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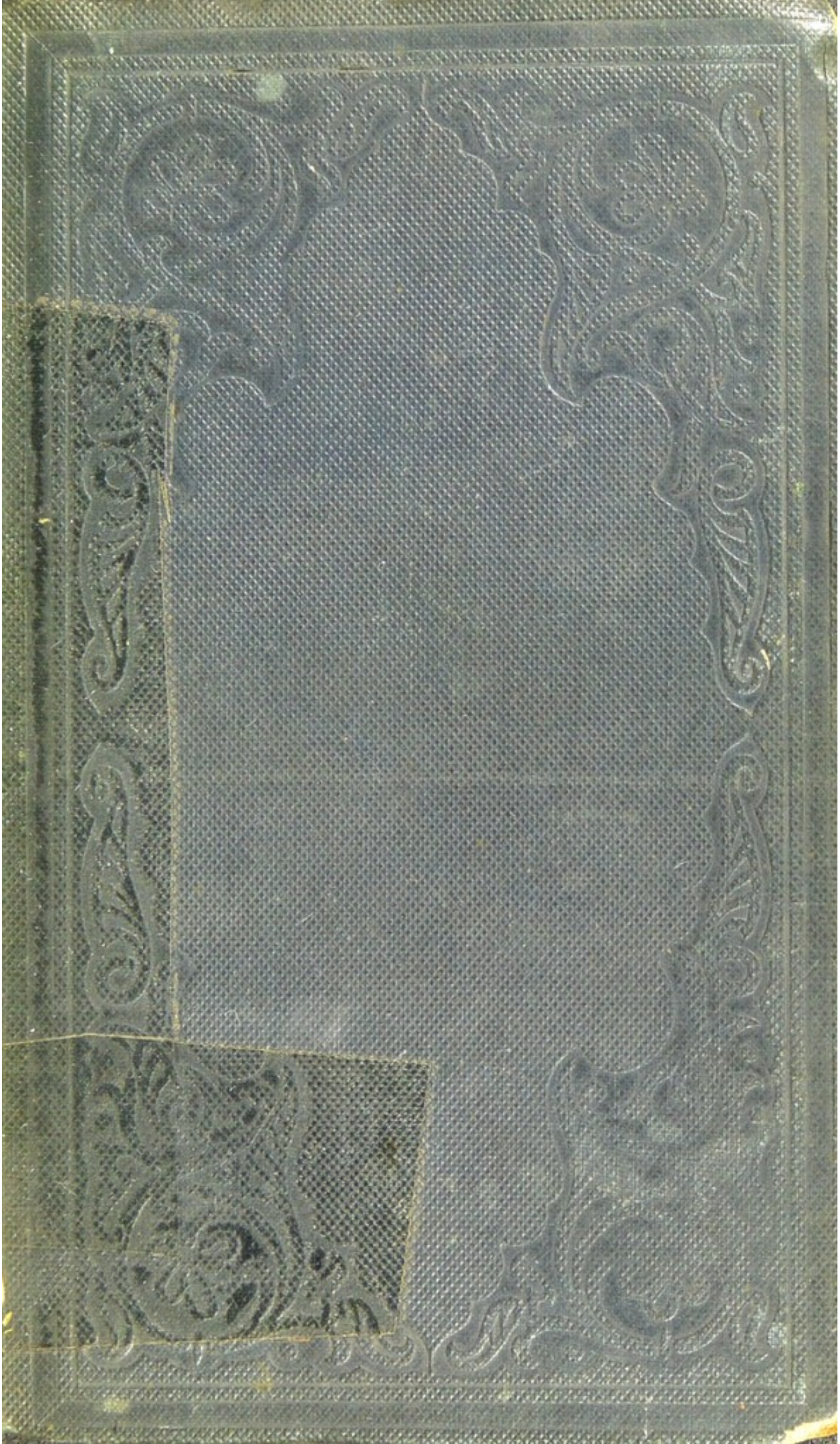

OUTLINES

OF

MORAL PHILOSOPHY.

BY

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AND FELLOW OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY, &c. &c.

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PREFACE.

My principal object, in this publication, is to exhibit such a view of the arrangement of my Lectures, as may facilitate the studies of those to whom they are addressed. In a course which employs more than five months, and which necessarily includes a great variety of disquisitions, it is difficult for a hearer to retain a steady idea of the train of thought leading from one subject to another; and, of consequence, the lectures, by assuming the appearance of detached discourses, are in danger of losing the advantages arising from connection and method. The following Outlines will, I hope, not only obviate this inconvenience, but will allow me, in future, a greater latitude of illustration and digression, than I could have indulged myself in with propriety, so long as my students were left to in-

vestigate the chain of my doctrines by their own reflections.

In the execution of this design, I have attempted, at the same time, to state, under each head, a few fundamental principles, which I was either anxious to impress on the memory of my hearers; or which I thought might be useful to them, by relieving their attention during the discussion of a long or a difficult argument.

The branch of Moral Philosophy which relates to the Principles of Politics being less abstract than the others, I have contented myself with a simple enumeration of the most important articles treated of in the third part of my course. It is scarcely necessary for me to mention, that, in this enumeration, I have not aimed at any thing approaching to systematical arrangement; and that, in illustrating the titles it contains, I am obliged, by the term prescribed to my academical labours, to confine myself to very general sketches. As soon as my other engagements allow me sufficient leisure for such an undertaking, I shall attempt a separate course of lectures on this very extensive and difficult subject.

With respect to my general plan, those who are in the smallest degree conversant with ethical writers, will perceive, that, in its formation, I have been guided almost entirely by the train of my own speculations. In following the order which these prescribed, I was far from proceeding on the supposition, that it was likely to possess, in the opinion of the public, advantages over the arrangements already proposed: but it appeared to me reasonable to think, that a plan resulting from my own habits of thought, would probably be better executed in my hands, than any one, how perfect soever, suggested by the views of another.

DUGALD STEWART.

College of Edinburgh,
Nov. 8. 1793.

P.S.—Having, of late, carried into execution (at least in part) the design announced in the foregoing Preface, by a separate course of Lectures on Political Economy, I have omitted, in this edition of my Outlines, the Articles which I formerly enumerated under that general

title; substituting in their stead a few others, calculated to illustrate the peculiar and intimate connection between this department of Politics and the more appropriate objects of Ethics. The observations which these articles are meant to introduce, may be useful, at the same time, in preparing the minds of Students for disquisitions, the details of which can scarcely fail to appear uninviting to those, who are not aware of the important conclusions to which they are subservient.

Nov. 2. 1801.

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OUTLINES

OF

MORAL PHILOSOPHY.

INTRODUCTION.

SECTION I.

OF THE OBJECT OF PHILOSOPHY, AND THE METHOD OF PROSECUTING PHILOSOPHICAL INQUIRIES.

1. ALL the different kinds of philosophical inquiry, and all that practical knowledge which guides our conduct in life, presuppose such an established order in the succession of events, as enables us to form conjectures concerning the future, from the observation of the past.

2. In the phenomena of the material world, and in many of the phenomena of mind, we expect, with the most perfect confidence, that in

the same combinations of circumstances the same results will take place. The laws which regulate the course of human affairs, are investigated with much greater difficulty: But, even in this class of events, such a degree of order may frequently be traced, as furnishes general rules of great practical utility; and this order becomes the more apparent, in proportion as we generalize our observations.

3. Our knowledge of the laws of nature is entirely the result of observation and experiment; for there is no instance in which we perceive such a necessary connection between two successive events, as might enable us to infer the one from the other by reasoning *a priori*. We find, from experience, that certain events are invariably conjoined, so that when we see the one, we expect the other; but our knowledge in such cases extends no farther than to the fact.

4. To ascertain those established conjunctions of successive events, which constitute the order of the universe;—to record the phenomena which it exhibits to our observation, and to refer them to their general laws, is the great business of philosophy.—Lord Bacon was the first person who was fully aware of the importance of this fundamental truth.—The ancients considered philosophy as the science of *causes;* and hence were led to many speculations, to

which the human faculties are altogether incompetent.

5. The ultimate object of philosophical inquiry is the same which every man of plain understanding proposes to himself, when he remarks the events which fall under his observation, with a view to the future regulation of his conduct. The more knowledge of this kind we acquire, the better can we accommodate our plans to the established order of things, and avail ourselves of natural Powers and Agents for accomplishing our purposes.

6. The knowledge of the Philosopher differs from that sagacity which directs uneducated men in the business of life, not in kind, but in degree, and in the manner in which it is acquired. 1*st*, By artificial combinations of circumstances, or, in other words, by *experiments*, he discovers many natural conjunctions which would not have occurred spontaneously to his observation. 2*dly*, By investigating the general Laws of Nature, and by reasoning from them synthetically, he can often trace an established order, where a mere observer of facts would perceive nothing but irregularity.—This last process of the mind is more peculiarly dignified with the name of *Philosophy;* and the object of the rules of philosophizing is to explain in what manner it ought to be conducted.

7. The knowledge which is acquired of the course of Nature by mere observation, is extremely limited, and extends only to cases in which the uniformity of the observed phenomena is apparent to our senses. This happens, either when one single law of nature operates separately, or when different laws are always combined together in the same manner. In most instances, however, when different laws are combined, the result varies in every particular case, according to the different circumstances of the combination; and it is only by knowing what the laws are which are concerned in any expected phenomenon, and by considering in what manner they modify each other's effects, that the result can be predicted.

8. Hence it follows, that the first step in the study of Philosophy is to ascertain the simple and general laws on which the complicated phenomena of the universe depend. Having obtained these laws, we may proceed safely to reason concerning the effect resulting from any given combination of them.—In the former instance, we are said to carry on our inquiries in the way of *Analysis;* in the latter in that of *Synthesis.*

9. To this method of philosophizing, (which is commonly distinguished by the title of the Method of Induction,) we are indebted for the

rapid progress which physical knowledge has made since the time of Lord Bacon. The publication of his writings fixes one of the most important eras in the history of science. Not that the reformation which has since taken place in the plan of philosophical inquiry is to be ascribed entirely to him; for although he did more to forward it than any other individual, yet his genius and writings seem to have been powerfully influenced by the circumstances and character of the age in which he lived; and there can be little doubt that he only accelerated an event which was already prepared by many concurrent causes.

SECTION II.

APPLICATION OF THE FOREGOING PRINCIPLES TO THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE HUMAN MIND.

10. The reformation in the plan of philosophical inquiry, which has taken place during the two last centuries, although not entirely confined to physics, has not extended in the same degree to the other branches of science; as sufficiently appears from the prevailing scepticism with respect to the principles of metaphysics and of moral philosophy. This scepti-

cism can only be corrected, by applying to these subjects the method of induction.

11. As all our knowledge of the material world rests ultimately on facts ascertained by observation, so all our knowledge of the human mind rests ultimately on facts for which we have the evidence of our own consciousness. An attentive examination of such facts will lead in time to the general principles of the human constitution, and will gradually form a science of mind not inferior in certainty to the science of body. Of this species of investigation, the works of Dr Reid furnish many valuable examples.

12. The objections which have been stated by some writers of the present age to the conclusions of those metaphysicians who have attempted to apply the method of induction to the science of mind, are perfectly similar to the charge which was at first brought against the Newtonian doctrine of gravitation, as being a revival of the occult qualities of the Aristotelians. In all our inquiries, whether they relate to matter or to mind, the business of philosophy is confined to a reference of particular facts to other facts more general; and our most successful researches must always terminate in the discovery of some law of nature, of which no explanation can be given.

