance: which was both the effect of his power, and the symbol of his presence. And thus what glorious representations soever were made either on mount Sinai, or in the pillar of the cloud, and cloud of glory, those were no indications of God's having a body; but were only manifestations, suited to beget such thoughts in the minds of men, that dwelt in bodies, as might lay the principles and foundations of religion deep in them. The language of the scriptures speaks to

ART.
I.

the capacities of men, and even of rude men in dark times, in which most of the Scriptures were writ: but, though God is spoke of as having a face, eyes, ears, a smelling, hands and feet, and as coming down to view things on earth, all this is expressed after the manner of men, and is to be understood in a way suitable to a pure spirit. For the great care that was used, even under the most imperfect state of revelation, to keep men from framing any image or similitude of the Deity, shewed that it was far from the meaning of those expressions, that God had an organized body. These do therefore signify only the several varieties of Providence. When God was pleased with a nation, his *face* was said to *shine* upon it; for so a man looks towards those whom he loves. The particular care he takes of them, and the answering their prayers, is expressed by figures borrowed from *eyes* and *ears*: the peculiar dispensations of rewards and punishments are expressed by his *hands*; and the exactness of his justice and *wisdom* is expressed by *coming down* to view the state of human affairs. Thus it is clear that God has no body: nor has he *parts*, for we can apprehend no parts but of a body: so, since it is certain that God has no body, he can have *no parts*: something like parts does indeed belong to spirits, which are their thoughts distinct from their being, and they have a succession of them, and do oft change them. But infinite perfection excludes this from the idea of God; successive thoughts, as well as successive duration, seem inconsistent both with eternity, and with infinite perfection. Therefore the essence of God is one perfect thought, in which he both views and wills all things: and though his transient acts that pass out of the divine essence, such as creation, providence, and miracles, are done in a succession of time; yet his immanent acts, his knowledge and his decrees, are one with his essence. Distinct thoughts are plainly an imperfection, and argue a progress in knowledge, and a deliberation in council, which carry defect and infirmity in them. To conceive how this is in God is far above our capacity: who, though we feel our imperfection in successive acts, yet cannot apprehend how all things can be both seen and determined by one single thought. But the divine Essence being so infinitely above us, it is no wonder if we can frame no distinct act concerning its knowledge or will.

There is indeed a vast difficulty that arises here; for those acts of God are supposed free; so that they might have been otherwise than we see they are: and then it is not easy to imagine how they should be one with the divine Essence, to which necessary existence does certainly belong. It cannot be said that those acts are necessary, and could not be otherwise: for, since all God's transient acts are the certain effects of his immanent ones, if the immanent ones are necessary, then the transient must be so likewise, and so

ART.
I.

every thing must be necessary: a chain of necessary fate must run through the whole order of things; and God himself then is no free being, but acts by a necessity of nature. This some have thought was no absurdity: God is necessarily just, true, and good, not by any extrinsic necessity, for that would import an outward limitation, which destroys the idea of God; but by an intrinsic necessity that arises from his own infinite perfection. Some have from hence thought that, since God acts by infinite wisdom and goodness, things could not have been otherwise than they are: for what is infinitely wise or good cannot be altered, or made either better or worse. But this seems on the other hand very hard to conceive: for it would follow from thence, that God could neither have made the world sooner nor later, nor any other way than now it is: nor could he have done any one thing otherwise than as it is done. This seems to establish fate, and to destroy industry and all prayers and endeavours. Thus there are such great difficulties on all hands in this matter that it is much the wisest and safest course to adore what is above our apprehensions, rather than to inquire too curiously, or determine too boldly in it. It is certain that God acts both freely and perfectly: nor is he a Being subject to change, or to new acts; but *he is what he is*, both infinite and incomprehensible: we can neither apprehend how he made, nor how he executes his decrees. So we must leave this difficulty, without pretending that we can explain it, or answer the objections that arise against all the several ways by which divines have endeavoured to resolve it.

The third thing under the head I now consider is, God's being *without passions*. That will be soon explained. Passion is an agitation that supposes a succession of thoughts, together with a trouble for what is past, and a fear of missing what is aimed at. It arises out of a heat of mind, and produces a vehemence of action. Now all these are such manifest imperfections, that it does plainly appear they cannot consist with infinite perfection. Yet after all this, there are several passions, such as *anger*, *fury*, *jealousy*, and *revenge*, *bowels of mercy*, *compassion* and *pity*, *joy* and *sorrow*, that are ascribed to God in the common forms of speech, that occur often in scripture, as was formerly observed, with relation to those figures that are taken from the parts of a human body. Passion produces a vehemence of action: so, when there is in the providences of God such a vehemence as, according to the manner of men, would import a passion, then that passion is ascribed to God: when he punishes men for sin, he is said to be *angry*: when he does that by severe and redoubled strokes, he is said to be full of *fury* and *revenge*: when he punishes for idolatry, or any dishonour done himself, he is said to be *jealous*: when he changes the course of his proceedings, he is said to *repent*: when his dispensations of

ART. I. providence are very gentle, and his judgments come slowly from him, he is said to have *bowels*. And thus all the varieties of Providence come to be expressed by all that variety of passions, which among men might give occasion to such a variety of proceeding.

The fourth head in this article is concerning the *power, wisdom, and goodness* of God, that he is *infinite* in them. If he can give being to things that are not, and can also give all the possibilities of motion, size, and shape, to beings that do exist, here is power without bounds. A power of creating must be infinite, since nothing can resist it. If some things are in their own nature impossible, that does not arise from the want of power in God, which extends to every thing that is possible. But that, which is supposed to be impossible of its own nature, cannot actually be: otherwise a thing might both be and not be; and it is perceptible to every man that this is impossible. It is not want of power in God, that he cannot lie nor sin: it is the infinite purity of the Divine nature that makes this impossible, by reason of his infinite perfection. Nor is it a want of power in God, that the truth of propositions concerning things that are past, as that yesterday once was, is unalterable. Among impossibilities, one is, to take from any being that which is essential to it. God can annihilate every being at his pleasure; for, as he gave being with a thought, so he can destroy it with another: and this does fully assert the infinite power of God. But if he has made beings with such peculiar essences, as that matter must be extended and impenetrable, and that it is capable of peculiar surfaces and other modes, which are only its different sizes and shapes, then matter cannot be, and yet not be, extended; nor can these modes subsist, if the matter of which they are the modes is withdrawn. The infinite power of God is fully believed by those who acknowledge both his power of creating and annihilating; together with a power of disposing of the whole creation, according to the possibilities of every part or individual of it; though they cannot conceive a possibility of separating the essential properties of any being from itself; that is to say, that it may both be, and not be, at the same time; since an essential property is that which cannot be without that substance to which it belongs.

The wisdom of God consists first in his seeing all the possibilities of things, and then in his knowing all things that either are, or ever were, or shall be: the former is called the knowledge of simple *intelligence* or *apprehension*; the other is called the knowledge of *vision*. The one arises from the perfection of the divine Essence, by which he apprehends whatever is possible; the other arises from his own decrees, in which the whole order of things is fixed. But besides these two ideas that we can frame of the knowledge of God, some have

ART. I. imagined a third knowledge, which, because it is of a middle order betwixt *intelligence* and *vision*, they have called a *middle knowledge*; which is the knowing certainly how, according to all the possibilities of circumstances in which free agents might be put, they should choose and act. Some have thought that this was a vain and needless conceit; and that it is impossible that such knowledge should be certain, or more than conjectural; and, since conjecture implies doubt, it is an imperfect act, and so does not become a Being of infinite perfection. But others have thought that the infinite perfection of the divine Mind must go so far as to foresee certainly what free creatures are to do; since upon this foresight only they imagine that the justice or goodness of God in his providence can be made out or defended. It seemed fit to mention this upon the present occasion; but it will be then proper to inquire more carefully about it, when the article of *predestination* is explained.

It is necessary to state the idea of the goodness of God most carefully; for we naturally enough frame great and just ideas of power and wisdom; but we easily fall into false conceits of goodness. This is that of all the divine perfections in which we are the most concerned, and so we ought to be the most careful to frame true ideas of it: it is also that, of all God's attributes, of which the scriptures speak most copiously. Infinite goodness is a tendency to communicate the divine perfections to all created beings, according to their several capacities. God is original goodness, all perfect and happy in himself, acting and seeing every thing in a perfect light; and he having made rational beings capable of some degrees of his light, purity, and perfection, the first and primary act of goodness is to propose to them such means as may raise them to these, to furnish them with them, to move them off to them, to accept and to assist their sincere endeavours after them. A second act of goodness, which is but in order to the first, is to pity those miseries into which men fall, as long as there is any principle or possibility left in them of their becoming good; to pardon all such sins as men have committed, who turn to the purposes of becoming seriously good, and to pass by all the frailties and errors of those who are truly and upon the main good, though surprise and strong temptations prove often too hard for them. These two give us as full an idea as we can have of perfect goodness; whose first aim must be the making us good, and like to that original goodness: pity and pardon coming in but in a subsidiary way, to carry on the main design of making men truly good. Therefore the chief act and design of goodness is the making us truly good; and, when any person falls below that possibility, he is no more the object of pity or pardon, because he is no more capable of becoming good. Pardon is offered on design to make us really good; so it is not to be sought for,

nor rested in, but in order to a farther end, which is the reforming our natures, and the making us partakers of the divine nature. We are not therefore to frame ideas of a feeble goodness in God, that yields to importunate cries, or that melts at a vast degree of misery. Tenderness in human nature is a great ornament and perfection, necessary to dispose us to much benignity and mercy: but, in the common administration of justice, this tenderness must be restrained; otherwise it would slacken the rigour of punishment too much, which might dissolve the order and peace of human societies. But since we cannot see into the truth of men's hearts, a charitable disposition and a compassionate temper are necessary to make men sociable and kind, gentle and humane. God, who sees our hearts, and is ever assisting all our endeavours to become truly good, needs not this tenderness, nor is he indeed capable of it; for, after all its beauty with relation to the state wherein we are now put, yet, in itself it implies imperfection. Nor can the miseries and howlings of wicked beings, after all the seeds and possibilities of goodness are utterly extinguished in them, give any pity to the divine Being. These are no longer the object of the primary act of his goodness, and therefore they cannot come under its secondary acts. It is of such great consequence to settle this notion right in our minds, that it well deserves to be so copiously opened; since we now see in what respects God's goodness is without bounds, and infinite; that is, it reaches to all men, after all sins whatsoever, as long as they are capable of becoming good. It is not a limitation of the divine goodness to say, that some men and some states are beyond it; no more than it is a limitation of his power to say, that he cannot sin, or cannot do impossibilities: for a goodness, towards persons not capable of becoming good, is a goodness that does not agree with the infinite purity and holiness of God. It is, such a goodness, that if it were proposed to the world, it would encourage men to live in sin, and to think that a few acts of homage offered to God, perhaps in our last extremities, could so far please him, as to bribe and corrupt him.

This is that which makes idolatry so great a sin, so often forbid by God, and so severely punished, not only as it is injurious to the majesty of God, but because it corrupts the ideas or notions of God. Those ideas rightly formed are the basis upon which all religion is built. The seeds and principles of a new and godlike nature spring up in us as we form ourselves upon the true ideas or notions of God. Therefore, when God is proposed to be adored by us under a visible shape or image, all the acts of religion offered to it are only so many pieces of pageantry, and end in the flattering and the magnifyings of it with much pomp, cruelty, or lasciviousness, according to the different genius of several nations. So

the forming a false notion of the goodness of God, as a tenderness that is to be overcome with importunities and howlings, and other submissions, and not to be gained only by becoming like him, is a capital and fundamental error in religion.