SECTION III.

CAUSES OF THE SLOW PROGRESS OF HUMAN KNOWLEDGE; MORE PARTICULARLY OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE HUMAN MIND, AND OF THE SCIENCES IMMEDIATELY CONNECTED WITH IT.

13. Some of the chief of these may be referred to the following heads.

(1.) The imperfections of language, both as an instrument of thought and a medium of communication.

(2.) Mistakes about the proper object of philosophy, and the method of prosecuting philosophical inquiries.

(3.) A disposition to grasp at general principles, without submitting to the previous study of particular facts.

(4.) Difficulty of ascertaining facts, particularly in the sciences immediately connected with the philosophy of the human mind.

(5.) The great part of life which is spent in making useless literary acquisitions.

(6.) Prejudices arising from a reverence for great names, and from the influence of local institutions.

(7.) A predilection for singular or paradoxical opinions.

(8.) A disposition to unlimited scepticism.

SUBJECT AND ARRANGEMENT OF THIS TREATISE.

1. THE object of Moral Philosophy is to ascertain the general rules of a wise and virtuous conduct in life, in so far as these rules may be discovered by the unassisted light of nature; that is, by an examination of the principles of the human constitution, and of the circumstances in which man is placed.

2. In examining the principles of our constitution with this view, our inquiries may be arranged under three heads; according as they refer,

(1.) To the intellectual powers of man.

(2.) To his active and moral powers. And,

(3.) To man, considered as the member of a political body.

3. Of these articles, the two first coincide with the common division of human nature into the powers of the Understanding and those of the Will; a division of great antiquity, and which (abstracting from the effects of political institutions) exhausts the whole of Moral Philosophy. As man, however, excepting in his

rudest state, has been always found connected with a political community, the principles which lay the foundation of this species of union may be regarded as universal and essential principles of our constitution; and, without an examination of them, it is impossible for us to have a just idea of our situation in the world, and of the most important duties we owe to our fellow-creatures. This last branch of the subject has, besides, a more intimate connection with the other two than might at first be apprehended: for it is in the political union, and in the gradual improvement of which it is susceptible, that nature has made a provision for a gradual development of our intellectual and moral powers, and for a proportional enlargement in our capacities of enjoyment; and it is by the particular forms of their political institutions that those opinions and habits which constitute the *Manners* of nations are chiefly determined. How intimately these are connected with the progress and the happiness of the race, will appear in the sequel.

4. An investigation of the Pleasures and Pains of which we are susceptible, might furnish the subject of a fourth view of man, considered as a sensitive being. But instead of aiming at so great a degree of analytical distinctness, it will be found more convenient to incorporate this

part of the Philosophy of the Human Mind with the other three which have been already defined; connecting whatever remarks may occur on our enjoyments or sufferings, with those intellectual or moral principles, from the exercise of which they respectively arise.

PART I.

OF THE INTELLECTUAL POWERS OF MAN.

THE most important of these are comprehended in the following enumeration:—

(1.) Consciousness.
(2.) Powers of external perception.
(3.) Attention.
(4.) Conception.
(5.) Abstraction.
(6.) Association of ideas.
(7.) Memory.
(8.) Imagination.
(9.) Powers of judgment and reasoning.

5. Besides these intellectual faculties, which in some degree are common to the whole species, there are other more complicated powers or capacities, which are gradually formed by particular habits of study or of business. Such are, the Power of Taste; a Genius for Poetry, for Painting, for Music, for Mathematics; with all the various intellectual habits acquired in

the different professions of life. To analyze such compounded powers into the more simple and general principles of our nature, forms one of the most interesting subjects of philosophical disquisition.

6. To this branch of our constitution may also be referred those auxiliary faculties and principles, which are essential to our intellectual improvement, or very intimately connected with it; in particular, the faculty of communicating our thoughts by arbitrary signs, and the principle of imitation.

SECTION I.

CONSCIOUSNESS.

7. This word denotes the immediate knowledge which the mind has of its sensations and thoughts, and, in general, of all its present operations.

8. Of all the present operations of the mind, Consciousness is an inseparable concomitant.

9. The belief with which it is attended has been considered as the most irresistible of any; insomuch that this species of evidence has never been questioned: and yet it rests on the same foundation with every kind of belief to which

we are determined by the constitution of our nature.

10. We cannot properly be said to be conscious of our own existence; our knowledge of this fact being necessarily posterior, in the order of time, to the consciousness of those sensations by which it is suggested.

11. From Consciousness and Memory we acquire the notion, and are impressed with a conviction, of our own personal identity.

SECTION II.

OF THE POWERS OF EXTERNAL PERCEPTION.

Article First.—Of the Laws of Perception in the case of our different Senses.

12. Our external senses are commonly reckoned to be five in number, and the same enumeration has been adopted by the soundest philosophers. An attempt has been made by some writers to resolve all our senses into that of feeling; but this speculation has plainly proceeded from over-refinement, and has no tendency to illustrate the subject of inquiry.

13. Of our five senses there are two, viz. Touch and Taste, in which there must be an immediate application of the object to the or-

gan. In the other three, the object is perceived at a distance, by the intervention of a material medium.

14. In order to form an accurate notion of the means by which we acquire our knowledge of things external, it is necessary to attend to the distinct meanings of the words *Sensation* and *Perception*. The former expresses merely that change in the state of the mind which is produced by an impression upon an organ of sense; (of which change we can conceive the mind to be conscious, without any knowledge of external objects:) the latter expresses the knowledge we obtain, by means of our sensations, of the qualities of matter. An indiscriminate use of these two words has introduced much confusion into philosophical disquisitions.

Smelling, Tasting, and Hearing.

15. The qualities perceived by Smelling, Tasting, and Hearing, are known to us only as the causes of certain sensations; and have therefore been contradistinguished by the name of *Secondary Qualities*, from those of which we learn the nature directly and immediately from the sensations with which they are connected. Of this last kind are Extension and Figure;—to which (along with some others) Philosophers

have given the title of the *Primary Qualities* of matter.

16. Abstracting from our other organs of perception, Smelling, Tasting, and Hearing, could give us no information concerning external objects.

17. Any one of these senses, however, might suggest to the mind (or furnish the occasions of our forming) the simple ideas or notions of Number, Time, Causation, Existence, Personal Identity, and many others.

Touch.

18. The sense of Touch is spread over the whole surface of the body; but the hand is more particularly appropriated to this mode of perception; in consequence, partly, of its anatomical structure, and partly of the greater degree of attention we give to the impressions which are made on it.

19. Some of the qualities perceived by this sense are primary, others secondary.—In all its different perceptions, however, there is one common circumstance; that we are not only made acquainted with the existence of some quality or other, but with the particular part of the body to which the external object is applied. It is probably owing to this, that we

refer to Touch a variety of sensations which have little or no resemblance to each other; *Heat, Itching, Pain,* &c. All of these suggest to us the local situation of their exciting causes; and hence we refer them to the same class.

20. The hand is useful in two respects: 1. For examining the properties of bodies, and the laws of the material world; of which properties and laws none of our other senses, unassisted by that of Touch, could convey to us any accurate knowledge. 2. For the practice of the mechanical arts.—The advantages we derive from it in these respects are so great, that some philosophers, fond of paradoxical opinions, have ascribed to it entirely our intellectual superiority over the brutes.

21. The importance of this organ to man sufficiently intimates the intentions of nature with respect to his ordinary posture; and affords a refutation of those theories which attempt to class him with the quadrupeds.

Sight.

22. The description of the Eye, and of the manner in which the pencils of rays, proceeding from the different points of a visible object, are collected by the refractive powers of the hu-

mours, so as to form a picture on the retina, belongs properly to Optics; but there are many questions arising from this subject, which are intimately connected with the philosophy of the human mind, and which optical writers have in vain attempted to resolve on the common principles of their science. Such are all the questions that relate to the most simple and general laws of vision. These laws are *facts* which the optician must assume as the groundwork of his reasoning; not *difficulties* which he is called on to explain.

23. Among the phenomena of vision, more immediately connected with the philosophy of the human mind, the most important are those which depend on the distinction between the *original* and the *acquired* perceptions of sight. Prior to experience, all that we perceive by this sense is superficial extension and figure, with varieties of colour and of illumination. In consequence, however, of a comparison between the perceptions of sight and of touch, the visible appearances of objects, together with the correspondent affections of the eye, become signs of their tangible qualities, and of the distances at which they are placed from the organ. In some cases our judgment proceeds on a variety of these circumstances combined together; and yet, so rapidly is the intellectual process per-

formed, that the perception seems to be perfectly instantaneous.

24. This distinction between the original and the acquired perceptions of sight, leads to an explanation of many curious phenomena, which had long puzzled those opticians who confined their attention to the mathematical principles of Dioptrics. But to the student of Moral Philosophy it is interesting, chiefly as it affords a palpable and an acknowledged proof, that the mind may carry on intellectual processes which leave no trace in the memory.

25. Two other celebrated questions concerning vision are intimately connected with the philosophy of the mind, and furnish a favourable opportunity for illustrating the limits which nature has prescribed to our inquiries on the subject of perception. The one relates to our seeing objects erect, by means of inverted images on the retina; the other, to our seeing objects single with two eyes.

26. Some of the qualities perceived by sight are primary, others secondary. Extension and figure belong to the former class; colour and varieties of illumination, to the latter.

27. The foregoing article naturally leads the attention to the general accommodation of our animal frame to our intellectual faculties. Un-

der this head the following particulars may furnish matter for useful reflections.

(1.) The local distribution of our organs of sense.

(2.) The adaptation of our perceptive powers to the properties and laws of the material world.

(3.) The relation of the stature and strength of man to the physical arrangements on that planet with which he is connected.

(4.) The versatility of his nature; qualifying him to subsist in every variety of climate.

Article Second.—Of Perception in general.

28. Our notions both of body and of mind are merely relative; that is, we can define the former only by the qualities perceived by our senses, and the latter by the operations of which we are conscious.

29. As the qualities of body bear no resemblance to the operations of mind, we are unavoidably led to consider them as perfectly distinct objects of our knowledge; each of which must be studied in its own peculiar way; the one by attention to the subjects of our Consciousness; the other by attention to the objects of our Perceptions. This is not a hypothesis, but a fact, which is implied in the only notions

of body and of mind that we are capable of forming.

30. It appears, however, from the phenomena of perception, and also from those of voluntary motion, that the connection between body and mind is extremely intimate; and various theories have been proposed, to explain the manner in which it is carried on. All these theories relate to a subject placed beyond the reach of our faculties; and concerning which it is impossible for us to ascertain any thing, but the laws by which the connection is regulated.

31. According to the distinction formerly stated between the primary and the secondary qualities of matter (15.), our notions of the latter are merely relative; the sensations which correspond to them informing us of nothing but of the existence of certain unknown causes by which they are produced. What we know of the nature of these causes is the result of subsequent philosophical investigation. The names of secondary qualities are in all languages ambiguous; the same word expressing the sensation, and the unknown cause by which it is excited. Hence the origin of the Cartesian paradox with respect to the non-existence of heat, cold, smell, sound, and colour.

32. The primary qualities of matter, (such, for example, as Extension and Figure,) although

perceived in consequence of certain sensations excited in our minds, are always apprehended as external and independent existences; and the notions of them we form have in general no reference to the sensations by which they are suggested. The truth seems to be, that these sensations were intended by nature to perform merely the office of signs, without attracting any notice to themselves; and as they are seldom accompanied either with pleasure or pain, we acquire an habitual inattention to them in early infancy, which is not easily to be surmounted in our maturer years.

33. As our sensations have no resemblance to the qualities of matter, it has puzzled philosophers to explain in what manner our notions of primary qualities are acquired. It is this difficulty that has given rise to the modern scepticism concerning the non-existence of matter.

34. According to the ancient theory of perception, sensible qualities are perceived by means of images or species propagated from external objects to the mind, by the organs of sense. These images (which since the time of Descartes have been commonly called *Ideas*) were supposed to be resemblances of the sensible qualities; and, like the impression of a seal on wax, to transmit their form without their mat-

ter. This hypothesis is now commonly distinguished by the title of the Ideal Theory.

35. On the principles of this theory, Berkeley demonstrated that the existence of matter is impossible: for, if we have no knowledge of any thing which does not resemble our ideas or sensations, it follows that we have no knowledge of any thing whose existence is independent of our perceptions.

36. If the Ideal Theory be admitted, the foregoing argument against the existence of matter is conclusive; but the theory is unsupported by evidence, and is even inconceivable. That we *have* notions of external qualities perfectly unlike to our sensations, or to any thing of which we are immediately conscious, is a *fact;* nor ought we to dispute the reality of what we perceive, because we cannot reconcile this fact with our received philosophical systems.

37. Dr Reid, who first called the Ideal Theory in question, offers no argument to prove that the material world exists; but considers our belief of it as an ultimate fact in our nature. It rests on the same foundation with our belief of the reality of our sensations, which no man has disputed.

38. Besides the Ideal Theory, other attempts have been made to explain in what manner the

communication between mind and matter is carried on, in the case of perception.—Leibnitz's system of pre-established Harmony, taking for granted the impossibility of any immediate connection between two substances essentially different, represents the human mind and human body as two independent machines, adjusted at their first formation, to an invariable correspondence with each other, like two clocks made to correspond in all their movements. By means of the same hypothesis, he endeavoured to account for the phenomena of Voluntary Motion.

39. The following are the most important general laws of our perceptions, as far as we can infer them from acknowledged facts.

(1.) The object either immediately or by means of some material medium, must make an impression on the organ.

(2.) By means of the organ, an impression is made on the nerves.

(3.) By means of the nerves, an impression is made on the brain.

40. With respect, however, to the manner in which this process is carried on, and even with respect to the nature of the changes that take place in the nerves and brain, in the case of perception, we are hitherto ignorant; nor does there seem to be any probability that we shall

ever obtain satisfactory information. Physiologists, as well as metaphysicians, have in this instance, too frequently lost sight of the just rules of philosophizing, and have proposed many conjectures which afford no explanation of the phenomena in question, and which have sometimes led to dangerous conclusions.

SECTION III.

OF ATTENTION.

41. It appears from the acquired perceptions of sight, that a process of thought may be carried on by the mind, without leaving any trace in the memory; and many facts prove, that impressions may be made on our organs of sense, and yet be forgotten next moment. In such cases, our want of recollection is ascribed, even in ordinary conversation, to a want of *attention;* so that it seems to be a principle sufficiently ascertained by common experience, that there is a certain act or exertion of the mind necessary to fix in the memory, the thoughts and the perceptions of which we are conscious. This act is one of the simplest of all our intellectual operations, and yet it has been very little noticed by writers on pneumatology.

42. Having established the certainty of the general fact, by an induction of particulars, we are entitled, by all the rules of sound philosophizing, to employ it as a principle for the explanation of other phenomena. Many very curious ones which are commonly referred to other causes, are resolvable into this principle, in a manner equally simple and satisfactory.

SECTION IV.

OF CONCEPTION.

43. The lower animals, as far as we are able to observe, are entirely occupied with their present sensations and perceptions; but man is possessed of a faculty by which he can *represent* to himself sensations of which he has been formerly conscious, and external objects which he has formerly perceived. This faculty may be conveniently distinguished by the name of Conception.

44. The objects of some senses are more easily conceived than those of others; above all, the objects which are perceived by the eye. The power of conception, however, may, in the case of all our senses, be greatly improved by experience.

45. It is commonly understood that conception is accompanied with no belief of the existence of its objects; but various considerations render this opinion somewhat doubtful.

46. This faculty has obviously a very intimate connection with the body. The conception of a pungent taste produces a rush of saliva into the mouth. The conception of an instrument of torture applied to any member of the body, produces a shock similar to what would be occasioned by its actual application.

SECTION V.

OF ABSTRACTION.

47. By our perceptive powers we are made acquainted only with what is *particular* or *individual;* but this description comprehends a very small part of the subjects about which our thoughts are employed. In by far the greater number of instances, our reasonings relate to classes or genera of objects or of events.

48. The process of classification supposes a power of attending to some of the qualities, or circumstances of objects and events, and of withdrawing the attention from the rest. This power is called by logicians Abstraction. It

may be defined in more general terms, "The faculty by which the mind separates the combinations which are presented to it, in order to simplify the objects of its consideration."

49. An appellative, or a generic word, is a name applicable in common to a number of individuals, which agree with each other in some particulars, and differ in others. By means of such words, we are enabled to reason concerning classes of objects and classes of events, and to arrive at general conclusions, comprehending under them a multitude of particular truths. The use which is made in algebra of the letters of the alphabet, affords the best illustration of the nature of general reasoning, and of the principles on which it proceeds. These principles were long misunderstood by philosophers, who imagined that a generic word expresses an actual existence distinct from the individuals of which the genus is composed; and that the mind has a faculty of directing its attention to this general IDEA or ESSENCE, without the mediation of language. Hence much of the mystery which still prevails in the abstract sciences.

50. As it is by language alone that we are rendered capable of general reasoning, one of the most valuable branches of logic is that which relates to the use of words. Too little attention has hitherto been bestowed on this subject.

51. It is not, however, sufficient that we guard against error, in ascertaining the truth of our general principles. However accurately just they may be in themselves, considered as speculative maxims; they must always be applied, in actual practice, with the utmost caution. To illustrate the advantages resulting from the proper use of them, and the mistakes produced by their abuse, would form another very important article in a philosophical system of logic.

52. A habit of abstract speculation, uncorrected by experience; and a habit of unenlightened practice, without the aid of general principles; are two opposite extremes, to which we are liable, in the conduct of the understanding. Few men are to be found, who have not acquired, in early life, a manifest bias either to the one or to the other.

SECTION VI.

OF THE ASSOCIATION OF IDEAS.

53. The effect of custom in connecting together different thoughts, in such a manner, that the one seems spontaneously to follow the other, is one of the most obvious facts with respect to

the operations of the mind. To this law of our constitution, modern philosophers have given the name of the Association of Ideas.—Of late, the phrase has been used in a more extensive sense, to denote the tendency which our thoughts have to succeed each other in a regular train; whether the connection between them be established by custom, or arise from some other associating principle.

54. What the different circumstances are, which regulate the succession of our thoughts, it is not possible, perhaps, to enumerate completely. The following are some of the most remarkable: Resemblance, Analogy, Contrariety, Vicinity in Place, Vicinity in Time, Relation of Cause and Effect, Relation of Means and End, Relation of Premises and Conclusion. Whether some of these may not be resolvable into others, is not very material to inquire.—The most powerful of all the associating principles is undoubtedly Custom; and it is that which leads to the most important inquiries of a practical nature.

55. Among the associating principles already enumerated, there is an important distinction. The relations on which some of them are founded are *obvious;* and connect our thoughts together, when the attention is not directed particularly to any subject. Other relations

are discovered only in consequence of efforts of meditation or study. Of the former kind are the relations of Resemblance and Analogy, of Contrariety, of Vicinity in Time and Place; of the latter, the Relations of Cause and Effect, of Means and End, of Premises and Conclusion. It is owing to this distinction that transitions, which would be highly offensive in philosophical writing, are the most pleasing of any in poetry.

56. In so far as the train of our thoughts is regulated by the laws of Association, it depends on causes of the nature of which we are ignorant, and over which we have no direct or immediate control. At the same time it is evident, that the will has some influence over this part of our constitution. To ascertain the extent and the limits of this influence, is a problem of equal curiosity and importance.

57. We have not a power of summoning up any particular thought, till that thought first solicit our notice. Among a crowd, however, which present themselves, we can choose and reject. We can detain a particular thought, and thus check the train that would otherwise have taken place.

58. The *indirect* influence of the will over the train of our thoughts is very extensive. It is exerted chiefly in two ways:—1. By an effort of attention, we can check the spontaneous

course of our ideas, and give efficacy to those associating principles which prevail in a studious and collected mind. 2. By practice, we can strengthen a particular associating principle to so great a degree, as to acquire a command over a particular class of our ideas.

59. The effect of habit, in subjecting to the will those intellectual processes, which are the foundation of wit,—of the *mechanical* part of poetry, (or, in other words, of the powers of versification and rhyming,)—of poetical fancy, —of invention in the arts and sciences;—and, above all, its effect in forming a talent for extempore elocution, furnish striking illustrations of this last remark.

60. Of all the different parts of our constitution, there is none more interesting to the student of Moral Philosophy than the laws which regulate the Association of Ideas. From the intimate and almost indissoluble combinations, which we are thus led to form in infancy and in early youth, may be traced many of our speculative errors; many of our most powerful principles of action; many perversions of our moral judgment; and many of those prejudices which mislead us in the conduct of life. By means of a judicious education, this susceptibility of the infant mind might be rendered subservient not only to moral improvement, but to the enlarge-

ment and multiplication of our capacities of enjoyment.

SECTION VII.

OF MEMORY.

61. The theories which attempt to account for the phenomena of Memory, by means of impressions and traces in the brain, are entirely hypothetical; and throw no light on the subject which they profess to explain.

62. This faculty appears, indeed, to depend much on the state of the body; as may be inferred from the effects of intoxication, disease, and old age. A collection of facts with respect to these effects, as they are diversified in different instances, would form a valuable addition to our knowledge, and might lead to important conclusions.

63. On a superficial view of the subject, the original differences among men, in their capacities of memory, would seem to be immense. But there is reason for thinking that these differences are commonly overrated, and that due allowances are not made for the diversity of appearance which the human mind must necessarily exhibit in this respect, in consequence of

the various walks of observation and of study, to which mankind are led, partly by natural propensity, and partly by accidental situation.

64. Independent of any inequalities in the original capacity, there are remarkable *varieties* of memory which lay the foundation of important distinctions among individuals in point of intellectual character.

65. These varieties arise chiefly from the different modes in which the constituent qualities of memory are combined in different instances. The perfection of memory is to unite Susceptibility, Retentiveness, and Readiness; but such an union is rare, and any extraordinary improvement that is bestowed on one of these qualities is generally purchased at the expense of the others.

SECTION VIII.

OF IMAGINATION.

66. The province of Imagination is to select qualities and circumstances from a variety of different objects; and, by combining and disposing these, to form a new creation of its own. In this appropriated sense of the word, it coin-

cides with what some authors have called *Creative* or *Poetical Imagination.*

67. This power is not a simple faculty, but results from the combination of several different ones. The effort, for example, of the painter, in composing an ideal landscape, implies conception, which enables him to represent to himself those beautiful scenes in nature, out of which his selection is to be made;—Abstraction, which separates the selected materials from the qualities and circumstances connected with them in the memory;—and Judgment or Taste, which selects the materials, and directs their combination.