The next branch of this article is, God's *creating and preserving of all things*; and that both material substances, which are visible, and immaterial and spiritual substances, which are invisible. God's creating all things has been already made out. If matter could neither be eternal, nor give itself a being, then it must have its being from God. Creating does naturally import infinite power; for that power is clearly without bounds, that can make things out of nothing: a bounded power, which can only shape and mould matter, must suppose it to have a being, before it can work upon it. We cannot indeed form a distinct thought of creation, for we cannot apprehend what nothing is. The nearest approach we can bring ourselves to a true idea of this, is, the considering our own thoughts; especially our ideas of mathematical proportions, and the other affections of bodies: those ideas are the modes of a spiritual substance; and there is no likeness nor resemblance between them and the modes of material substances, which are only the occasions of our having those ideas, and not in any wise the matter out of which they are formed. Here seems to be a sort of beings brought out of nothing; but, after all, this is vastly below creation, and is only a faint resemblance of it.

With the power of creating we must also join that of annihilating, which is equal to it, and must necessarily be supposed to be in God, because we plainly perceive it to be a perfection. The recalling into nothing a being brought out of nothing, is a necessary consequence of infinite power, when it thinks fit so to exert itself. There is a common notion in the world, that things would fall back into nothing of themselves, if they were not preserved by the same infinite Power that made them: but without question it is an act of the same infinite Power to reduce a being to nothing, that it is to bring a being out of nothing: so whatever has once a being, must of its nature continue still to be, without any new causality or influence. This must be acknowledged, unless it can be said, that a tendency to annihilation is the consequent of a created being. But as this would make the preservation of the world to be a continued violence to a natural tendency that is in all things; so there is no more reason to imagine that beings have a tendency to annihilation, than that nothing had a tendency to creation. It is absurd to think that any thing can have a tendency to that which is essentially opposite to itself, and is destructive of it.

The preservation of things is the keeping the frame of nature, and the order of the universe, in such a state as is suitable to the purposes of the supreme Mind. It is true, natural

agents must ever keep the course in which they are once put; and the great heavenly orbs, as well as all smaller motions, must ever have rolled on in one constant channel, when they were once put into it; so in this respect it may seem that conservation by a special act is not necessary. But we perceive a freedom in our own natures, and a power that our minds have, not only to move our own bodies, but by them, and by the help of such engines as we can invent, we make a vast change in this earth from what it would be, if it were left unwrought. In a course of some ages, the whole world, by the natural progress of things, would be a forest: both earth and air are very much different from what they would be, if men were not free agents, and did not cultivate the earth, and thereby purify the air. The working of mines, minerals, and other fossils, makes also a great change in its bowels; it gives vent to some damps which might much affect the air, and it frees the earth from earthquakes. Thus the industry of man has in many respects changed both earth and air very sensibly from what it would have been, if the world had not those inhabitants in it. Nor do we know what natural force other spirits inhabiting in or about it, or at least using subtiller bodies, may have, or in what influences or operations they may exert that force on material substances. Upon all these accounts it is, that the world could not be preserved in a constant and regular state, if the supreme Mind had not a direction both of men's wills and actions, and of the course of nature: for, unless it is thought that man is really no free agent, but acts in a chain as certainly as other natural agents do, it must be acknowledged, that by the interposition of men's minds, together with their power over matter, the course of the first motion that was given to the universe is so changed, that if there is not a constant providence, the frame of nature must go out of the channel into which God did at first put it. The order of things on this earth takes a great turn from the wind, both as to the fruitfulness of the earth, and to the operations on the sea, and has likewise a great influence on the purity of the air, and, by consequence, on men's good or ill health; and the wind, or the agitation of the air, turns so often and so quick, that it seems to be the great instrument of Providence, upon which an unconceivable variety of things does naturally depend. I do not deny, but that it may be said, that all those changes in the air arise from certain and mechanical, though to us unknown, causes; which may be supported from this, that between the tropics, where the influence of the heavenly bodies is stronger, the wind and weather are more regular; though even that admits of great exceptions: yet it has been the common sense of mankind, that, besides the natural causes of the alterations in the air, they are under a particular influence and direction of Providence: and it is in itself highly probable, to say no more

of it. This may either be managed immediately by the acts of the divine Mind, to which nature readily obeys, or by some subaltern mind, or angel, which may have as natural an efficiency over an extent of matter proportioned to its capacity, as a man has over his own body, and over that compass of matter that is within his reach. Which way soever God governs the world, and what influence soever he has over men's minds, we are sure that the governing and preserving his own workmanship is so plainly a perfection, that it must belong to a Being infinitely perfect: and there is such a chain in things, those of the greatest consequence arising often from small and inconsiderable ones, that we cannot imagine a Providence, unless we believe every thing to be within its care and view.

The only difficulty that has been made in apprehending this has arisen from the narrowness of men's minds, who have measured God rather by their own measure and capacity, than by that of infinite perfection, which, as soon as it is considered, will put an end to all farther doubtings about it. When we perceive that a vast number of objects enter in at our eye by a very small passage, and yet are so little jumbled in that crowd, that they open themselves regularly, though there is no great space for that neither; and that they give us a distinct apprehension of many objects that lie before us, some even at a vast distance from us, both of their nature, colour, and size; and by a secret geometry, from the angles that they make in our eye, we judge of the distance of all objects both from us, and from one another. If to this we add the vast number of figures that we receive and retain long and with great order in our brains, which we easily fetch up either in our thoughts or in our discourses, we shall find it less difficult to apprehend how an infinite mind should have the universal view of all things ever present before it. It is true, we do not so easily conceive how free minds are under this Providence, as how natural agents should always move at its direction. But we perceive that one mind can work upon another. A man raises a sound of words, which carry such signs of his inward thoughts, that, by this motion in the air, another man's ear is so struck upon that thereby an impression is made upon his brain, by which he not only conceives what the other man's thought was, but is very powerfully inclined to consent to it, and to concur with it. All this is a great way about, and could not be easily apprehended by us, if we had not a clear and constant perception of it. Now since all this is brought about by a motion upon our brains, according to the force with which we are more or less affected, it is very reasonable for us to apprehend that the supreme Mind can, besides many other ways to us less known, put such motions in our brain, as may give us all such thoughts

ART. I. as it intends to impress upon us, in as strong and effectual a manner as may fully answer all its purposes.

The great objection that lies against the power and the goodness of Providence, from all that evil that is in the world, which God is either not willing or not able to hinder, will be more properly considered in another place; at present it is enough in general to observe, that God's providence must carry on every thing according to its nature; and since he has made some free beings capable of thought, and of good and evil, we must believe, that, as the course of nature is not oft put out of its channel, unless when some extraordinary thing is to be done, in order to some great end, so, in the government of free agents, they must be generally left to their liberty, and not put too oft off their bias: this is a hint to resolve that difficulty by, concerning all the moral evil, which is, generally speaking, the occasion of most of the physical evil that is in the world. A providence thus settled, that extends itself to all things both natural and free, is necessary to preserve religion, to engage us to prayers, praises, and to a dependence on it, and a submission to it. Some have thought it was necessary to carry this farther, and so they make God to be the first and immediate cause of every action or motion. This some modern writers have taken from the schools, and have dressed it in new phrases of general laws, particular wills, and occasional causes; and so they express or explain God's producing every motion that is in matter, and his raising every sensation, and, by the same parity of reason, every cogitation in minds: this they think arises out of the idea of infinite perfection, and fully answers these words of the scriptures, that 'in God we live, move, and have our being.' To others all this seems first unnecessary; for, if God has made matter capable of motion, and capable of receiving it from the stroke or impulse that another piece of matter gives it, this comes as truly from God, as if he did immediately give every motion by an act of his own will. It seems more suitable to the beauty of his workmanship, to think that he has so framed things that they hold on in that course in which he has put them, than to make him perpetually produce every new motion. And the bringing God immediately into every thing, may, by an odd reverse of effects, make the world think that every thing is done as much without him, as others are apt to imagine that every thing is done by him. And though it is true that we cannot distinctly apprehend how a motion in our brain should raise such a thought as answers to it in our minds; yet it seems more reasonable to think that God has put us under such an order of being from which that does naturally follow, than that he himself should interpose in every thought. The difficulty of apprehending how a thing is done, can be no prejudice to the belief of it, when we have the infinite power of God in our thoughts, who may be as

easily conceived to have once for all put us in a method of receiving such sensations, by a general law or course of nature, as to give us new ones at every minute. But the greatest difficulty against this is, that it makes God the first physical cause of all the evil that is in the world: which, as it is contrary to his nature, so, it absolutely destroys all liberty; and this puts an end to all the distinctions between good and evil, and consequently to all religion. And as for those large expressions that are brought from scripture, every word in scripture is not to be stretched to the utmost physical sense to which it can be carried: it is enough if a sense is given to it, that agrees to the scope of it: which is fully answered by acknowledging, that the power and providence of God is over all things, and that it directs every thing to wise and good ends, from which nothing is hid, by which nothing is forgot, and to which nothing can resist. This scheme of providence fully agrees with the notion of a Being infinitely perfect, and with all that the scriptures affirm concerning it; and it lays down a firm foundation for all the acts and exercises of religion.

As to the power and providence of God with relation to invisible beings, we plainly perceive that there is in us a principle capable of thought and liberty, of which, by all that appears to us, matter is not at all capable: after its utmost refinings by fires and furnaces, it is still passive, and has no self-motion, much less thought, in it. Thought seems plainly to arise from a single principle, that has no parts, and is quite another thing than the motion of one subtle piece of matter upon another can be supposed to be. If thought is only motion, then no part of us thinks, but as it is in motion; so that only the moving particles, or rather their surfaces, that strike upon one another, do think: but such a motion must end quickly in the dissipation and evaporation of the whole thinking substance; nor can any of the quiescent parts have any perception of such thoughts, or any reflection upon them. And to say that matter may have other affections unknown to us besides motion, by which it may think, is to affirm a thing without any sort of reason: it is rather a flying from an argument, than an answering it: no man has any reason to affirm this, nor can he have any. And besides, all our cogitations of immaterial things, proportions, and numbers, do plainly shew that we have a being in us distinct from matter, that rises above it, and commands it: we perceive we have a freedom of moving and acting at pleasure. All these things give us a clear perception of a being that is in us distinct from matter, of which we are not able to form a complete idea: we having only four perceptions of its nature and operations.

1. That it thinks.
2. That it has an inward power of choice.
3. That by its will it can move and command the body.
- And,
4. That it is in a close and entire union with it, that it has a

ART. I.