68. The nature and province of imagination are most clearly exemplified, in the arts which convey pleasure to the mind by new modifications and combinations of beauties originally perceived by the eye. The operations of imagination, in this particular instance, serve to illustrate the intellectual processes, by which the mind deviates from the models presented to it by experience, and forms to itself new and untried objects of pursuit in those analogous but less palpable cases, which fall under the consideration of the moralist. It is in consequence of such processes, (which, how little soever they may be attended to, are habitually passing in the thoughts of all men,) that human

affairs exhibit so busy and various a scene; tending, in one instance, to improvement, and, in another, to decline; according as our notions of excellence and of happiness are just or erroneous.

SECTION IX.

OF JUDGMENT AND REASONING.

69. Judgment is defined by the writers on logic, to be an act of the mind, by which one thing is affirmed or denied of another;—a definition, which, although not unexceptionable, is as good as the nature of the subject admits of.

70. In some cases, our judgments are formed as soon as the terms of the proposition are understood; or they result so necessarily from the original constitution of the mind, that we act upon them from our earliest infancy, without ever making them an object of reflection. In other cases, they are formed in consequence of a process of thought, consisting of different successive steps. Hence, a distinction of *Evidence* into *intuitive* and *deductive*.

I. Of Intuitive Evidence.

71. The most important, if not all the different species of intuitive evidence, may be comprehended under the three following heads :—

(1.) The evidence of axioms.

(2.) The evidence of consciousness, of perception, and of memory.

(3.) The evidence of those fundamental laws of human belief, which form an essential part of our constitution ; and of which our entire conviction is implied, not only in all speculative reasonings, but in all our conduct as active beings.——Of this class, is the evidence for our own personal identity ; for the existence of the material world ; for the continuance of those laws which have been found, in the course of our past experience, to regulate the succession of phenomena. Such truths no man ever thinks of stating to himself in the form of propositions; but all our conduct, and all our reasonings, proceed on the supposition that they are admitted. The belief of them is necessary for the preservation of our animal existence ; and it is accordingly coeval with the first operations of the intellect.

72. The attacks of modern sceptics have been chiefly directed against this last description of intuitive truths. They have been called

Principles of Common Sense, by some late writers, who have undertaken to vindicate their authority. The conclusions of these writers are, on the whole, solid and important: but the vagueness of the expression, *Common Sense*, which is generally employed, in ordinary discourse, in a sense considerably different from that in which it was at first introduced into this controversy, has furnished to their opponents, the means of a specious misrepresentation of the doctrine in question; as an attempt to shelter popular prejudices from a free examination; and to institute an appeal from the decisions of philosophy to the voice of the multitude.

II. Of Deductive Evidence.

73. Notwithstanding the commonly received doctrine concerning the radical distinction between Intuition and Reasoning, it may be doubted if the one of these powers be not implied in the other. If it be true, that a perfect demonstration is constituted by a chain of reasoning, in which all the links are connected by intuitive evidence; it will follow, that the power of reasoning presupposes the power of intuition. On the other hand, are not the powers of intuition and of memory sufficient to account for those processes of thought, which

conduct the mind by a series of consequences, from premises to a conclusion?

74. "When the mind," says Locke, "perceives the agreement or disagreement of two ideas immediately by themselves, without the intervention of any other, its knowledge may be called *intuitive*. When it cannot so bring its *ideas* together, as by their immediate comparison, and, as it were, juxtaposition, or application one to another, to perceive their agreement or disagreement, it is fain, by the intervention of other ideas, (one, or more, as it happens), to discover the agreement or disagreement which it searches; and this is what we call *Reasoning*."——According to these definitions; supposing the equality of two lines A and B to be perceived immediately, in consequence of their coincidence; the judgment of the mind is intuitive. Supposing A to coincide with B, and B with C; the relation between A and C is perceived by Reasoning.

75. This is certainly not agreeable to common language. The truth of mathematical axioms has always been supposed to be intuitively obvious; and the first of these, according to Euclid's enumeration, affirms; that if A be equal to C, and B to C; A and C are equal.

76. Admitting, however, Locke's definition to be just, it might easily be shewn, that the fa-

culty which perceives the relation between A and C, is the same with the faculty which perceives the relation between A and B; and between B and C. When the relation of equality between A and B has once been perceived, A and B become different names for the same thing.

77. That the power of reasoning (or, as it has been sometimes called, the Discursive Faculty) is implied in the powers of intuition and memory, appears also from an examination of the structure of syllogisms. It is impossible to conceive an understanding so formed as to perceive the truth of the major and minor propositions, and not to perceive the truth of the conclusion. Indeed, as in this mode of stating an argument, the mind is led from universals to particulars, the truth of the conclusion must have been known before the major proposition is formed.

78. Deductive evidence is of two kinds, Demonstrative and Probable. The former relates to necessary, the latter to contingent truths. An accurate examination and comparison of these are of great consequence to all who engage in moral inquiries, but the subject is too extensive to be introduced here.

79. The process of the mind, in discovering media of proof for establishing the truth of

doubtful propositions; and also the process by which we bring new truths to light, is properly called Invention. In this power remarkable inequalities are observable among different individuals. In a capacity of understanding the reasonings of others, all men seem to be nearly on a level.

80. The word *Logic* is used by modern writers in two very different senses: 1. To express the scholastic art of syllogizing, which is commonly referred to Aristotle for its inventor. 2. To express that branch of the philosophy of the human mind, which has for its object, to guard us against the various errors to which we are liable in the exercise of our reasoning powers; and to assist and direct the inventive faculty in the investigation of truth. The general aim of these two sorts of logic is the same; and they differ only in the justness of the principles on which they proceed. The inutility of the former is now pretty generally acknowledged; and it deserves our attention chiefly as a curious article in the history of science. The other is still in its infancy; but many important views have already been opened into the subject by Lord Bacon and others.

SECTION X.

OF INTELLECTUAL POWERS OR CAPACITIES, FORMED BY PARTICULAR HABITS OF STUDY OR OF BUSINESS.

81. The varieties of intellectual character among men, result from the various possible combinations and modifications of faculties, which, in greater or less degrees, are common to the whole species. Supposing these faculties to be originally the same in every individual, infinite diversities of genius would necessarily arise, from the different situations into which men are thrown by the accidents of human life.

82. The intellectual habits that are formed by the pursuits of science or of literature, are widely different from those which are produced by the active engagements of business. There are other peculiarities of a more delicate nature, which originate from particular studies, and which distinguish the different classes of literary men from each other. The metaphysician, the mathematician, the antiquary, the poet, the critic, strengthen, by their respective pursuits, particular faculties and principles, while they suffer others to remain without due cultivation.

83. An examination of the effects produced on the understanding, by different sciences, and

by different active professions, would suggest many important rules for the improvement and enlargement of the mind, and for preserving all its various powers in that just proportion to each other which constitutes the perfection of our intellectual nature.

84. Quickness, Acuteness, Penetration, Presence of Mind, Good Sense, Sagacity, Comprehension, Profoundness,—all express particular characteristics of intellect by which individuals are distinguished from each other; and which present a subject of observation and study, not more interesting to the philosopher, than to those who take an active concern in the business of the world.—The mental defects to which these qualities are respectively opposed, are no less deserving of attention.

85. Nearly connected with these last speculations, are those philosophical inquiries which have for their object, to analyze, into their constituent principles, the different kinds of intellectual ability which are displayed in the different sciences and arts. Such inquiries not only open a curious and interesting field of disquisition, but have an obvious tendency to lessen that blind admiration of original genius, which is one of the chief obstacles to the improvement of the arts, and to the progress of knowledge.

86. Among the intellectual powers, gradually formed by a particular application of our original faculties, the power of Taste is one of the most important. It was formerly treated by metaphysicians as a simple and uncompounded principle of our constitution; and, notwithstanding the ingenious attempts lately made to analyze it into its component elements, it continues still to be considered by some as an ultimate fact in the constitution of the human mind. The extensive influence it possesses in such a state of society as ours, not only over the pursuits of those who devote themselves to the study of Literature and of the Fine Arts, but over the enjoyments of every individual who partakes of the general refinement of manners, might justify the allotment of a separate article to an illustration of the intellectual process by which it is formed. Such a digression, however, would necessarily encroach on other discussions still more closely connected with the object of this First Part of the Course; and the intimate relation between the Power of Taste and our Moral Principles will furnish another and a more convenient opportunity of resuming the speculation.

87. It is sufficient, at present, to remark, that although the ground-work of Taste must be laid in the original qualities of the mind,

yet this power is the slow result of experience, habitually and attentively conversant with a particular class of agreeable objects. The instantaneous rapidity of its decisions gives it sometimes the appearance of an immediate perception,—and hence the name which it has borrowed, in the languages of modern Europe, from one of the external senses. The use made in the French tongue of the word *Tact*, to denote that delicate sense of propriety which enables a man to *feel his way* in the difficult intercourse of polished society, seems to have been suggested by similar considerations. This power, as well as the other, is evidently an acquired one; and a comparison of the two might be useful for illustrating the nature and *genesis* of both.

SECTION XI.

OF CERTAIN AUXILIARY FACULTIES AND PRINCIPLES ESSENTIAL TO OUR INTELLECTUAL IMPROVEMENT, OR INTIMATELY CONNECTED WITH IT.

88. The form and posture of the human body, and its various organs of perception, have an obvious reference to Man's rational nature; and are beautifully fitted to encourage and faci-

litate his intellectual improvement. A similar remark may be extended to many other parts of our constitution, both external and internal; but there are two which more particularly claim our attention; the power of expressing our thoughts by Language, and the principle of Imitation.

I. Of Language.

89. The connection of this subject with that of the foregoing sections is sufficiently obvious. It is to the use of artificial signs (§ 49.) that we are indebted for all our general conclusions; and without it, our knowledge would have been entirely limited to individuals. It is also to the use of artificial signs that we are indebted for all that part of information which is not the immediate result of our own personal experience; and for that transmission of intellectual acquisitions from one race to another, which lays the foundation of the progressive improvement of the species.

90. The formation of an artificial language, (as Dr Reid has remarked,) presupposes the use of natural signs. These consist in certain expressions of the countenance, certain gestures of the body, and certain tones of the voice.

91. There seems to be, in man, a power of interpreting instinctively some of these expres-

sions. This, indeed, has been disputed of late; but various considerations might be mentioned, which justify the common opinion upon the subject, when stated with certain corrections and limitations.

92. As ideas multiply, the imperfections of natural language are felt; and men find it necessary to invent artificial signs, of which the meaning is fixed by mutual agreement. In proportion as artificial language improves, the language of nature declines; insomuch, that in such a state of society as ours, it requires a great deal of reflection and study to recover the use of it. This study is in a considerable degree the foundation of the arts both of the actor and of the orator.

93. Artificial signs may be divided into those which are addressed to the eye, and those which are addressed to the ear. The latter have formed, among all nations, the ordinary medium of intellectual communication.

94. As we have no record of the steps, by which any of the languages spoken among men have arisen, some writers have employed their ingenuity, in tracing, from the faculties of the mind, the origin of the different parts of speech, and, in illustrating the gradual progress of language, resulting from the general progress of society. Such conjectural speculations concern-

ing the natural advances of the Species, in any particular line of improvement, may be distinguished by the title of *Theoretical Histories*.

95. The imperfections of those languages, which have originated from popular use, have suggested, to some philosophers, the idea of a language expressly calculated for the purposes of science. The failure of the attempts hitherto made on this subject, are not decisive against the practicability of such a project.

96. The art of Writing is an important step in the history of language; and a powerful aid to the intellectual progress of the species.

97. The advantages with which it is accompanied, are wonderfully extended by the art of Printing, which may be justly regarded, not only as the happiest of all expedients, for facilitating the intellectual commerce of mankind, but as one of the most important events that have occurred in the history of human affairs.

II. Of the Principle of Imitation.

98. Whenever we see any expression, or, in general, any change, in the countenance of another person, we have a tendency to assume the same expression, or the same change, in our own countenance. Every man is sensible of this, when he looks at another in a rage, in a fit of laughter, or in a deep melancholy.——

Nor is it the *visible* appearance alone of others, that we have a disposition to imitate. We copy instinctively the voices of our companions, their tones, their accents, and their modes of pronunciation.

99. This tendency in our nature to imitation is attended with important advantages. It seems to be by means of it, that children acquire the use of speech ; and that they learn insensibly to model their habits on the appearance and manners of those with whom they are familiarly conversant.

100. As it is in early life, that the principle of imitation is of greatest use to us, so it is in infancy that we have the strongest tendency to indulge it. It is of this natural tendency, which all men have in some degree, that mimics avail themselves ; till, by repeated efforts, they acquire a power of carrying it farther than they could have done originally ; or, rather, perhaps, they only contrive to retain through life, a faculty, which, in the case of most men, disappears after the period of childhood.

101. The contagious nature of insanity, of convulsions, of hysteric disorders, of panics, and of all the different kinds of enthusiasm, seems to have an intimate connection with the principle of imitation. To this class of facts, an important addition has lately been made in the

course of the philosophical inquiries which took rise at Paris, in consequence of the cures pretended to be effected by means of animal magnetism.

SECTION XII.

OF THE INTELLECTUAL FACULTIES OF MAN, AS CONTRASTED WITH THE INSTINCTS OF THE BRUTES.

102. That the brutes are under the more immediate guidance of nature, while man is left to regulate, to a great degree, his own destiny, by the exercise of his reason, is a fact too obvious to admit of dispute. In what manner, indeed, nature operates, in this instance, we are perfectly ignorant; but nothing can be more certain than this, that it is not by a deliberate choice, analogous to what we experience in ourselves, that the lower animals are determined to the pursuit of particular ends; nor by any process analogous to our reason, that they combine means in order to attain them.

103. To that unknown principle, which guides the operations of the brutes, we give the name of Instinct. It is distinguished from Reason by two circumstances; 1. By the uniformity with which it proceeds, in all individuals of the same

species; and, 2. By the unerring certainty with which it performs its office, prior to all experience.

104. But although we do not, in such cases, ascribe reason or art to the brutes, the operations of instinct plainly indicate intelligence in that Being by whom they were formed; and who, by adapting their constitutions so beautifully to the laws of the material world, has evinced an unity of design, which proves that all the different parts of the universe, animate and inanimate, are the workmanship of the same author.

105. The wisdom of nature, as displayed in the instincts of animals, is more particularly conspicuous in those tribes which associate in political communities;—as the bee and the beaver. Here we see animals, who, considered individually, discover but a small degree of sagacity, conspiring together, under the guidance of a blind impulse, in the accomplishment of effects, astonishing by their magnitude, and by the complicated ingenuity they exhibit.

106. Animals, however, are left to make some small acquisitions, by experience; as sufficiently appears, in certain tribes, from the sagacity of the old, when contrasted with the ignorance of the young; and from the effects which may be produced on many of them, by discipline and education.

107. In what, then, does the difference between man and the brutes consist? Do their faculties differ from each other in degree only; or is there an essential distinction between the rational and the animal natures?

108. The French philosophers of the Cartesian school adopted the latter opinion; and even carried it so far, as to consider the brutes as mere machines. Their successors have, in general, gone into the opposite extreme; and have employed their ingenuity in attempting to account for the boasted superiority of man, by accidental circumstances in his bodily organization, or in his external condition.

109. In opposition to these doctrines of modern Materialists, a great variety of considerations prove; that, in respect of our intellectual and moral principles, our nature does not admit of comparison with that of any other inhabitant of this globe; the difference between our constitution and theirs, being a difference, not in degree, but in kind. Perhaps, this is the single instance, in which that regular gradation which we, every where else, observe in the universe, fails entirely.—The subject is by far too extensive to be treated in these *Outlines*.

PART II.

OF THE ACTIVE AND OF THE MORAL POWERS OF MAN.

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110. This part of the subject naturally divides itself into two Chapters:—The first relates to the Classification and Analysis of our Active and Moral Powers. The second, to the various branches of our Duty.

CHAPTER I.

CLASSIFICATION AND ANALYSIS OF OUR ACTIVE AND MORAL POWERS.

SECTION I.

OF THE ACTIVE POWERS IN GENERAL.

111. The word *Action* is properly applied to those exertions which are consequent on volition; whether the exertion be made on exter-

nal objects, or be confined to our mental operations. Thus, we say the mind is active, when engaged in study. In ordinary discourse, indeed, we are apt to confound together action and motion. As the operations in the minds of other men escape our notice, we can judge of their activity only from the sensible effects it produces: and hence we are led to apply the character of Activity, to those whose bodily activity is the most remarkable; and to distinguish mankind into two classes, the Active and the Speculative.—In the present instance the word Activity is used in its most extensive signification, as applicable to every voluntary exertion.

112. The primary sources of our activity, therefore, are the circumstances that influence the will. Of these, there are some which make a part of our constitution, and which, on that account are called Active principles. Such are, Hunger, Thirst, Curiosity, Ambition, Pity, Resentment. The most important principles of this kind may be referred to the following heads.

(1.) Appetites.
(2.) Desires.
(3.) Affections.
(4.) Self-love.
(5.) The Moral Faculty.

SECTION II.

OF OUR APPETITES.

113. This class of our active principles is distinguished by the following circumstances.

(1.) They take their rise from the body, and are common to us with the brutes.

(2.) They are not constant, but occasional.

(3.) They are accompanied with an uneasy sensation, which is strong or weak, in proportion to the strength or weakness of the appetite.

114. Our appetites are three in number; Hunger, Thirst, and the appetite of Sex. Of these, two were intended for the preservation of the individual; the third, for the continuance of the species; and without them, reason would have been insufficient for these important purposes.

115. Our appetites can, with no propriety, be called selfish, for they are directed to their respective objects, as ultimate ends; and they must all have operated, in the first instance, prior to any experience of the pleasure arising from their gratification.—Self-love, too, is often sacrificed to appetite, when we indulge ourselves

in an immediate enjoyment, which we know is likely to be attended with hurtful consequences.

116. Beside our natural appetites, we have many acquired ones.—Such are, an appetite for tobacco, for opium, and for intoxicating liquors. In general, every thing that stimulates the nervous system, produces a subsequent languor, which gives rise to a desire of repetition.

117. Our occasional propensities to action and to repose are, in many respects, analogous to our appetites.

SECTION III.

OF OUR DESIRES.

118. These are distinguished from our appetites by the following circumstances.

(1.) They do not take rise from the body.

(2.) They do not operate periodically, after certain intervals; and they do not cease upon the attainment of a particular object.

119. The most remarkable active principles belonging to this class are;

(1.) The Desire of Knowledge, or the Principle of Curiosity.

(2.) The Desire of Society.

(3.) The Desire of Esteem.

(4.) The Desire of Power; or the Principle of Ambition.

(5.) The Desire of Superiority; or the Principle of Emulation.

I.—The Desire of Knowledge.

120. The principle of Curiosity appears, in children, at a very early period, and is commonly proportioned to the degree of capacity they possess. The direction too which it takes, is regulated by nature, according to the order of our wants and necessities; being confined, in the first instance, exclusively to those properties of material objects, and those laws of the material world, an acquaintance with which is essential to the preservation of our animal existence. In more advanced years, it displays itself, in one way or another, in every individual; and gives rise to an infinite diversity in their pursuits. Whether this diversity be owing to natural predisposition, or to early education, it is of little consequence to determine; as upon either supposition, a preparation is made for it in the original constitution of the mind, combined with the circumstances of our external situation. Its final cause is also sufficiently obvious; as it is this which gives rise, in the case of individuals, to a limitation of attention and

study; and lays the foundation of all the advantages, which society derives, from the division and subdivision of intellectual labour.

121. The desire of knowledge is not a selfish principle. As the object of hunger is not happiness, but food; so the object of curiosity is not happiness but knowledge.

II.—The Desire of Society.

122. Abstracting from those affections which interest us in the happiness of others, and from all the advantages which we ourselves derive from the social union, we are led by a natural and instinctive desire, to associate with our own species. This principle is easily discernible in the minds of children; and it is common to man with many of the brutes.

123. After experiencing, indeed, the pleasures of social life; the influence of habit, and a knowledge of the comforts inseparable from society, contribute greatly to strengthen the instinctive desire: and hence some authors have been induced to display their ingenuity, by disputing its existence. Whatever opinion we form on this speculative question, the desire of society is equally entitled to be ranked among the natural and universal principles of our constitution.

124. How very powerfully this principle of action operates, appears from the effects of solitude upon the mind. We feel ourselves in an unnatural state; and, by making companions of the lower animals, or by attaching ourselves to inanimate objects, strive to fill up the void of which we are conscious.

125. The connection between the Desire of Society and the Desire of Knowledge is very remarkable. The last of these principles is always accompanied with a wish to impart our information to others;—insomuch, that it has been doubted, if any man's curiosity would be sufficient to engage him in a course of persevering study, if he were entirely cut off from the prospect of social intercourse. In this manner, a beautiful provision is made for a mutual communication, among mankind, of their intellectual attainments.

III.—The Desire of Esteem.

126. This principle discovers itself, at a very early period, in infants; who, long before they are able to reflect on the advantages resulting from the good opinion of others, and even before they acquire the use of speech, are sensibly mortified by any expression of neglect or contempt. It seems, therefore, to be an original

principle in our nature; that is, it does not appear to be resolvable into reason and experience, or into any other principle more general than itself. An additional proof of this is, the very powerful influence it has over the mind;—an influence more striking than that of any other active principle whatever. Even the love of life daily gives way to the desire of esteem; and of an esteem, which, as it is only to affect our memories, cannot be supposed to interest our self-love. In what manner, the association of ideas should manufacture, out of the other principles of our constitution, a new principle stronger than them all, it is difficult to conceive.

127. As our appetites of Hunger and Thirst, though not selfish principles, are yet immediately subservient to the preservation of the individual; so the desire of Esteem, though not a social or benevolent principle, is yet immediately subservient to the good of society.

IV.—The Desire of Power.

128. Whenever we are led to consider ourselves as the authors of any effect, we feel a sensible pride of exultation, in the consciousness of Power; and the pleasure is, in general, proportioned to the greatness of the effect, compared to the smallness of our exertion.

129. The infant, while still on the breast, delights in exerting its little strength upon every object it meets with; and is mortified, when any accident convinces it of its own imbecility. The pastimes of the boy are, almost without exception, such as suggest to him the idea of his power:—and the same remark may be extended to the active sports, and the athletic exercises, of youth and of manhood.