A R T.
I.

dependence on it, as to many of its acts, as well as an authority over it in many other things. Such a being that has no parts must be immortal in its nature, for every single being is immortal. It is only the union of parts that is capable of being dissolved; that which has no parts is indissoluble. To this two objections are made: one is, that beasts seem to have both thought and freedom, though in a lower order: if then matter can be capable of this in any degree how low soever, a higher rectification of matter may be capable of a higher degree of it. It is therefore certain, that either beasts have no thought or liberty at all, and are only pieces of finely organized matter, capable of many subtle motions, that come to them from objects without them, but that they have no sensation nor thought at all about them: or, since how prettily soever some may have dressed up this notion, it is that which human nature cannot receive or bear; there being such evident indications of even high degrees of reason among the beasts; it is more reasonable to imagine, that there may be spirits of a lower order in beasts, that have in them a capacity of thinking and choosing; but that so entirely under the impressions of matter, that they are not capable of that largeness, either of thought or liberty, that is necessary to make them capable of good or evil, of rewards and punishments; and that therefore they may be perpetually rolling about from one body to another. Another objection to the belief of an immaterial substance in us is, that we feel it depends so entirely on the fabric and state of the brain, that a disorder, a vapour, or humour in it, defaces all our thoughts, our memory, and imagination; and, since we find that which we call *mind* sinks so low upon a disorder of the body, it may be reasonable to believe, that it evaporates, and is quite dissipated, upon the dissolution of our bodies: so that the soul is nothing but the livelier parts of the blood, called the animal spirits. In answer to this, we know that those animal spirits are of such an evanid and subtle nature, that they are in a perpetual waste, new ones always succeeding as the former go off: but we perceive at the same time that our soul is a stable and permanent being, by the steadiness of its acts and thoughts; we being for many years plainly the same beings, and therefore our souls cannot be such a loose and evaporating substance as those spirits are. The spirits are indeed the inward organs of the mind, for memory, speech, and bodily motion; and, as these flatten or are wasted, the mind is less able to act: as when the eye or any other organ of sense is weakened, the sensations grow feeble on that side: and as a man is less able to work, when all those instruments he makes use of are blunted; so the mind may sink upon a decay or disorder in those spirits, and yet be of a nature wholly different from them. How a mind should work on matter, cannot, I confess, be clearly comprehended. It cannot be denied by any that

A R T.
I.

is not a direct atheist, that the thoughts of the supreme Mind give impressions and motions to matter. So our thoughts may give a motion, or the determination of motion, to matter, and yet rise from substances wholly different from it. Nor is it inconceivable, that the supreme Mind should have put our minds likewise under such a subordination to some material motions, that out of them peculiar thoughts should arise in us. And though this union is that which we cannot distinctly conceive; yet there is no difficulty in it, equal to that of our imagining that matter can think or move itself. We perceive that we ourselves and the rest of mankind have thinking principles within us; so from thence it is easy enough to us to apprehend, that there may be other thinking beings, which either have no bodies at all, but act purely as intellectual substances: or, if they have bodies, that they are so subtilized as to be capable of a vast quickness of motion, such in proportion as we perceive to be in our animal spirits, which in the minute that our minds command them, are raising motions in the remotest parts of our bodies. Such bodies may also be so thin as to be invisible to us; and as among men some are good and some bad, and of the bad some seem to be determinedly, and, as to all appearance, incurably bad; so there may have been a time and state of liberty, in which those spirits were left to their choice, whether they would continue in their innocency, or fall from it; and such as continued might be for ever fixed in that state, or exalted to higher degrees in it: and such as fell from it might fall irrecoverably into a state of utter apostacy from God, and of rebellion against him. There is nothing in this theory that is incredible: therefore, if the scriptures have told us any thing concerning it, we have no reason to be prejudiced against them upon that account: besides that, there are innumerable histories in many several countries and ages of the world, of extraordinary apparitions, and other unaccountable performances, that could only have been done by invisible powers. Many of those are so well attested, that it argues a strange pitch of obstinacy, to refuse to believe a matter of fact when it is well vouched, and when there is nothing in reason to oppose it, but an unwillingness to believe invisible beings. It is true, this is an argument in which a fabulous humour will go far, and in which some are so credulous as to swallow down every thing; therefore all wise men ought to suspend their belief, and not to go too fast: but when things are so undeniably attested, that there is no reason to question the exactness or the credit of the witnesses, it argues a mind unreasonably prepossessed to reject all such evidence.

All these invisible beings were created by God, and are not to be considered as emanations or rays of his essence, which was a gross conceit of such philosophers as fancied that

A R T.
I.
the Deity had parts. They are beings created by him, and are capable of passing through various scenes, in bodies more or less refined. In this life the state of our minds receives vast alterations from the state of our bodies, which ripen gradually; and after they are come to their full growth, they cannot hold in that condition long, but sink down much faster than they grew up; some humours or diseases discomposing the brain, which is the seat of the mind, so entirely, that it cannot serve it, at least so far as to reflex acts. So in the next state it is possible that we may at first be in a less perfect condition by reason of this, that we may have a less perfect body, to which we may be united between our death and the general resurrection; and there may be a time, in which we may receive a vast addition and exaltation in that state by the raising up of our former bodies, and the reuniting us to them, which may give us a greater compass, and a higher elevation.

These things are only proposed as suppositions, that have no absurdity in them: so that, if they should happen to be the parts of a revealed religion, there is no reason to doubt of it, or to reject it, on such an account.

The last branch of this article is the assertion of that great doctrine of the Christian religion concerning the Trinity, or three Persons in one divine essence. It is a vain attempt to go about to prove this by reason: for it must be confessed, that we should have had no cause to have thought of any such thing, if the scriptures had not revealed it to us. There are indeed prints of a very ancient tradition in the world, of three in the Deity; * called the *Word*, or the *Wisdom*, and the *Spirit*, or the *Love*, besides the fountain of both these, God: this was believed by those from whom the most ancient phi-

* Doctor Buchanan, in his *Christian Researches in Asia*, observes, that the chief and distinguishing doctrines of the Scripture—the Trinity in Unity; the incarnation of the Deity; a vicarious atonement for sin; and the influence of the Divine Spirit on the mind of man—are held by the eastern nations, though in gross ignorance respecting the only living and true God. Of the Trinity he writes:

“The Hindoos believe in one God, Brahma; and yet they represent him as subsisting in three persons; and they worship one or other of these persons in every part of India. And what proves distinctly that they hold this doctrine is, that their most ancient representation of the Deity is formed of *one* body and *three* faces. The most remarkable of these is that at the caves of Elephanta, in an island near Bombay. The author visited it in the year 1808; nor has he seen any work of art in the east, which he contemplated with greater wonder: whether considered with respect to its colossal size, its great antiquity, the beauty of the sculpture, or the excellence of the preservation. From causes which cannot now be known, the Hindoos have long since ceased to worship at this temple. Each of the faces of the Triad is about five feet in length. The whole of the statue and the spacious temple which contains it, is cut out of the solid rock of the mountain. The Hindoos assign to these works an immense antiquity, and attribute the workmanship to the Gods. The temple of Elephanta is certainly one of the wonders of the world, and is, perhaps, a grander effort of the ingenuity of man, than the pyramids of Egypt. Whence then have the Hindoos derived the idea of a *Triune* God? It should seem as if they had heard of the *ELOHIM* of Revelation in the first chapter of Genesis—“Let us make man.”—[Ed.]

losophers had their doctrines. The author of the Book of Wisdom, Philo, and the Chaldee paraphrasts, have many things that shew that they had received those traditions from the former ages; but it is not so easy to determine what gave the first rise to them.

It has been much argued, whether this was revealed in the Old Testament or not; some from the plural termination of *Elohim*, which is joined to singular verbs, and from that of the Lord raining fire from the Lord upon Sodom (*Jehovah* from *Jehovah*); from the description of the Wisdom of God in the 8th of the Proverbs, as a Person with God from all eternity; and from the mention that is often made of the Spirit, as well as the Word of God that came to the prophets; they have, I say, from all these places, and some others, concluded, that this is contained in the Old Testament. Others have doubted of this, and have said that the name *Elohim*, though of a plural termination, being often joined to a singular verb, makes it reasonable to think it was a singular: which, by somewhat peculiar to that language, might be of a plural termination. Nor have they thought that since angels carry the name of God, when they went on special deputations from him, the angels being called *Jehovah* could be very confidently urged: that sublime description of the *Wisdom* of God in the Proverbs seems not to them to be a full proof in this matter: for the *Wisdom* there mentioned seems to be the *Wisdom* of creation and providence, which is not personal, but belongs to the essence; nor do they think that those places in the Old Testament, in which mention is made of the *Word*, or of the *Spirit* of God, can settle this point; for these may only signify God's revealing himself to his prophets. Therefore, whatever secret tradition the Jews might have had among them concerning this, from whom perhaps the Greeks might have also had it; yet many do not pretend to prove this from passages in the Old Testament alone: though the expositions given to some of them in the New Testament prove to us, who acknowledge it, what was the true meaning of those passages; yet, take the Old Testament in itself without the New, and it must be confessed that it will not be easy to prove this article from it.

But there are very full and clear proofs of it in the New Testament; and they had need be both full and clear, before a doctrine of this nature can be pretended to be proved by them. In order to the making this mystery to be more distinctly intelligible, different methods have been taken. By *one Substance* many do understand a numerical or individual unity of substance; and by *three Persons* they understand three distinct subsistences in that essence. It is not pretended by these, that we can give a distinct idea of *Person* or *Subsistence*, only they hold it imports a real diversity in one from another, and even such a diversity from the substance

A R T. I. of the Deity itself, that some things belong to the Person which do not belong to the Substance: for the Substance neither begets nor is begotten; neither breathes, nor proceeds. If this carries in it something that is not agreeable to our notions, nor like any thing that we can apprehend, to this it is said, that, if God has revealed that in the scripture which is thus expressed, we are bound to believe it, though we can frame no clear apprehension about it. God's eternity, his being all one single act, his creating and preserving all things, and his being every where, are things that are absolute riddles to us: we cannot bring our minds to conceive them, and yet we must believe that they are so; because we see much greater absurdities must follow upon our conceiving that they should be otherwise. So if God has declared this inexplicable thing concerning himself to us, we are bound to believe it, though we cannot have any clear idea how it truly is. For there appear as strange and unanswerable difficulties in many other things, which yet we know to be true; so if we are once well assured that God has revealed his doctrine to us, we must silence all objections against it, and believe it: reckoning that our not understanding it, as it is in itself, makes the difficulties seem to be much greater than otherwise they would appear to be, if we had light enough about it, or were capable of forming a more perfect idea of it while we are in this depressed state.

Others give another view of this matter, that is not indeed so hard to be apprehended: but that has an objection against it, that seems as great a prejudice against it, as the difficulty of apprehending the other way is against that: it is this; they do hold that there are three Minds; that the first of these three, who is from that called the Father, did from all eternity by an emanation of essence beget the Son, and by another emanation that was from eternity likewise, and was as essential to him as the former, both the first and the second, did jointly breathe forth the Spirit; and that these are three distinct Minds, every one being God, as much as the other: only the Father is the fountain, and is only self-originated. All this is in a good degree intelligible: but it seems hard to reconcile it both with the idea of unity, which seems to belong to a Being of infinite perfection; and with the many express declarations that are made in the scriptures concerning the unity of God. Instead of going farther into explanations of that which is certainly very far beyond all our apprehensions, and that ought therefore to be let alone, I shall now consider what declarations are made in the scripture concerning this point.

The first and the chief is in that charge and commission which our Saviour gave to his apostles to go and make disciples to him among all nations, 'baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.' By name is

A R T. I. meant either an authority derived to them, in the virtue of which all nations were to be baptized: or that the persons so baptized are dedicated to the *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*. Either of these senses, as it proves them all to be *Persons*, so it sets them in an equality, in a thing that can only belong to the *divine Nature*. Baptism is the receiving men from a state of sin and wrath, into a state of favour, and into the rights of the sons of God, and the hopes of eternal happiness, and a calling them by the name of God. These are things that can only be offered and assured to men in the name of the great and eternal God; and therefore, since, without any distinction or note of inequality, they are all three set together as Persons in whose name this is to be done, they must be all three the true God; otherwise it looks like a just prejudice against our Saviour, and his whole gospel, that by his express direction the first entrance to it, which gives the visible and federal right to those great blessings that are offered by it, or their initiation into it, should be in the name of two created beings, (if the one can be called properly so much as a being, according to their hypothesis,) and that even in an equality with the supreme and increated Being. The plainness of this charge, and the great occasion upon which it was given, makes this an argument of such force and evidence, that it may justly determine the whole matter.