130. As we advance in years, and as our animal powers lose their activity and vigour, we gradually aim at extending our influence over others, by the superiority of fortune and of situation, or by the still more flattering superiority of intellectual endowments:—by the force of our understanding; by the extent of our information; by the arts of persuasion, or the accomplishments of address. What but the idea of power pleases the orator, in the consciousness of his eloquence; when he silences the reason of others by superior ingenuity; bends to his purposes their desires and passions; and, without the aid of force, or the splendour of rank, becomes the arbiter of the fate of nations?

131. To the same principle we may trace, in part, the pleasure arising from the discovery of general theorems. Every such discovery puts us in possession of innumerable particular truths,

or particular facts; and gives us a ready command of a great stock of knowledge to which we had not access before. The desire of power, therefore, comes, in the progress of reason and experience, to act as an auxiliary to our instinctive desire of knowledge.

132. The idea of power is, partly at least, the foundation of our attachment to property. It is not enough for us to have the use of an object. We desire to have it completely at our own disposal; without being responsible to any person whatever.

133. Avarice is a particular modification of the desire of power; arising from the various functions of money in a commercial country. Its influence as an active principle is much strengthened by habit and association.

134. The love of liberty proceeds, in part, from the same source; from a desire of being able to do whatever is agreeable to our own inclination. Slavery mortifies us, because it limits our power.

135. Even the love of tranquillity and retirement has been resolved by Cicero into the same principle. "Multi autem et sunt, et fuerunt, qui eam, quam dico, Tranquillitatem expetentes, a negotiis publicis se removerint, ad otiumque perfugerint. His idem propositum fuit, quod regibus, ut ne qua re egerent, ne cui parerent,

libertate uterentur; cujus proprium est, sic vivere, ut velis. Quare, cum hoc commune sit potentiæ cupidorum cum iis, quos dixi, otiosis; alteri se adipisci id posse arbitrantur, si opes magnas habeant; alteri, si contenti sint et suo, et parvo."

136. The idea of power is also, in some degree, the foundation of the pleasure of Virtue. We love to be at liberty to follow our own inclinations, without being subjected to the control of a superior: but this alone is not sufficient to our happiness. When we are led, by vicious habits, or by the force of passion, to do what reason disapproves, we are sensible of a mortifying subjection to the inferior principles of our nature, and feel our own littleness and weakness. A sense of freedom and independence, elevation of mind, and the pride of virtue, are the natural sentiments of the man, who is conscious of being able, at all times, to calm the tumults of passion, and to obey the cool suggestions of duty and honour.

V.—The Desire of Superiority.

137. Emulation has been sometimes classed with the Affections: but it seems more properly to fall under the definition of our Desires. It is, indeed, frequently accompanied with ill-will towards our rivals: but it is the desire of supe-

riority which is the active principle; and the malevolent affection is only a concomitant circumstance.

138. A malevolent affection is not even a *necessary* concomitant of the desire of superiority. It is possible, surely, to conceive (although the case may happen but rarely,) that Emulation may take place between men, who are united by the most cordial friendship; and without a single sentiment of ill-will disturbing their harmony.

139. When Emulation is accompanied with malevolent affection, it assumes the name of Envy. The distinction between these two principles of action is accurately stated by Dr Butler. "Emulation is merely the desire of superiority over others with whom we compare ourselves. To desire the attainment of this superiority, by the particular means of others being brought down below our own level, is the distinct notion of Envy. From whence it is easy to see, that the real end, which the natural passion, Emulation, and which the unlawful one, Envy, aims at, is exactly the same; and, consequently, that to do mischief is not the end of Envy, but merely the means it makes use of to attain its end."

140. Some faint symptoms of Emulation may be remarked among the lower animals; but the

effects it produces among them are perfectly insignificant. In our own race, it operates in an infinite variety of directions, and is one of the principal springs of human improvement.

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141. As we have artificial appetites, so we have also artificial desires. Whatever conduces to the attainment of any object of natural desire, is itself desired on account of its subserviency to this end; and frequently comes, in process of time, to acquire, in our estimation, an intrinsic value. It is thus that wealth becomes, with many, an ultimate object of pursuit; although it is undoubtedly valued at first, merely as the means of attaining other objects. In like manner, men are led to desire dress, equipage, retinue, furniture, on account of the estimation in which they are supposed to be held by the public. Such desires have been called, by Dr Hutcheson, Secondary Desires. Their origin is easily explicable, on the principle of Association.

SECTION IV.

OF OUR AFFECTIONS.

142. Under this title are comprehended all those active principles, whose direct and ulti

mate object is the communication either of enjoyment or of suffering, to any of our fellow-creatures. According to this definition, Resentment, Revenge, Hatred, belong to the class of our affections, as well as Gratitude or Pity. Hence a distinction of the affections into Benevolent and Malevolent.

I. —Of the Benevolent Affections.

143. Our Benevolent affections are various; and it would not, perhaps, be easy to enumerate them completely. The Parental and the Filial affections,—the affections of Kindred,—Love,—Friendship,—Patriotism,—Universal Benevolence,—Gratitude,—Pity to the distressed,—are some of the most important. Besides these, there are peculiar benevolent affections, excited by those moral qualities in other men, which render them either amiable, or respectable, or objects of admiration.

144. In the foregoing enumeration, it is not to be understood that all the benevolent affections particularly specified, are stated as original principles, or ultimate facts in our constitution. On the contrary, there can be little doubt, that several of them may be analyzed into the same general principle differently modified, according to the circumstances in which it ope-

rates. This, however, (notwithstanding the stress which has been sometimes laid upon it), is chiefly a question of arrangement. Whether we suppose these principles to be all ultimate facts, or some of them to be resolvable into other facts more general; they are equally to be regarded as constituent parts of human nature; and, upon either supposition, we have equal reason to admire the wisdom with which that nature is adapted to the situation in which it is placed. The laws which regulate the acquired perceptions of Sight, are surely as much a part of our frame, as those which regulate any of our original perceptions; and, although they require, for their development, a certain degree of experience and observation in the individual, the uniformity of the result shows, that there is nothing arbitrary nor accidental in their origin.

145. The question, indeed, concerning the origin of our different affections, leads to some curious disquisitions; but is of very subordinate importance to those inquiries, which relate to their nature, and laws, and uses. In many philosophical systems, however, it seems to have been considered as the most interesting subject of discussion connected with this part of the human constitution.

146. To treat, in detail, of the nature, laws,

and uses of our benevolent affections, is obviously inconsistent with the brevity of a treatise, confined by its plan, to a statement of definitions and divisions, and of such remarks as are necessary for explaining the arrangement on which it proceeds. The enumeration already mentioned (§ 143.), suggests an order according to which this subject may be treated in a course of lectures on Moral Philosophy. What follows is equally applicable to all the various principles which come under the general description.

147. The exercise of all our kind affections is accompanied with an agreeable feeling or emotion. So much, indeed, of our happiness is derived from this source, that those authors, whose object is to furnish amusement to the mind, avail themselves of these affections as one of the chief vehicles of pleasure. Hence, the principal charm of tragedy, and of every other species of pathetic composition. How far it is of use, to separate, in this manner, "the luxury of pity" from the opportunities of active exertion, may perhaps be doubted.

148. The pleasures of kind affection are not confined to the virtuous. They mingle also with our criminal indulgences; and often mislead the young and thoughtless, by the charms they impart to vice and to folly.

149. Even when these affections are disappointed in the attainment of their objects, there is a degree of pleasure mixed with the pain:—and sometimes the pleasure greatly predominates.

150. The final cause of the agreeable emotion connected with the exercise of Benevolence, in all its various modes, was evidently to induce us to cultivate, with peculiar care, a class of our active principles so immediately subservient to the happiness of human society.

151. Notwithstanding, however, the pleasure arising from the indulgence of the benevolent affections, these affections have nothing selfish in their origin—as has been fully demonstrated by different writers. This conclusion, although contrary to the systems of many philosophers, both ancient and modern, is not only agreeable to the obvious appearance of the fact, but is strongly confirmed by the analogy of the other active powers already considered.

152. We have found, that the preservation of the individual, and the continuation of the the species, are not intrusted to Self-love and Reason alone; but that we are endowed with various appetites, which, without any reflection on our part, impel us to their respective objects. We have also found, with respect to the acquisition of knowledge, (on which the perfection of

the individual, and the improvement of the species, essentially depend); that it is not intrusted solely to Self-love and Benevolence; but that we are prompted to it by the implanted principle of Curiosity. It farther appeared, that, in addition to our sense of duty, another incentive to worthy conduct is provided in the desire of Esteem, which is not only one of our most powerful principles of action, but continues to operate in full force, to the last moment of our being. Now, as men were plainly intended to live in society, and as the social union could not subsist, without a mutual interchange of good offices; would it not be reasonable to expect, agreeably to the analogy of our nature, that so important an end would not be intrusted solely to the slow deductions of Reason, or to the metaphysical refinements of Self-love; but that some provision would be made for it in a particular class of active principles, which might operate, like our appetites and desires, independently of our reflection? To say this of Parental affection or of Pity, is saying nothing more in their favour, than what was affirmed of Hunger and Thirst; that they prompt us to particular objects, without any reference to our own enjoyment.

II.—Of the Malevolent Affections.

153. The names which are given to these in common discourse, are various,—Hatred, Jealousy, Envy, Revenge, Misanthropy; but it may be doubted, if there be any principle of this kind, implanted by nature, in the mind, excepting the principle of Resentment; the others being grafted on this stock, by our erroneous opinions and criminal habits.

154. Resentment has been distinguished into Instinctive and Deliberate. The former operates, in man, exactly as in the lower animals; and was plainly intended to guard us against sudden violence, in cases where reason would come too late to our assistance. This species of Resentment subsides, as soon as we are satisfied that no injury was intended.

155. Deliberate Resentment is excited only by intentional injury; and, therefore, implies a sense of justice, or of moral good and evil.

156. The Resentment excited by an injury offered to another person, is properly called Indignation. In both cases, the principle of action seems to be fundamentally the same; and to have for its object, not the communication of suffering to a sensitive being, but the punishment of injustice and cruelty.

157. As all the benevolent affections are ac-

companied with pleasant emotions; so all the malevolent affections are sources of pain and disquiet. This is true even of Resentment; how justly soever it may be roused by the injurious conduct of others.

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158. In the foregoing review of our active powers, no mention has been made of our Passions. The truth is, that this word does not, in strict propriety, belong exclusively to any one class of these principles; but is applicable to all of them, when they are suffered to pass the bounds of moderation. In such cases, a sensible agitation or commotion of the body is produced; our reason is disturbed; we lose, in some measure, the power of self-command, and are hurried to action by an almost irresistible impulse. Ambition, the desire of Fame, Avarice, Compassion, Love, Gratitude, Resentment, Indignation; may all, in certain circumstances, be entitled to this appellation. When we speak of *passion* in general, we commonly mean the passion of Resentment; probably because this affection disturbs the reason more, and leaves us less the power of self-government, than any other active principle of our nature.

SECTION V.

OF SELF-LOVE.

159. The constitution of man, if it were composed merely of the active principles hitherto mentioned, would be analogous to that of the brutes. His reason, however, renders his nature and condition, on the whole, essentially different from theirs.