A second argument is taken from this, that we find St. Paul begins or ends most of his Epistles with a salutation in the form of a wish, which is indeed a prayer, or a benediction, in the name of those who are so invocated; in which he wishes the churches 'grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ;'^{*} which is an invocation of Christ, in conjunction with the Father, for the greatest blessings of favour and mercy: that is a strange strain, if he was only a creature; which yet is delivered without any mitigation or softening in the most remarkable parts of his Epistles. This is carried farther in the conclusion of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians; 'The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with you.'^{2 Cor. xiii. 14.} It is true this is expressed as a wish, and not in the nature of a prayer, as the common salutations are: but here three great blessings are wished to them as from three fountains, which imports that they are three different Persons, and yet equal: for, though in order the Father is first, and is generally put first, yet, here Christ is named, which seems to be a strange reversing of things, if they are not equal as to their essence or substance. It is true the second is not named here, *the Father*, as elsewhere, but only *God*; yet, since he is

^{*} Rom. i. 7. Rom. xvi. 20, 24. 1 Cor. xvi. 23. 1 Cor. i. 3. 2 Cor. i. 2. Gal. i. 3. Gal. vi. 18. Eph. i. 2. Eph. vi. 23. Phil. i. 2. Phil. iv. 23. Col. i. 2. 1 Thess. i. 1. 1 Thess. v. 28. 2 Thess. i. 2. 2 Thess. iii. 18. 1 Tim. i. 2. 2 Tim. i. 2. Tit. i. 4. Philem. 3. 25. 2 John i. 3.

ART. I. mentioned as distinct from Christ and the Holy Ghost, it must be understood of the *Father*; for, when the *Father* is named with *Christ*, sometimes he is called *God* simply, and sometimes *God the Father*.

This argument from the threefold salutation appears yet stronger in the words in which St. John addresses himself to the seven churches in the beginning of the Revelations:

Rev. i. 4. 'Grace and peace from him which is, which was, and which is to come; and from the seven spirits which are before his throne; and from Jesus Christ.' By the *seven spirits* must be meant one or more persons, since he wishes or declares *grace and peace* from them: now either this must be meant of angels, or of the Holy Ghost. There are no where prayers made, or blessings given, in the name of angels: this were indeed a worshipping them; against which there are express authorities, not only in the other books of the New Testament, but in this book in particular. Nor can it be imagined that angels could have been named before *Jesus Christ*: so then it remains, that, *seven* being a number that imports both variety and perfection, and that was the sacred number among the Jews, this is a mystical expression, which is no extraordinary thing in a book that is all over mysterious; and it imports one Person from whom all that variety of gifts, administrations, and operations, that were then in the church did flow; and this is the *Holy Ghost*. But as to his being put in order before Christ, as upon the supposition of an equality, the going out of the common order is no great matter; so since there was to come after this a full period that concerned Christ, it might be a natural way of writing to name him last. Against all this it is objected, that the designation that is given to the first of these in a circumlocution that imports eternity, shews that the great God, and not the person of the Father, is to be meant: but then how could St. John, writing to the churches, wish them grace and peace from the other two? A few verses after this, the same description of eternal duration is given to Christ, and is a strong proof of his eternity, and, by consequence, of his divinity: so what is brought so soon after as a character of the eternity of the Son, may be also here used to denote the eternal Father. These are the chief places in which the Trinity is mentioned all together.

I do not insist on that contested passage of St. John's Epistle; there are great doubts made about it; the main ground of doubting being the silence of the Fathers, who never made use of it in the disputes with the Arians and Macedonians. There are very considerable things urged, on the other hand, to support the authority of that passage; yet I think it is safer to build upon sure and indisputable grounds: so I leave it to be maintained by others who are more fully persuaded of its being authentical. There is no

ART. I. need of it. This matter is capable of a very full proof, whether that passage is believed to be a part of the canon, or not.

It is no small confirmation of the truth of this doctrine, that we are certain it was universally received over the whole Christian church long before there was either a Christian prince to support it by his authority, or a council to establish it by consent: and, indeed, the council of Nice did nothing but declare what was the faith of the Christian church, with the addition only of the word *consubstantial*: for, if all the other words of the Creed settled at Nice are acknowledged to be true, that of the three Persons being of one substance will follow from thence by a just consequence. We know, both by what Tertullian and Novatian writ, what was the faith both of the Roman and the African churches. From Irenæus we gather the faith both of the Gallican and the Asiatic churches. And the whole proceedings in the case of Samosatenus,* that was the solemnest business that passed while the church was under oppression and persecution, give us the most convincing proof possible, not only of the faith of the eastern churches at that time, but of their zeal likewise in watching against every breach that was made in so sacred a part of their trust and *depositum*.

* These things have been fully opened and enlarged on by

* Paulus Samosatenus, who flourished in the latter end of the third century, succeeded Demetrianus in the see of Antioch. He was at first poor, but amassed very considerable wealth by his corrupt practices, by his oppression of the brethren, by his using his patronage to advance his own interests;—thus turning godliness into gain. He was, besides, a man of very immoral character, and lived in such a manner as proved him totally unfit to govern in the church of God. He endeavoured to revive the heresy of Artemon, 'which affirmed Christ to be a mere man,' but after his incarnation, by his improvement of the wisdom and power which were imparted to him, to have been made God. Eusebius quotes from a volume, written in his day to confute this 'blasphemous untruth,' the following in reply to the daring assertion of these men, that the apostles and early fathers taught this heresy unto the time of Victor, thirteenth bishop of Rome: 'This peradventure might seem to have some likelihood of truth, if it were not oppugned first by all the holy Scriptures, next by the books of sundry men long before the time of Victor, which they published against the Gentiles, and in confutation of the heretical opinions of their time. I mean Justin Miltiades, Tatian, and Clemens, with many others, in all which works Christ is preached and published to be God. Who knoweth not that the works of Irenæus, Melito, and all other Christians, do confess Christ to be both God and man?'

A Synod was held at Antioch which was attended by many distinguished bishops, who there 'met with the rotten sheep which corrupted the flock of Christ.' Samosatenus endeavoured to conceal his opinions, but his 'blasphemy against Christ' was laid open by many, and especially by Malchion, a very eloquent man, a moderator in moral discipline in the school of Antioch, and who, for his sincere faith in Christ, was advanced to the ministry. Paul was condemned, and a letter (from which some of the above is taken) was written to Dionysius and Maximus, bishops of Rome and Alexandria, and 'to all our fellow bishops, elders, and deacons, throughout the world, and to the whole universal and Catholic church under heaven,' in which the character of Paul is given at some length. Paul was deposed by the Synod, but refused to surrender the church or house until an edict was obtained from the emperor to expel him. He was succeeded by Domnus, the son of Demetrianus, Paul's predecessor, a man adorned with those gifts required in a bishop.—[Ed. 1.]

others, to whom the reader is referred; I shall only desire him to make this reflection on the state of Christianity at that time; the disputes that were then to be managed with the heathens, against the deifying or worshipping of men, and those extravagant fables concerning the genealogies of their heroes and gods, must have obliged the Christians rather to have silenced and suppressed the doctrine of the Trinity, than to have owned and published it: so that nothing but their being assured that it was a necessary and fundamental article of their faith, could have led them to own it in so public a manner; since the advantages that the heathen would have taken from it, must be too visible not to be soon observed. The heathens retorted upon them their doctrine of a man's being a God, and of God's having a Son; and every one who engaged in this controversy framed such answers to these objections as he thought he could best maintain. This, as it gave the rise to the errors which some brought into the church, so it furnishes us with a copious proof of the common sense of the Christians of those ages, who all agreed in general to the doctrine, though they had many different, and some very erroneous ways of explaining it among them.

I now come to the special proofs concerning each of the three Persons: but, there being other articles relating to the Son and the Holy Ghost, the proofs of these two will belong more properly to the explanation of those articles; therefore all that belongs to this article is to prove that the Father is truly God; but that needs not be much insisted on, for there is no dispute about it: none deny that he is God; many think that he is so truly God, that there is no other that can be called God besides him, unless it be in a larger sense of the word: and, therefore, I will here conclude all that seems necessary to be said on this first article; on which if I have dwelt the longer, it was because the stating the idea of God right being the fundamental article of all religion, and the key into every part of it, this was to be done with all the fulness and clearness possible.

In a word, to recapitulate a little what has been said; the liveliest way of framing an idea of God is to consider our own souls, which are said to be made after the *image of God*. An attentive reflection on what we perceive in ourselves, will carry us farther than any other thing whatsoever, to form just and true thoughts of God. We perceive what thought is, but, with that, we do also perceive the advantage of such an easy thought as arises out of a sensation, such as seeing or hearing, which gives us no trouble: we think, without any trouble, of many of the objects that we see all at once, or so near all at once, that the progression from one object to another is scarce perceptible; but the labour of study and of pursuing consequences wearies us, though the pleasure or the

vanity of having found them out compensates for the pain they gave us, and sets men on to new inquiries. We perceive in ourselves a love of truth, and a vexation when we see we are in error, or are in the dark: and we feel that we act the most perfectly, when we act upon the clearest views of truth, and in the strictest pursuance of it; and the more present and regular, the more calm and steady, that our thoughts of all things are, that lie in our compass to know, present, past, or to come, we do plainly perceive that we do thereby become perfecter and happier beings. Now out of all this we can easily rise up in our thoughts to an idea of a mind that sees all things by a clear and full intuition, without the possibility of being mistaken, and that ever acts in that light, upon the surest prospect, and with the perfectest reason; and that does therefore always rejoice in every thing it does, and has a constant perception of all truth ever present to it. This idea does so genuinely arise from what we perceive both of the perfections and the imperfections of our own minds, that a very little reflection will help us to form it to a very high degree.

The perception also that we have of goodness, of a desire to make others good, and of the pleasure of effecting it; of the joy of making any one wiser or better, of making any one's life easy, and of raising his mind higher, will also help us in the forming of our ideas of God. But in this we meet with much difficulty and disappointment. So this leads us to apprehend how diffusive of itself infinite goodness must needs be; and what is the eternal joy that infinite love has, in bringing so many to that exalted state of endless happiness. We do also feel a power, issuing from us by a thought, that sets our bodies in motion; the varieties in our thoughts create a vast variety in the state of our bodies; but with this, as that power is limited to our own bodies; so it is often checked by disorders in them, and the soul suffers a great deal from those painful sensations that its union with the body subjects it to. From hence we can easily apprehend how the Supreme Mind can by a thought set matter into what motions it will, all matter being constantly subject to such impressions as the acts of the Divine Mind give it. This absolute dominion over all matter makes it to move, and shapes it according to the acts of that Mind; and matter has no power, by any irregularity it falls into, to resist those impressions which do immediately command and govern it; nor can it throw any uneasy sensations into that perfect Being.