160. They are incapable of looking forward to consequences, or of comparing together the different gratifications of which they are susceptible; and accordingly, as far as we are able to perceive, they yield to every present impulse. But man is able to take a comprehensive survey of his various principles of action, and to form a plan of conduct for the attainment of his favourite objects. Every such plan implies a power of refusing occasionally to particular active principles, the gratification which they demand.

161. According to the particular active principle which influences habitually a man's conduct, his character receives its denomination of Covetous, Ambitious, Studious, or Voluptuous: and his conduct is more or less systematical, as he adheres to his general plan with steadiness or inconstancy.

162. A systematical steadiness in the pursuit of a particular end, while it is necessary for the complete gratification of our ruling passion, is far more favourable to the general improvement of the mind, than the dissipation of attention resulting from an undecided choice, among the various pursuits which human life presents to us. Even the systematical voluptuary is able to command a much greater variety of sensual indulgences, and to continue them to a much more advanced age, than the thoughtless profligate; and, how low soever the objects may be which occupy his thoughts, they seldom fail, by engaging them habitually in one direction, to give a certain degree of cultivation to his intellectual faculties.

163. The only exception, perhaps, which can be mentioned to the last remark, is in the case of those men whose leading principle of action is *Vanity;* and who, as their rule of conduct is borrowed from without, must, in consequence of this very circumstance, be perpetually wavering and inconsistent in their pursuits. Accordingly, it will be found, that such men, although they have frequently performed splendid actions, have seldom risen to eminence in any one particular career; unless, when, by a rare concurrence of accidental circumstances, this career

has been steadily pointed out to them through the whole of their lives, by public opinion.

164. A systematical conduct in life, invariably directed to certain objects, is more favourable to happiness, than one which is influenced merely by occasional inclination and appetite. Even the man who is decidedly and uniformly unprincipled, is free of much of the disquiet which disturbs the tranquillity of those whose characters are more mixed, and more inconsistent.

165. There is another, and very important respect, in which the nature of man differs from that of the brutes. He is able to avail himself of his past experience, in avoiding those enjoyments, which he knows will be succeeded by suffering; and in submitting to lesser evils, which he knows are to be instrumental in procuring him a greater accession of good. He is able, in a word, to form the general notion of happiness, and to deliberate about the most effectual means of attaining it.

166. It is implied in the very idea of happiness, that it is a desirable object; and therefore, self-love is an active principle very different from those which have been hitherto considered. These, for aught we know, may be the effect of arbitrary appointment; and they have, accordingly, been called *implanted* principles. The

desire of happiness may be called a *rational* principle of action; being peculiar to a rational nature, and inseparably connected with it.

167. In prefixing to this section the title of self-love, the ordinary language of modern philosophy has been followed. The expression, however, is exceptionable; as it suggests an analogy (where there is none in fact) between that regard, which every rational being must necessarily have to his own happiness, and those benevolent affections which attach us to our fellow-creatures. The similarity, too, between the words, self-love and selfishness, has introduced much confusion into ethical disquisitions.

168. The word selfishness is always used in an unfavourable sense; and hence, some authors have been led to suppose, that vice consists in an excessive regard to our own happiness. It is remarkable, however, that although we apply the epithet *selfish* to avarice, and to low and private sensuality, we never apply it to the desire of knowledge, or to the pursuits of virtue, which are certainly sources of more exquisite pleasure than riches or sensuality can bestow.

169. The truth will probably be found, upon examination, to be this; that the word selfishness, when applied to a pursuit, has no reference to the *motive* from which the pursuit proceeds, but to the *effect* it has on the conduct.

Neither our animal appetites, nor avarice, nor curiosity, nor the desire of moral improvement, arise from self-love; but some of these active principles disconnect us with society more than others; and consequently, though they do not indicate a greater regard for our own happiness, they betray a greater unconcern for the happiness of our neighbours. The pursuits of the miser have no mixture whatever of the social affections: on the contrary, they continually lead him to state his own interest in opposition to that of other men. The enjoyments of the sensualist all expire within his own person; and, therefore, whoever is habitually occupied in the search of them, must of necessity neglect the duties which he owes to mankind. It is otherwise with the desire of knowledge, which is always accompanied with a strong desire of social communication; and with the love of moral excellence, which, in its practical tendency, coincides so remarkably with benevolence, that many authors have attempted to resolve the one principle into the other.

170. That the word selfishness is by no means synonymous with a regard to our own happiness, appears farther from this, that the blame we bestow on those pursuits which are commonly called selfish, is founded, *partly*, on the sacrifice they imply of our true interest, to the

inferior principles of our nature. When we see, for example, a man enslaved by his animal appetites; so far from considering him as under the influence of an excessive self-love, we pity and despise him for neglecting the higher enjoyments which are placed within his reach.

SECTION VI.

OF THE MORAL FACULTY.

Article First.—General observations on the Moral Faculty, tending chiefly to shew, that it is an original principle of our nature, and not resolvable into any other principle or principles more simple.

171. The facts alluded to in the last paragraph of the foregoing section, have led some philosophers to conclude, that Virtue is merely a matter of prudence, and that a sense of duty is but another name for a rational self-love. This view of the subject was far from being unnatural; for we find, that these two principles, in general, lead to the same course of action; and we have every reason to believe, that if our knowledge of the universe were more extensive, they would be found to do so in all instances whatever.

172. That we have, however, a sense of duty which is not resolvable into a regard to our happiness, appears from various considerations.

(1.) There are, in all languages, words equivalent to Duty and to Interest, which men have constantly distinguished in their signification. They coincide, in general, in their applications; but they convey very different ideas.

(2.) The emotions arising from the contemplation of what is *right* or *wrong* in conduct, are different, both in degree and in kind, from those which are produced by a calm regard to our own happiness. This is particularly remarkable in the emotions excited by the moral conduct of others; for such is the influence of self-deceit, that few men judge with perfect fairness of their own actions. The emotions excited by characters exhibited in histories and in novels, are sometimes still more powerful than what we experience from similar qualities displayed in the circle of our acquaintance, because the judgment is less apt to be warped by partiality or by prejudice. The representations of the stage, however, afford the most favourable of all opportunities for observing their effects. As every species of Enthusiasm operates most forcibly when men are collected in a crowd, our moral feelings are exhibited on a larger scale in the theatre than in the closet. And accordingly,

the slightest hint suggested by the poet, raises to transport the passions of the audience, and forces involuntary tears from men of the greatest reserve, and the most correct sense of propriety.

(3.) Although philosophers have shewn that a sense of duty and an enlightened regard to our own happiness, conspire, in most instances, to give the same direction to our conduct, so as to put it beyond a doubt, that, even in this world, a virtuous life is true wisdom; yet this is a truth by no means obvious to the common sense of mankind, but deduced from an extensive view of human affairs, and an accurate investigation of the remote consequences of our different actions.

It is from experience and reflection, therefore, that we learn the tendency of virtue to advance our worldly prosperity; and, consequently, the great lessons of morality, which are obvious to the capacity of all mankind, cannot have been suggested to them merely by a regard to their own interest.

(4.) The same conclusion is strongly confirmed by the early period of life at which our moral judgments make their appearance;—long before children are able to form the general notion of happiness, and indeed in the very infancy of their reason.

173. In order to elude the force of some of

the foregoing arguments, it has been supposed, that the rules of morality were, in the first instance, brought to light by the sagacity of philosophers and politicians, and that it is only in consequence of the influence of education that they appear to form an original part of the human constitution.—The diversity of opinions among different nations, with respect to the morality of particular actions, has been considered as a strong confirmation of this doctrine.

174. But the power of education, although great, is confined within certain limits; for it is by co-operating with the natural principles of the mind, that it produces its effects. Nay, this very susceptibility of education, which is acknowledged to belong universally to the race, presupposes the existence of certain principles which are common to all mankind.

175. The influence of education, in diversifying the appearances which human nature exhibits, depends on that law of our constitution, which was formerly called the association of Ideas: And this law supposes, in every instance, that there are opinions and feelings essential to the human frame, by a combination with which external circumstances lay hold of the mind, and adapt it to its accidental situation.

176. Education may vary, in particular cases, the opinions of individuals with respect to the

beautiful and the sublime. But education could not create our notions of Beauty or Deformity, of Grandeur or Meanness. In like manner, education may vary our sentiments with respect to particular actions, but could not create our notions of Right and Wrong, of Merit and Demerit.

177. The historical facts which have been alleged to prove that the moral judgments of mankind are entirely factitious, will be found, upon examination, to be either the effects of misrepresentation; or to lead to a conclusion directly the reverse of what has been drawn from them:—proper allowance being made, 1st, For the different circumstances of mankind in different periods of society;—2dly, For the diversity of their speculative opinions;—and 3dly, For the different moral import of the same action, under different systems of external behaviour.

178. All these doctrines, how erroneous soever, have been maintained by writers not unfriendly to the interests of morality. But some licentious moralists have gone much farther, and have attempted to shew, that the motives of all men are fundamentally the same, and that what we commonly call Virtue is mere Hypocrisy.

179. The disagreeable impression which such representations of human nature leave on the

mind, affords a sufficient refutation of their truth. If there be really no essential distinction between virtue and vice, whence is it that we conceive one class of qualities to be more excellent and meritorious than another? Why do we consider Pride, or Vanity, or Selfishness, to be less worthy motives for our conduct, than disinterested Patriotism or Friendship, or a determined adherence to what we believe to be our duty? Why does our species appear to us less amiable in one set of philosophical systems than in another?

180. It has been a common error among licentious moralists, to confound the question concerning the actual attainments of mankind, with the question concerning the reality of moral distinctions; and to substitute a satire on vice and folly, instead of a philosophical account of the principles of our constitution. Admitting the picture which has been sometimes drawn of the real depravity of the world to be a just one, the gloom and dissatisfaction which it leaves on the mind are sufficient to demonstrate that we are formed with the love and admiration of moral excellence, and that this is enjoined to us as the law of our nature. "Hypocrisy itself," as Rochefoucault has remarked, "is an homage which vice renders to virtue."

Article Second.—Analysis of our Moral Perceptions and Emotions.

181. After establishing the universality of moral perception as an essential part of the human constitution, the next question that occurs, is, how our notions of Right and Wrong are formed? Are we to refer them to a particular principle in our nature, appropriated to the perception of these qualities, as our external senses are appropriated to the perception of the qualities of matter?—or are they perceived by the same intellectual power which discovers truth in the abstract sciences?—or are they resolvable into other notions still more simple and general than themselves? All these opinions have been maintained by authors of eminence. In order to form a judgment on the point in dispute, it is necessary to analyze the state of our minds when we are spectators of any good or bad action performed by another person, or when we reflect on the actions performed by ourselves. On such occasions we are conscious of three different things.

(1.) The perception of an action as Right or Wrong.

(2.) An emotion of pleasure or of pain; varying in its degree, according to the acuteness of our moral sensibility.

(3.) A perception of the merit or demerit of the agent.

I.—*Of the Perception of Right and Wrong.*

182. The controversy concerning the origin of our moral ideas, took its rise in modern times in consequence of the writings of Mr Hobbes. According to him, we approve of virtuous actions, or of actions beneficial to society, from self-love; as we know, that whatever promotes the interest of society, has, on that very account, an indirect tendency to promote our own.—He farther taught, that, as it is to the institution of government we are indebted for all the comforts and the confidence of social life, the laws which the civil magistrate enjoins are the ultimate standards of morality.