This conduces also to give us a distinct idea of miracles. All matter is uniform: and it is only the variety of its motions and texture that makes all the variety that is in the world. Now, as the acts of the Eternal Mind gave matter its first motion, and put it into that course that we do now call

ART. I. the course of nature, so another act of the same Mind can either suspend, stop, or change that course at pleasure, as he who throws a bowl may stop it in its course, or throw it back if he will; this being only the altering that impulse which himself gave: so, if one act of the infinite Mind puts things in a regular course, another act interposed may change that at pleasure. And thus with relation to God, miracles are no more difficult than any other act of Providence: they are only more amazing to us, because they are less ordinary, and go out of the common and regular course of things. By all this it appears how far the observation of what we perceive concerning ourselves may carry us to form livelier and clearer thoughts of God.

So much may suffice upon the first article.

ARTICLE II.

Of the Word or Son of God, which was made very Man.

The Son, which is the Word of the Father, begotten from Everlasting of the Father; the very and eternal God, of one Substance with the Father, took Man's Nature in the Womb of the Blessed Virgin of her Substance; so that two whole and perfect Natures, that is, the Godhead and Manhood, were joined together in one Person; never to be divided: whereof is one Christ, very God and very Man: who truly suffered, was dead and buried, to reconcile his Father to us, and to be a Sacrifice not only for Original Guilt, but also for actual Sins of Men.

THERE are in this article five heads to be explained.

I. That the Son or Word is of the same substance with the Father, begotten of him from all eternity.

II. That he took man's nature upon him in the womb of the blessed virgin, and of her substance.

III. That the two natures of the Godhead and manhood, both still perfect, were in him joined in one person never to be divided.

IV. That Christ truly suffered, was crucified, dead, and buried.

V. That he was our sacrifice to reconcile the Father to us, and that not only for original guilt, but for actual sins.

The first of these leads me to prosecute what was begun in the former article: and to prove, that the *Son* or *Word*, was from all eternity begotten of the same substance with the *Father*. It is here to be noted, that Christ is, in two respects, the *Son*, and the *only-begotten Son of God*. The one is, as he was man; the miraculous overshadowing of the blessed Virgin by the Holy Ghost having, without the ordinary course of nature, formed the first beginnings of Christ's human body in the womb of the Virgin. Thus, that miracle being instead of a natural begetting, he may, in that respect, be called the *begotten*, and the *only-begotten Son of God*. The other sense is, that the *Word*, or the divine Person, was in, and of, the substance of the Father, and so was truly God. It is also to be considered, that by the word *one substance* is to be understood that this second Person is not a creature of a pure and excellent nature, like God, holy and perfect, as we are called to be; but is truly God, as the *Father* is. *Begetting* is a term that naturally signifies the relation between the *Father* and the *Son*; but, what it strictly signifies here is not possible for us to understand, till we

A R T. comprehend this whole matter: nor can we be able to assign a reason why the emanation of the *Son*, and not that of the *Holy Ghost* likewise, is called *begetting*. In this we use the scripture terms, but must confess we cannot frame a distinct apprehension of that which is so far above us. This *begetting* was from all eternity: if it had been in time, the *Son* and *Holy Ghost* must have been creatures; but, if they are truly God, they must be eternal, and not produced by having a being given them, but educed of a substance that was eternal, and from which they did eternally spring. All these are the natural consequences of the main article that is now to be proved; and, when it is once proved clearly from scripture, these do follow by a natural and necessary deduction.

John i. 1,
2, 3.

The first and great proof of this is taken from the words with which St. John begins his Gospel.* 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God; the same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.' Here it is to be observed, that these words are set down here, before St. John comes to speak of Christ's being made in our nature: this passage belongs to another precedent being that he had. The *beginning* also here is set to import, that it was before creation or time: now a duration before time is eternal. So this *beginning* can be no other than that duration which was before *all things that were made*. It is also plainly said, over and over again, that *all things were made by this Word*. A power to create must be infinite; for, it is certain, that a power which can give being is without bounds. And, although the word *make* may seem capable of a larger sense, yet, as in other places of the New Testament, the stricter word *create* is used and applied to Christ, as the 'Maker of all things in heaven and earth, visible and invisible;' so the word *make* is used through the Old Testament for *create*; so that God's *making the heaven and the earth* is the character frequently given of him to distinguish him from idols and false gods. And of this *Word* it is likewise said, that *he was with God, and was God*. These words seem very plain, and the place where they are put by St. John, in the front of his Gospel, as it were an inscription upon it, or an introduction to it, makes it very evident, that he, who of all the writers of the New Testament has the greatest plainness and simplicity of style, would not have put words here, such as were not to be understood in a plain and literal signification, without any key to lead us to any other sense of them. This had been to lay a stone of stumbling in the very threshold; particularly to the Jews, who were apt to cavil at Christianity, and were particularly jealous of every thing that savoured of idolatry, or of the plurality of gods. And upon this occasion

* For a full and critical examination of this passage, see Pearson on the Creed, page 177, Dobson's Edition.

A R T. I desire one thing to be observed, with relation to all those subtile expositions which those who oppose this doctrine put upon many of those places by which we prove it; that they represent the apostles as magnifying Christ in words that at first sound seem to import his being the true God; and yet they hold that in all these they had another sense, and a reserve of some other interpretation, of which their words were capable. But can this be thought fair dealing? Does it look like honest men to write thus; not to say, men inspired in what they preached and writ? and not rather like impostors, to use so many sublime and lofty expressions concerning Christ as God, if all these must be taken down to so low a sense, as to signify only that he was miraculously formed, and endued with an extraordinary power of miracles, and an authority to deliver a new religion to the world; and that he was, in consideration of his exemplary death which he underwent so patiently, raised up from the grave, and had divine honours conferred upon him. In such an hypothesis as this, the world going in so naturally to the excessive magnifying, and even the deifying of wonderful men, it had been necessary to have prevented any such mistakes, and to have guarded against the belief of them rather than to have used a continued strain of expressions, that seem to carry men violently into them, and that can hardly, nay very hardly, be softened by all the skill of critics, to bear any other sense. It is to be considered farther, that, when St. John writ his Gospel, there were three sorts of men particularly to be considered. The Jews, who could bear nothing that savoured of idolatry; so no stumbling-block was to be laid in their way, to give them deeper prejudices against Christianity. Next to these were the Gentiles; who, having worshipped a variety of gods, were not to be indulged in any thing that might seem to favour their polytheism. In fact, we find particular caution used, in the New Testament, against the worshipping angels or saints. How can it therefore be imagined, that words would have been used, that, in the plain signification that did arise out of the first hearing of them, imported that a man was God, if this had not been strictly true? The apostles ought, and must, have used a particular care to have avoided all such expressions, if they had not been literally true. The third sort of men in St. John's time were those, of whom intimation is frequently given through all the Epistles, who were then endeavouring to corrupt the purity of the Christian doctrine, and to accommodate it so, both to the Jew and to the Gentile, as to avoid the cross and persecution upon the account of it. Church-history, and the earliest writers after St. John, assure us, that Ebion* and Cerinthus* denied the divinity of

A R T.
II.

Matt. iv.
10. Colos
ii. 18.
Acts x. 25
26. xiv. 14,
15. Rev.
xix. 10, &
xxii. 8, 9.

* Whence the Ebionites derived their name is uncertain. According to some they were so called from the founder of their sect, Ebion. Eusebius states that they were "called Ebionites, i. e. poor men, for they were poor and abject, in

Christ, and asserted that he was a mere man. Controversy naturally carries men to speak exactly; and, among human writers, those who let things fall more carelessly from their pens, when they apprehend no danger or difficulty, are more correct both in their thoughts and in their expressions, when things are disputed; therefore, if we should have no other regard to St. John, but as an ordinary, cautious, and careful man, we must believe that he weighed all his words in that point, which was then the matter in question; and to clear which, we have good ground to believe, both from the testimony of ancient writers, and from the method that he pursues quite through it all, that he writ his Gospel; and that, therefore, every part of it, but this beginning of it more signally, was writ, and is to be understood, in the sense which the words naturally import; that the *Word which took flesh*, and assumed the human nature, had a being *before the worlds were made*, and that this *Word was God*, and *made the world*.

Another eminent proof of this is in St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians; in which, when he is exhorting Christians to humility, he gives an argument for it from our Saviour's example. He begins with the dignity of his person, expressed thus; 'that he was in the form of God, and that he thought it no robbery to be equal with God:' then his humili-

delivering the doctrine concerning Christ.' They judged him 'a simple and a common man; and for his forwardness of manners found justified only as man, and born of Mary and her husband.' They thought that the observance of the law was necessary, 'as though salvation were not by faith alone in Christ, and corresponding conversation of life.' Others of the same name, according to Eusebius, avoided the absurdity of their speeches; not denying the Lord to have been born of the Virgin, and the Holy Ghost; yet, when called on to confess him to be God, the Word and Wisdom before his incarnation, they fell into the same sin with their companions. They contended for the 'corporal observation of the law;' rejected the epistles of the apostle Paul, and accused him of having fallen from the law. They used a gospel of their own, indiscriminately called the gospel of the Nazarines or Hebrews, about which there have been many disputes amongst the learned. They observed the Jewish Sabbaths and other ceremonies, only they observed *Sunday*, in like manner as the Christians, in remembrance of the resurrection of Christ. They are generally placed among the heretics of the apostolic age; 'yet (remarks Dr. Mosheim) they really belong to the second century, which was the earliest period of their existence as a sect.'

Cerinthus was a Jew, who attempted to form a new system, by a combination of the doctrines of Christ with the opinions and errors of the Jews and Gnostics. He taught the necessity of circumcision, and that the Prophets and law were given by angels, and that the world was made by them. He maintained that Jesus was not born of a virgin, which he affirmed to be impossible, but of Mary and Joseph—that Jesus was not Christ, but that Christ came upon him in the form of a dove—that Jesus suffered and rose again, but not Christ; for Christ, he said, fled away from him before his passion. He taught that the kingdom of Christ should become earthly—that after the resurrection, Christ should reign over us on earth one thousand years. He lusted, saith Eusebius, after the satisfying of the belly with meat, drink, and marriage; to which he added, holy days, oblations, and slaughter for sacrifices. Such was the millenium which he held out to his followers. Irenæus relates, on the authority of Polycarp, that St. John having gone to a public bath, and hearing that Cerinthus was there, returned hastily, saying, 'Let us speedily go hence, lest the bath come to ruin, wherein Cerinthus, the enemy of the truth, batheth himself.' 'So zealous (remarks Eusebius) were the apostles and their disciples, that they communicated not even in word with the corrupters of the truth.'—[Ed.]

liation comes, that he 'made himself of no reputation, but took on him the form of a servant,' (the same word with that used in the former verse:) after which follows his exaltation, and a *name* or authority *above every name* or authority is said to be given him; so that 'all in heaven, earth, and under the earth (which seems to import angels, men, and devils), should bow at his name, and confess that he is the Lord.' Now, in this progress that is made in these words, it is plain that the dignity of Christ's person is represented as antecedent both to his humiliation and to his exaltation. It was that which put the value on his humiliation, as his humiliation was rewarded by his exaltation. This dignity is expressed first, that he was in *the form of God*, before he humbled himself: he was certainly in the *form of a servant*, that is, really a servant, as other servants are; he was obedient to his parents, he was under the authority both of the Romans, of Herod, and of the sanhedrim: therefore since his being really a servant is expressed by his being in *the form of a servant*, his being in *the form of God* must also import that he was truly *God*. But the following words, that *he thought it not robbery to be equal, or be held equal* (for so the word may be rendered) *with God*, carry such a natural signification of his being neither a made nor subordinate *God*, and that his divinity is neither precarious nor by concession, that fuller words cannot be devised for expressing an entire equality. Those who deny this are aware of it, and therefore they have put another sense on the words, *in the form of God*. They think, that they signify his appearing in the world, as one sent in the name of God, representing him, working miracles, and delivering a law in his name: and the words rendered, *he thought it no robbery*, they render, *he did not catch at, or vehemently desire to be held in equal honour with God*. And some authorities are found, in eloquent Greek authors, who use the words rendered, *he thought it not robbery*, in a figurative sense, for the earnestness of desire, or the pursuing after a thing greedily, as robbers do for their prey. This rendering represents St. Paul as treating so sacred a point in the figures of a high and seldom used rhetoric, which, one would think, ought to have been expressed more exactly. But, if even this sense is allowed, it will make a strange period, and a very odd sort of an argument, to enforce humility upon us, because Christ, though working miracles, did not desire, or snatch at, divine adorations, in an equality with God. The sin of Lucifer, and the cause of his fall, is commonly believed to be his desire to be equal to God; and yet this seems to be such an extravagant piece of pride, that it is scarce possible to think that even the sublimest of created beings should be capable of it. To be next to God seems to be the utmost height to which even the diabolical pride could aspire: so that here, by the sense which the Socinians put on those words, they will import,

A R T.
II.

that we are persuaded to be humble from the example of Christ, who did not affect an equality with God! the bare repeating of this seems so fully to expose and overthrow it, that I think it is not necessary to say more upon this place.

The next head of proof is made up of more particulars. All the names, the operations, and even the attributes, of God, are in full and plain words given to Christ. He is called God; his blood is said to be *the blood of God*; *God is said to have laid down his life for us*; Christ is called *the true God, the great God, the Lord of glory, the King of kings, and the Lord of lords*; and, more particularly, the name Jehovah is ascribed to him in the same word in which the LXX interpreters had translated it throughout the whole Old Testament. So that this constant uniformity of style between the Greek of the New, and that translation of the Old Testament which was then received, and was of great authority among the Jews, and was yet of more authority among the first Christians, is an argument that carries such a weight with it, that this alone may serve to determine the matter. The creating, the preserving, and the governing, of all things, is also ascribed to Christ in a variety of places, but most remarkably, when it is said, that 'by him were all created, that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist.' He is said to have 'known what was in man, to have known men's secret thoughts, and to have known all things:' that 'as the Father was known of none but of the Son, so none knew the Son but the Father.' He 'pardons sin, sends the Spirit, gives grace and eternal life, and he shall raise the dead at the last day.' When all these things are laid together in that variety of expressions, in which they lie scattered in the New Testament, it is not possible to retain any reverence for those books, if we imagine that they are writ in a style so full of approaches to the deifying of a mere man, that, without a very critical studying of languages and phrases, it is not possible to understand them otherwise. Idolatry, and a plurality of gods, seem to be the main things that the scriptures warn us against; and yet here is a pursued thread of passages and discourses, that do naturally lead a man to think that Christ is the *true God*, who yet, according to these men, only acted in his name, and has now a high honour put on him by him.

This carries me to another argument to prove that the *Word* that was *made flesh* was truly God. Nothing but the true God can be the proper object of adoration. This is one of those truths that seems almost so evident, that it needs not to be proved. Adoration is the humble prostration of ourselves before God, in acts that own our dependence upon him, both for our being, and for all the blessings that we do either

Acts xx.
28.
1 John iii.
16.
1 John v.
20.
Tit. ii. 13.
Jam. ii. 1.
Rev. i. 8.
Rev. xix.
16.

Col. i. 16,
17.
John ii. 25.
Matt. xi.
27.
Matt. ix. 6.
John xv.
26.
John xiv.
13.
John v. 25,
26.
John vi.
39, 40.

A R T.
II.

enjoy or hope for, and also in earnest prayers to him for the continuance of these to us. This is testified by such outward gestures and actions as are most proper to express our humility and submission to God: all this has so clear and so inseparable a relation to the only true God, as its proper object, that it is scarce possible to apprehend how it should be separated from him, and given to any other. And, as this seems evident from the nature of things, so it is not possible to imagine how any thing could have been prohibited in more express and positive, and in more frequently-repeated words, and longer reasonings, than the offering of divine worship, or any part of it, to creatures. The chief design of the Mosaical religion was to banish all idolatry and polytheism out of the minds of the Jews, and to possess them with the idea of one God, and of one object of worship. The reasons upon which those prohibitions are founded are universal; which are, the unity of God's essence, and his jealousy in not giving his honour to another. It is not said that they should not worship any as God, till they had a precept or declaration for it. There is no reserve for any such time; but they are plainly forbid to worship any but the great God, because he was one, and was jealous of his glory. The New Testament is writ in the same strain: Christ, when tempted of the Devil, answered, 'Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.' The apostles charged all idolaters 'to forsake those idols and to serve the living God.' The angel refused St. John's worship, commanding him to 'worship God'. The Christian faith does, in every particular, raise the ideas of God and of religion to a much greater purity and sublimity than the Mosaical dispensation had done; so it is not to be imagined, that in the chief design of revealed religion, which was the bringing men from idolatry to the worship of one God, it should make such a breach, and extend it to a creature. All this seems fully to prove the first proposition of this argument, that God is the only proper object of adoration. The next is, that Christ is proposed in the New Testament as the object of divine worship. I do not in proof of this urge the instances of those who fell down at Christ's feet and worshipped him, while he was on earth: for it may be well answered to that, that, a prophet was worshipped with the civil respect of falling down before him, among the Jews; as appears in the history of Elijah and Elisha: nor does it appear that those who worshipped Christ had any apprehension of his being God; they only considered him as the Messias, or as some eminent prophet. But the mention that St. Luke makes in his Gospel, of the disciples worshipping Christ at his ascension, comes more home to this matter. All those salutations in the beginning and conclusion of the Epistles, in which 'grace, mercy, and peace' are wished 'from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ,' are implied invocations of him. It is also plain,

Matt. iv.
10.
Acts xiv.
15.
Acts xvii.
29.
1 Thess. i.
9.
Rev. xix.
10.

Luke xxv.
52.

A R T. II. that it was to him that St. Paul *prayed*, when he was under the temptations of the Devil, as they are commonly understood; 'Every knee must bow to him: the angels of God worship him:' *all the hosts in heaven* are represented in St. John's visions as falling down prostrate before him, and worshipping him *as they worship the Father*. He is proposed as the object of our faith, hope, and love; as the Person whom we are to obey, to pray to, and to praise; so that every act of worship, both external and internal, is directed to him as to its proper object. But the instance of all others, that is the clearest in this point, is in the last words of St. Stephen, who was the first martyr, and whose martyrdom is so particularly related by St. Luke: he then in his last minutes saw Christ *at the right hand of God*; and in his last breath he worshipped him in two short prayers, that are, upon the matter, the same with those in which our blessed Saviour worshipped his Father on the cross; 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit: Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.' From this it seems very evident, that, if Christ was not the true God, and equal to the Father, then this proto-martyr died in two acts that seem not only idolatrous, but also blasphemous; since he worshipped Christ in the same acts in which Christ had worshipped his Father. It is certain, from all this deduction of particulars, that his human nature cannot be worshipped; therefore there must be another nature in him, to which divine worship is due, and on the account of which he is to be worshipped.

It is plain, that when this religion was first published, together with these duties in it as a part of it, the Jews, though implacably set against it, yet never accused it of idolatry; though that charge, of all others, had served their purposes the best who intended to blacken and blast it. Nothing would have been so well heard, and so easily apprehended, as a just prejudice against it, as this. The argument would have appeared as strong as it was plain: and as the Jews could not be ignorant of the acts of the Christian worship, when so many fell back to them from it who were offended at other parts of it: so they had the books, in which it was contained, in their hands. Notwithstanding all which, we have all possible reason to believe that, this objection against it was never made by any of them, in the first age of Christianity: upon all which, I say, it is not to be imagined that they could have been silent on this head, if a mere man had been thus proposed among the Christians as the object of divine worship. The silence of the apostles, in not mentioning nor answering this, is such a proof of the silence of the Jews, that it would indeed disparage all their writings, if we could think, that, while they mentioned and answered the other prejudices of the Jews, which in comparison to this are small and inconsiderable matters, they should have passed over this, which must have been the greatest and the plausiblest of them all, if it was one at

2 Cor. xii.
8, 9.
Phil. ii. 10.
Heb. i. 6.
Rev. v. 8.
to the end.

Acts vii.
59, 60.

A R T. II. all. Therefore, as the silence of the apostles is a clear proof that the Jews were silent also, and did not object this; and since their silence could neither flow from their ignorance, nor their undervaluing of this religion; it seems to be certain, that the first opening of the Christian doctrine did not carry any thing in it that could be called the worshipping of a creature. It follows from hence, that the Jews must have understood this part of our religion in such a manner as agreed with their former ideas. So we must examine these: they had this settled among them, that God dwelt in the cloud of glory, and that, by virtue of that inhabitation, divine worship was paid to God as dwelling in the cloud; that it was called *God, God's Throne, his Holiness, his Face, and the Light of his Countenance*: they went up to the temple to worship God, as dwelling there *bodily*, that is substantially, so *bodily* sometimes signifies, or in a corporeal appearance. This seems to have been a Person that was truly God, and yet was distinct from that which appeared and spake to Moses; for this seems to be the importance of these words: 'Behold, I send an angel before thee to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee to the place which I have prepared: beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions: for my name is in him.' These words do plainly import a person to whom they belong; and yet they are a pitch far above the angelical dignity. So that angel must here be understood, in a large sense, for one sent of God; and it can admit of no sense so properly, as, that the eternal Word, which dwelt afterwards in the man Christ Jesus, dwelt then in that cloud of glory. It was also one of the prophecies received by the Jews, 'that the glory of the second temple was to exceed the glory of the first.' The chief character of the glory of the first was that inhabitation of the divine presence among them; from hence it follows, that such an inhabitation of God in a creature, by which that creature was not only called God, but that adoration was due to it upon that account, was a notion that could not have scandalized the Jews, and was indeed the only notion that agreed with their former ideas, and that could have been received by them without difficulty or opposition. This is a strong inducement to believe that this great article of our religion was at that time delivered and understood in that sense.

If the *Son* or *Word* is truly God, he must be from all eternity, and must also be of the same substance with the Father, otherwise he could not be God; since a God of another substance, or of another duration, is a contradiction.

The last argument that I shall offer is taken from the beginning of the Epistle to the Hebrews: to the apprehending the force of which, this must be premised, that all those who acknowledge that Christ ought to be honoured and wor-

Exod. xxiii.
20, 21.

Hag. ii. 9

A R T.
II. shipped as the Father, must say that this is due to him either because he is truly God: or because he is a person of such a high and exalted dignity, that God has, upon the consideration of that, appointed him to be so worshipped. Now this second notion may fall under another distinction; that either he was of a very sublime order by nature, as some angelical being, that though he was created, yet had this high privilege bestowed upon him: or that he was a prophet illuminated and authorized in so particular a manner beyond all others, that, out of a regard to that, he was exalted to this honour of being to be worshipped. One of these must be chosen by all who do not believe him to be truly God: and indeed one of these was the Arian,* as the other is the Socinian,† hypo-

* Arius, a Presbyter of Alexandria, a 'man very skilful in the subtilties of sophistical logic,' and remarkable for his eloquence, arose in the beginning of the fourth century. He entered the field of controversy against his bishop, Alexander of Alexandria, who, in his discourses, treated the doctrine of the Trinity, and of the unity in the Trinity, 'somewhat too curiously.' Arius suspected Alexander of an intention to revive the heresy of Sabellius (who maintained that the three persons in the Trinity were one, but differed from his master Naetus in that Sabellius did not allege that the Father suffered), and opposed him with much zeal, and too much of the spirit of contention. His opposition led into the opposite extreme, and he laid down his doctrine thus:—'If the Father begat the Son, then had the Son, which was begotten, a beginning of essence; hereby it is maintained that there was a time when the Son was not, and consequently that he had his essence of nothing.' From this it appears that he separated the Son from the Father. He held the Son to be the highest of beings whom the Father had created, and by whom he made the worlds—consequently inferior to the Father, not only as touching his manhood, but also as to his godhead. The first general Council was summoned and assembled at Nice, in the year 325, in consequence of the manner in which this destructive heresy spread throughout the empire. At that famous council was this antichristian heresy condemned; and a creed drawn up, and afterwards at the Council of Constantinople adopted and enlarged, which is held by, and read in the communion service of, the Church of England. Arius was excommunicated, and died at Constantinople, according to the testimony of Socrates Scholasticus, a most wretched death.—[Ed.]

† 'The Socinians are said to have derived this denomination from the illustrious family of the Sozzini, which flourished a long time at Sienna in Tuscany, and produced several great and eminent men, and among others Lælius and Faustus Socinus, who are commonly supposed to have been the founders of this sect. The former was the son of Marianus, a famous lawyer, and was himself a man of uncommon genius and learning; to which he added, as his very enemies are obliged to acknowledge, the lustre of a virtuous life, and of unblemished manners. Being forced to leave his country, in the year 1547, on account of the disgust he had conceived against popery, he travelled through France, England, Holland, Germany, and Poland, in order to examine the religious sentiments of those who had thrown off the yoke of Rome, and thus at length to come at the truth. After this he settled at Zurich, where he died in the year 1562, before he had arrived at the fortieth year of his age. His mild and gentle disposition rendered him averse from whatever had the air of contention and discord. He adopted the Helvetic confession of faith, and professed himself a member of the church of Switzerland; but this did not engage him to conceal entirely the doubts he had formed in relation to certain points of religion, and which he communicated, in effect, by letter, to some learned men, whose judgment he respected, and in whose friendship he could confide. His sentiments were indeed propagated, in a more public manner, after his death; since Faustus, his nephew and his heir, is supposed to have drawn from the papers he left behind him that religious system upon which the sect of the Socinians was founded.

'It is, however, to be observed, that this denomination does not always convey the same idea, since it is susceptible of different significations, and is, in effect, used sometimes in a more strict and proper, and at others in a more improper and

A R T.
II. thesis. For how much soever the Arians might exalt him in words, yet if they believed him to be a creature made in time, so that once he was not; all that they said of him can amount to no more, but that he was a creature of a spiritual nature; and this is plainly the notion which the scripture gives us of angels. Artemon, Samosatenus, Photinus, and the Socinians in our days, consider our Saviour as a great prophet and lawgiver, and into this they resolve his dignity. In opposition to both these, that Epistle begins with expressions that are the more severe, because they are negative, which are to be understood more strictly than positive words. Christ is not only preferred to angels, but is set in opposition to them, as one of another order of beings. 'Made so much better than angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the 5, angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? When he bringeth in the first begotten into 6, the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him. Of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and 7, his ministers a flame of fire. But unto the Son he saith, Thy 8, throne, O God, is for ever and ever. And, Thou, Lord, in 10, the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the works of thy hands. Thou art the same, and 12, thy years shall not fail. But to which of the angels said he 13, at any time, Sit on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent 14, forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?'

extensive sense. For, according to the usual manner of speaking, all are termed Socinians whose sentiments bear a certain affinity to the system of Socinus; and they are more especially ranked in that class, who either boldly deny, or artfully explain away, the doctrines that assert the Divine nature of Christ, and a Trinity of persons in the Godhead. But, in a strict and proper sense, they only are deemed the members of this sect who embrace wholly, or with a few exceptions, the form of theological doctrine which Faustus Socinus either drew up himself, or received from his uncle, and delivered to the Unitarian brethren, or Socinians, in Poland and Transylvania.

'The sum of their theology is as follows:—"God, who is infinitely more perfect than man, though of a similar nature in some respects, exerted an act of that power by which he governs all things; in consequence of which an extraordinary person was born of the Virgin Mary. That person was Jesus Christ, whom God first translated to heaven by that portion of his divine power which is called the Holy Ghost; and having instructed him fully there in the knowledge of his will, counsels, and designs, sent him again into this sublunary world, to promulgate to mankind a new rule of life, more excellent than that under which they had formerly lived, to propagate divine truth by his ministry, and to confirm it by his death.

"Those who obey the voice of this Divine Teacher (and this obedience is in the power of every one whose will and inclination leads that way), shall one day be clothed with new bodies, and inhabit eternally those blessed regions, where God himself immediately resides. Such, on the contrary, as are disobedient and rebellious shall undergo most terrible and exquisite torments, which shall be succeeded by annihilation, or the total extinction of their being."

'The whole system of Socinianism, when stripped of the embellishments and commentaries with which it has been loaded and disguised by its doctors, is really reducible to the few propositions now mentioned.' *Mosheim* —[Ed.]

A R T.
II.

Chap. ii.
16.

Chap. iii.
1.

This opposition is likewise carried on through the whole second chapter; one passage in it being most express to shew both that his nature had a subsistence before his incarnation, and that it was not of an angelical order of beings, since he 'took not on him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham.' Thus, in a great variety of expressions, the conceit of Christ's being of an angelical nature is very fully condemned. From that the writer goes next to the notion of his being to be honoured, because he was an eminent prophet; on which he enters with a very solemn preface, inviting them to 'consider the apostle and high-priest of our profession:' then he compares Moses to him, as to the point of being 'faithful to him who had appointed him.' But how eminent soever Moses was above all other prophets, and how harshly soever it must have sounded to the Jews to have stated the difference in terms so distant as that of a *servant* and a *son*,^o of *one who built the house, and of the house itself*; yet we see the apostle does not only prefer Christ to Moses, but puts him in another order and rank; which could not be done according to the Socinian hypothesis. From all which this conclusion naturally follows,—that if Christ is to be worshipped, and that this honour belongs to him neither as an angel, nor as a prophet, that then it is due to him because he is truly God.

The second branch of this article is, that he *took man's nature upon him in the womb of the blessed Virgin, and of her substance*. This will not need any long or laboured proof, since the texts of scripture are so express that nothing but wild extravagance can withstand them. Christ was in all things like unto us, except his miraculous conception by the Virgin: he was the son of Abraham and of David. But among the frantic humours that appeared at the Reformation, some, in opposition to the superstition of the church of Rome, studied to derogate as much from the blessed Virgin on the one hand, as she had been over-exalted on the other: so they said, that Christ had only gone through her. But this impiety sunk so soon, that it is needless to say any thing more to refute it.

The third branch of the Article is, that *these two natures were joined in one Person, never to be divided*. What a person is that results from a close conjunction of two natures, we can only judge of by considering man, in whom there is a material and a spiritual nature joined together. They are two natures as different as any we can apprehend among all created beings; yet these make but one man. The matter of which the body is composed does not subsist by itself, is not under all those laws of motion to which it would be subject, if it were mere inanimated matter; but, by the indwelling and actuation of the soul, it has another spring within it, and has another course of operations. According to this, then, to

subsisit by another is when a being is acting according to its natural properties, but yet in a constant dependance upon another being; so our bodies subsist by the subsistence of our souls. This may help us to apprehend how that as the body is still a body, and operates as a body, though it subsists by the indwelling and actuation of the soul; so in the person of Jesus Christ the human nature was entire, and still acted according to its own character; yet there was such an union and inhabitation of the eternal Word in it, that there did arise out of that a communication of names and characters, as we find in the scriptures. A man is called tall, fair, and healthy, from the state of his body; and learned, wise, and good, from the qualities of his mind: so Christ is called holy, harmless, and undefiled; is said to have died, risen, and ascended up into heaven, with relation to his human nature: he is also said to be in 'the form of God, to have created all things, to be the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person,' with relation to his divine nature. The ideas that we have of what is material, and what is spiritual, lead us to distinguish in a man those descriptions that belong to his body from those that belong to his mind; so the different apprehensions that we have of what is created and uncreated must be our thread to guide us into the resolution of those various expressions that occur in the scriptures concerning Christ.

The design of the definition, that was made by the church concerning Christ's having one person, was chiefly to distinguish the nature of the *indwelling* of the Godhead in him from all prophetic inspirations. The Mosaical degree of prophecy was in many respects superior to that of all the subsequent prophets: yet the difference is stated between Christ and Moses, in terms that import things quite of another nature; the one being mentioned as a servant, the other as the Son that built the house. It is not said that God appeared to Christ, or that he spoke to him; but God was ever with him, and in him; and while 'the Word was made flesh,' yet still 'his glory was as the glory of the only-begotten Son of God.' The glory that Isaiah saw, was called *his glory*; and on the other hand, God is said to have purchased his church with his own blood. If Nestorius,* in

A R T.
II.

Phil. ii. 6.
Col. i. 16.
Heb. i. 3.

John i. 14.
Isai. vi. 1,
3, 9, 10, &
John xii.
41.
Acts xx. 28.

* Nestorius, a man of some learning and much eloquence, but of a very arrogant and overbearing disposition, was a native of Germany, and a Presbyter of Antioch. On the death of Sisinius, bishop of Constantinople, he was sent for by the emperor Theodosius, and appointed to that see. He so persecuted the Arians, that they destroyed by fire their own churches, rather than suffer them to fall into his hands. But although so zealous against heresy and heretics, yet he does not appear to have been much influenced by the truth which he professed to uphold. He brought with him from Antioch a certain Presbyter, named Anastasius, who declaimed much against the use of the term *θεοτοκος* as applied to the Virgin Mary, and contended that she ought to be called the Mother of Christ, and not the Mother of God. Nestorius warmly espoused the cause of Anastasius; and was accused of maintaining that in Christ the divine was superadded to the human

A R T.
II.

opposing this, meant only, as some think it appears by many citations out of him, that the blessed Virgin was not to be called simply *the Mother of God*, but *the Mother of him that was God*; and if that of making two persons in Christ was only fastened on him as a consequence, we are not at all concerned in the matter of fact, whether Nestorius was misunderstood and hardly used, or not; but the doctrine here asserted is plain in the scriptures, that, though the human nature in Christ acted still according to its proper character, and had a peculiar will, yet, there was such a constant presence, indwelling, and actuation on it from the eternal *Word*, as did constitute both human and divine nature one *Person*. As these are thus so entirely united, so they are never to be separated. Christ is now exalted to the highest degrees of glory and honour; and the characters of *blessing*, *honour*, and *glory*, are represented, in St. John's visions, as offered 'to the Lamb for ever and ever.' It is true, St. Paul speaks as if Christ's mediatory office and kingdom were to cease after the day of judgment, and that then he was to deliver up all to the Father. For though, when the full number of the elect shall be gathered, the full end of his death will be attained; and when these saints shall be glorified with him and by him, his office as Mediator will naturally come to an end; yet his own personal glory shall never cease: and if every saint shall inherit an everlasting kingdom, much more shall he who has merited all that to them, and has conferred it on them, be for ever possessed of his glory.

Rev. v. 13.

I Cor. xv.
24—28.

The fourth branch of the Article is concerning the truth of Christ's crucifixion, his death and burial. The matter of fact concerning the death of Christ is denied by no Christian; the Jews do all acknowledge it; the first enemies to Christianity did all believe this, and reproached his followers with it. This was that which all Christians gloried in and avowed; so that no question was made of his death, except by a small number called *Docetæ*, who were not esteemed Christians, till Mahomet denied it in his Alcoran, who pretends that he was withdrawn, and that a Jew was crucified in his stead. But this corruption of the history of the gospel came too late afterwards, to have any shadow of credit due to it; nor was there any sort of proof offered to support it. So this

nature. He was cited before the third general Council held at Ephesus, A. D. 431, or, according to some, 434. Here, writes Socrates, he spoke as follows:—'I verily will not consent to call him God who grew to man's estate by two months, and three months, and so forth: therefore I wash my hands from your blood; and from henceforth I will no more come into your company.' When he saw the consequences of this speech in the disorder which such sentiments created, he made a recantation, which, not being considered sincere, was not received. He was therefore condemned, deposed, and banished, by order of the council, which decreed—'That Christ was one divine person, in whom two natures were most closely and intimately united, but without being mixed or confounded together.' Nestorius died in Oasis, the place of his banishment, and after his death his followers divided into different parties.—[Ed.]

ART.
II.

doctrine concerning the death of Christ is to be received as an unquestionable truth. There is no part of the gospel writ with so copious a particularity, as the history of his sufferings and death; as there was indeed no part of the gospel so important as this is.

The fifth branch of the Article is, that he was a *true sacrifice to reconcile the Father to us, and that not only for original, but for actual sins*. The notion of an expiatory sacrifice, which was then, when the New Testament was writ, well understood all the world over, both by Jew and Gentile, was this, that the sin of one person was transferred on a man or beast, who was upon that devoted and offered up to God, and suffered in the room of the offending person; and by this oblation, the punishment of the sin being laid on the sacrifice, an expiation was made for sin, and the sinner was believed to be reconciled to God.* This, as appears through the whole book of Leviticus, was the design and effect of the *sin* and *tresspass offerings* among the Jews, and more particularly of the goat that was offered up for the sins of the whole people on the day of atonement. This was a piece of religion well known both to Jew and Gentile, that had a great many phrases belonging to it, such as the sacrifices being offered *for*, or *instead of*, *sin*, and *in the name*, or on the account, of the sinner; *its bearing of sin*, and *becoming sin*, or the *sin-offering*; its being the *reconciliation*, the *atonement*, and the *redemption*, of the sinner, by which the sin was no more *imputed*, but *forgiven*, and for

Levit. xvi.

* 'Of the several sacrifices under the law, that one, which seems most exactly to illustrate the sacrifice of Christ, and which is expressly compared with it by the writer to the Hebrews, is that which was offered for the whole assembly on the solemn anniversary of expiation. The circumstances of this ceremony, whereby atonement was to be made for the sins of the whole Jewish people, seem so strikingly significant, that they deserve a particular detail. On the day appointed for this general expiation, the priest is commanded to offer a bullock and a goat, as *sin-offerings*, the one for himself, and the other for the people: and, having sprinkled the blood of these in due form before the mercy-seat, to lead forth a second goat, denominated the *scape-goat*: and, after laying both his hands upon the head of the *scape-goat*, and confessing over him all the iniquities of the people, to put them upon the head of the goat, and to send the animal thus bearing the sins of the people away into the wilderness: in this manner expressing, by an action which cannot be misunderstood, that the atonement, which it is directly affirmed was to be effected by the sacrifice of the *sin-offering*, consisted in removing from the people their iniquities by a symbolical translation to the animal. For it is to be remarked, that the ceremony of the *scape-goat* is not a *distinct* one; it is the continuation of the process, and is evidently the concluding part, and symbolical consummation, of the *sin-offering*. So that the transfer of the iniquities of the people upon the head of the *scape-goat*, and the bearing them away to the wilderness, manifestly imply, that the atonement effected by the sacrifice of the *sin-offering* consisted in the transfer and consequent removal of those iniquities. What, then, are we taught to infer from this ceremony?—That, as the atonement under the law, or expiation of the legal transgressions, was represented as a translation of those transgressions, in the act of sacrifice in which the animal was slain, and the people thereby cleansed from their legal impurities, and released from the penalties which had been incurred; so, the great atonement for the sins of mankind was to be effected by the sacrifice of Christ, undergoing, for the restoration of men to the favour of God, that death, which had been denounced against sin; and which he suffered in like manner as if the sins of men had been *actually* transferred to him, as those of the congregation had been *symbolically* transferred to the *sin-offering* of the people.' *Magee*.—[Ed.]

ART.
II.

which the sinner was *accepted*. When therefore this whole set of phrases, in its utmost extent, is very often, and in a great variety, applied to the death of Christ, it is not possible for us to preserve any reverence for the New Testament, or the writers of it, so far as to think them even honest men, not to say inspired men, if we can imagine, that in so sacred and important a matter they could exceed so much as to represent that to be our sacrifice which is not truly so: this is a point which will not bear figures and amplifications; it must be treated of strictly, and with a just exactness of expression. Christ is called the 'Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world;' he is said 'to have borne our sins in his own body; to have been made sin for us;' it is said, that 'he gave his life a ransom for many;' that 'he was the propitiation for the sins of the whole world;' and that 'we have redemption through his blood, even the remission of our sins.' It is said, that 'he hath reconciled us to his Father in his cross, and in the body of his flesh through death:' that he by 'his own blood entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us:' that 'once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin, by the sacrifice of himself:' that 'he was once offered to bear the sins of many:' that 'we are sanctified by the offering of the body of Christ once for all:' and that, 'after he had offered one sacrifice for sin, he sat down for ever on the right hand of God.' It is said, that 'we enter into the holiest by the blood of Christ, that is the blood of the new covenant, by which we are sanctified:' that 'he hath sanctified the people with his own blood: and was the great shepherd of his people, through the blood of the everlasting covenant:' that 'we are redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot;' and, that 'Christ suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.' In these, and in a great many more passages that lie spread in all the parts of the New Testament, it is as plain, as words can make any thing, that the death of Christ is proposed to us as our sacrifice and reconciliation, our atonement and redemption. So it is not possible for any man that considers all this, to imagine, that Christ's death was only a confirmation of his gospel, a pattern of a holy and patient suffering of death, and a necessary preparation to his resurrection; by which he gave us a clear proof of a resurrection, and by consequence of eternal life, as by his doctrine he had shewed us the way to it. By this all the high commendations of his death amount only to this, that he by dying has given a vast credit and authority to his gospel, which was the powerfullest mean possible to redeem us from sin, and to reconcile us to God: but this is so contrary to the whole design of the New Testament, and to the true importance of that great variety of phrases, in which this matter is set out, that, at this rate of expounding

John i. 29.

1 Pet. ii.

24.

2 Cor. v.

21.

Matt. xx.

23.

Rom. iii.

25.

1 John ii. 2.

Eph. i. 7.

Col. i. 14.

20, 21, 22.

Heb. ix.

11, 12, 13,

14.

Heb. ix.

26, 28.

Heb. x. 10,

12, 14, 19,

29.

Heb. xiii.

12, 20.

1 Pet. i. 19.

1 Pet. ii.

24.

1 Pet. iii.

18.

ART.
II.

scripture, we can never know what we may build upon, especially when the great importance of this thing, and of our having right notions concerning it, is well considered. St. Paul does, in his Epistle to the Romans, state an opposition between the death of Christ, and the sin of Adam; the ill effects of the one being removed by the other: but he plainly carries the death of Christ much farther than that it had only healed the wound that was given by Adam's sin; 'for as the judgment was of one (sin) to condemnation, the free gift is of many offences to justification.' But, in the other places of the New Testament, Christ's death is set forth so fully, as a propitiation for the sins of the whole world, that it is a very false way of arguing to infer, that because in one place that is set in opposition to Adam's sin, that therefore the virtue of it was to go no farther than to take away that sin. It has indeed removed that, but it has done a great deal more besides.

Rom. v.
12, to the
end

Thus it is plain that Christ's death was our sacrifice: the meaning of which is this; that God, intending to reconcile the world to himself, and to encourage sinners to repent and turn to him, thought fit to offer the pardon of sin, together with the other blessings of his gospel, in such a way as should demonstrate both the guilt of sin, and his hatred of it; and yet with that, his love of sinners, and his compassions towards them. A free pardon without a sacrifice had not been so agreeable neither to the majesty of the great Governor of the world, nor the authority of his laws, nor so proper a method to oblige men to that strictness and holiness of life that he designed to bring them to: and therefore he thought fit to offer his pardon, and those other blessings, through a Mediator, who was to deliver to the world this new and holy rule of life, and to confirm it by his own unblemished life: and in conclusion, when the rage of wicked men, who hated him for the holiness both of his life and of his doctrine, did work them up into such a fury as to pursue him to a most violent and ignominious death, he, in compliance with the secret design of his Father, did not only go through that dismal series of sufferings, with the most entire resignation to his Father's will, and with the highest charity possible towards those who were his most unjust and malicious murderers; but he at the same time underwent great agonies in his mind; which struck him with such an amazement and sorrow even to the death, that upon it he did sweat great drops of blood, and on the cross he felt a withdrawing of those comforts, that till then had ever supported him, when he cried out, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' It is not easy for us to apprehend in what that agony consisted: for we understand only the agonies of pain, or of conscience, which last arise out of the horror of guilt, or the apprehension of the wrath of God. It is indeed certain, that he who had no sin could have no such horror in him; and yet it is as certain, that he could not be

Isai. liii.

10.

Acts ii. 23

Rev. xiii.

8.

ART.
II.

put into such an agony only through the apprehension and fear of that violent death, which he was to suffer next day: therefore we ought to conclude, that there was an inward suffering in his mind, as well as an outward visible one in his body. We cannot distinctly apprehend what that was, since he was sure both of his own spotless innocence, and of his Father's unchangeable love to him. We can only imagine a vast sense of the heinousness of sin, and a deep indignation at the dishonour done to God by it, a melting apprehension of the corruption and miseries of mankind by reason of sin, together with a never-before-felt withdrawing of those consolations that had always filled his soul. But what might be farther in his agony, and in his last dereliction, we cannot distinctly apprehend; only this we perceive, that our minds are capable of great pain as well as our bodies are. Deep horror, with an inconsolable sharpness of thought, is a very intolerable thing. Notwithstanding the bodily or substantial indwelling of the fulness of the Godhead in him, yet he was capable of feeling vast pain in his *body*: so that he might become a complete sacrifice, and that we might have from his sufferings a very full and amazing apprehension of the guilt of sin; all those emanations of joy, with which the indwelling of the *eternal Word* had ever till then filled his soul, might then, when he needed them most, be quite withdrawn, and he be left merely to the firmness of his faith, to his patient resignation to the will of his heavenly Father, and to his willing readiness of drinking up that cup which his Father had put in his hand to drink.

There remains but one thing to be remembered here, though it will come to be more specially explained, when other Articles are to be opened; which is, that this reconciliation, which is made by the death of Christ, between God and man, is not absolute and without conditions. He has established the covenant, and has performed all that was incumbent on him, as both the priest and the sacrifice, to do and to suffer; and he offers this to the world, that it may be closed with by them, on the terms on which it is proposed; and if they do not accept of it upon these conditions, and perform what is enjoined them, they can have no share in it.