183. Dr Cudworth, who, in opposition to the system of Mr Hobbes, first shewed in a satisfactory manner, that our ideas of Right and Wrong are not derived from positive law; referred the origin of these ideas to the power which distinguishes truth from falsehood: and it became, for some time, the fashionable language among moralists to say, that virtue consisted, not in obedience to the law of a superior, but in a conduct conformable to Reason.

184. At the time that Cudworth wrote, no accurate classification had been attempted, of

the principles of the human mind. His account of the office of reason, accordingly, in enabling us to perceive the distinction between right and wrong, passed without censure, and was understood merely to imply, that there is an eternal and immutable distinction between right and wrong, no less than between truth and falsehood; and that both these distinctions are perceived by our rational powers, or by those powers which raise us above the brutes.

185. The publication of Locke's Essay introduced into this part of science, a precision of expression unknown before; and taught philosophers to distinguish a variety of powers which had formerly been very generally confounded. With these great merits, however, his work has capital defects; and, perhaps, in no part of it are these defects more important, than in the attempt he has made to deduce the origin of our knowledge entirely from sensation and reflection. These, according to him, are the sources of all our simple ideas; and the only power that the mind possesses, is to perform certain operations of Analysis, Combination, Comparison, &c. on the materials with which it is thus supplied.

186. This system led Mr Locke to some dangerous opinions, concerning the nature of moral distinction; which he seems to have considered

as the offspring of Education and Fashion. Indeed, if the words Right and Wrong neither express simple ideas, nor relations discoverable by reason, it will not be found easy to avoid adopting this conclusion.

187. In order to reconcile Locke's account of the origin of our ideas, with the immutability of moral distinctions, different theories were proposed concerning the nature of virtue. According to one, for example, it was said to consist in a conduct conformable to the Fitness of things: According to another, in a conduct conformable to Truth.—The great object of all these theories may be considered as the same; —to remove Right and Wrong from the class of simple Ideas, and to resolve moral rectitude, into a conformity with some relation perceived by reason or the understanding.

188. Dr Hutcheson saw clearly the vanity of these attempts; and hence he was led, in compliance with the language of Locke's philosophy, to refer the origin of our moral ideas to a particular power of perception, to which he gave the name of the Moral Sense. "All the ideas, (says he), or the materials of our reasoning or judging, are received by some immediate powers of perception, internal or external, which we may call senses. Reasoning or intellect seems to raise no new species of ideas, but to

discover or discern the relations of those received."

189. According to this system, as it has been commonly explained, our perceptions of right and wrong are impressions, which our minds are made to receive from particular actions; similar to the relishes and aversions given us for particular objects of the external or internal senses.

190. From the hypothesis of a moral sense, various sceptical conclusions have been deduced by later writers. The words Right and Wrong, it has been alleged, signify nothing in the objects themselves to which they are applied, any more than the words sweet and bitter, pleasant and painful; but only certain effects in the mind of the spectator. As it is improper, therefore, (according to the doctrines of modern philosophy), to say of an object of taste that it is sweet; or of heat, that it is in the fire; so it is equally improper, to say of actions, that they are right or wrong. It is absurd to speak of morality as a thing independent and unchangeable: inasmuch as it arises from an arbitrary relation between our constitution and particular objects.

191. In order to avoid these supposed consequences of Dr Hutcheson's philosophy, an attempt has been made by some later writers, in

particular by Dr Price, to revive the doctrines of Dr Cudworth, and to prove, that moral distinctions, being perceived by reason or the understanding, are equally immutable with all other kinds of truth.

192. This is the most important question that can be stated, with respect to the theory of morals. The obscurity in which it is involved arises chiefly from the use of indefinite and ambiguous terms.

193. That moral distinctions are perceived by a sense, is implied in the definition of a sense which Dr Hutcheson has given, (§ 188.): provided it be granted, (as Dr Price has done explicitly), that the words Right and Wrong express simple ideas, or ideas incapable of analysis.

194. It may be farther observed, in justification of Dr Hutcheson, that the sceptical consequences deduced from his supposition of a moral sense, do not necessarily result from it. Unfortunately, most of his illustrations were taken from the secondary qualities of matter, which, since the time of Des Cartes, philosophers have been, in general, accustomed to refer to the mind, and not to the external object. But if we suppose our perception of Right and Wrong to be analogous to the perception of Extension and Figure, and other primary qualities; the

reality and immutability of moral distinction seems to be placed on a foundation, sufficiently satisfactory to a candid inquirer, (§ 31 and 32.)

195. The definition, however, of a sense, which Hutcheson has given, is by far too general, and was plainly suggested to him by Locke's account of the origin of our ideas, (§ 185.) The words Cause and Effect, Duration, Number, Equality, Identity, and many others, express simple ideas, as well as the words Right and Wrong; and yet it would surely be absurd to ascribe each of them to a particular power of perception.—Notwithstanding this circumstance, as the expression *Moral Sense* has now the sanction of use, and as, when properly explained, it cannot lead to any bad consequences, it may be still retained without inconvenience, in ethical disquisitions.

196. To what part of our constitution, then, shall we ascribe the origin of the ideas of Right and Wrong? Price says,—to the Understanding; and endeavours to shew, in opposition to Locke and his followers, that "the power which understands, or the faculty that discerns truth, is a source of new ideas."

197. This controversy turns chiefly on the meaning of words. The origin of our ideas of right and wrong, is manifestly the same with that of the other simple ideas already men-

tioned; and whether it be referred to the understanding or not, seems to be a matter of mere arrangement; provided it be granted, that the words Right and Wrong express qualities of actions, and not merely a power of exciting certain agreeable or disagreeable emotions in our minds.

198. It may perhaps obviate some objections against the language of Cudworth and Price, to remark, that the word Reason is used in senses which are extremely different. Sometimes to express the whole of those powers which elevate man above the brutes, and constitute his rational nature;—more especially, perhaps, his intellectual powers. Sometimes to express the power of deduction or argumentation. The former is the sense in which the word is used in common discourse; and it is in this sense that it seems to be employed by those writers who refer to it the origin in our moral ideas. Their antagonists, on the other hand, understand, in general, by Reason, the power of deduction or argumentation; an use of the word which is not unnatural, from the similarity between the words Reason and Reasoning, but which is not agreeable to its ordinary meaning. "No hypothesis (says Dr Campbell) hitherto invented, hath shewn that, by means of the discursive faculty, without the aid of any other mental

power, we could ever obtain a notion of either the beautiful or the good.*" The remark is undoubtedly true; and may be applied to all those systems which ascribe to Reason the origin of our moral ideas, if the expressions, Reason and Discursive Faculty, be used as synonymous. But if the word Reason be used in a more general sense, to denote merely our rational and intellectual nature; there does not seem to be much impropriety in ascribing to it the origin of those simple notions, which are not excited in the mind by the immediate operation of the senses; but which arise in consequence of the exercise of the intellectual powers upon their various objects.

199. A variety of intuitive judgments might be mentioned, involving simple ideas, which it is impossible to trace to any origin, but to the power which enables us to form these judgments. Thus, it is surely an intuitive truth, that the sensations of which I am conscious, and all those I remember, belong to one and the same being, which I call *myself*. Here is an intuitive judgment involving the simple idea of *Identity*. In like manner, the changes which I perceive in the universe impress me with a conviction that some cause must have operated to produce them. Here is an intui-

* Philosophy of Rhetoric, vol. i. page 204.

tive judgment, involving the simple idea of *Causation*. When we consider the adjacent angles made by a straight line standing upon another, and perceive that their sum is equal to two right angles, the judgment we form involves the simple idea of *Equality*. To say, therefore, that Reason or the Understanding is a source of new ideas, is not so exceptionable a mode of speaking as has been sometimes supposed.——According to Locke, *Sense* furnishes our ideas, and *Reason* perceives their agreements or disagreements. But the truth is, that these agreements and disagreements are, in many instances, simple ideas, of which no analysis can be given; and of which the origin must therefore be referred to Reason, according to Locke's own doctrine.

200. The opinion we form, however, on this point, is of litle moment, provided it be granted, that the words Right and Wrong express qualities of actions. When I say of an act of justice that it is right; do I mean merely that the act excites pleasure in my mind, as a particular colour pleases my eye, in consequence of a relation which it bears to my organ; or do I mean to assert a truth which is as independent of my constitution, as the equality of the three angles of a triangle to two right angles? Scepticism may be indulged in both cases, about ma-

thematical and about moral truth: but in neither case, does it admit of a refutation by argument.

201. The immutability of moral distinctions has been called in question, not only by sceptical writers, but by some philosophers who have adopted their doctrine, with the pious design of magnifying the perfections of the Deity. Such authors certainly do not recollect, that what they add to his power and majesty, they take away from his moral attributes; for if moral distinctions be not immutable and eternal, it is absurd to speak of the goodness or of the justice of God.

II. *Of the Agreeable and Disagreeable Emotions arising from the Perception of what is Right and Wrong in Conduct.*

202. It is impossible to behold a good action, without being conscious of a benevolent affection, either of love or of respect, towards the agent; and consequently, as all our benevolent affections include an agreeable feeling, every good action must be a source of pleasure to the spectator. Beside this, other agreeable feelings, of order, of utility, of peace of mind, &c. come, in process of time, to be associated with the general idea of virtuous conduct.

203. Those qualities in good actions, which

excite agreeable feelings in the mind of the spectator, form what some moralists have called the Beauty of virtue.

204. All this may be applied, *mutatis mutandis*, to explain what is meant by the Deformity of Vice.

205. Our perception of moral beauty and deformity is plainly distinguishable from our perception of actions as right or wrong: But the distinction has been too little attended to by philosophers. Among the moderns, in particular, some have confined their attention almost solely to our perception of actions as right or wrong; and have thereby rendered their works abstract and uninteresting. Others, by dwelling exclusively on our perception of Moral Beauty and Deformity, have been led into enthusiasm and declamation, and have furnished licentious moralists with a pretext for questioning the immutability of moral distinctions.

206. The emotions of pleasure and of pain arising from the contemplation of moral beauty and deformity, are so much more exquisite than any that are produced by the perception of material forms, that some philosophers have held, that the words Beauty and Sublimity express, in their *literal* signification, the qualities of mind; and that material objects affect us only by means of the moral ideas they suggest.

This was a favourite doctrine of the Socratic school, and has been supported with great ingenuity by several modern writers.

207. Whatever opinion we adopt on this speculative question, there can be no dispute about the fact, that good actions and virtuous characters form the most delightful of all objects to the human mind; and that there are no charms in the external universe so powerful as those which recommend to us the cultivation of the qualities, that constitute the perfection and happiness of our nature.

208. It was a leading object of the ancient moralists, to establish such an union between philosophy and the fine arts, as might add to the natural beauty of virtue every attraction which the imagination could impart. The effect which might be produced in this way may be easily conceived, from the examples we daily see of the influence of association in concealing the meanness and deformity of fashionable vices.

III. *Of the Perception of Merit and Demerit.*

209. The virtuous actions performed by other men, not only excite in our minds a benevolent affection towards them, or a disposition to promote their happiness; but impress us with a sense of the merit of the agents. We perceive

them to be the proper objects of love and esteem, and that it is morally right that they should receive their reward. We feel ourselves called on to make their worth known to the world, in order to procure them the favour and respect they deserve; and if we allow it to remain secret, we are conscious of injustice, in suppressing the natural language of the heart.

210. On the other hand, when we are witnesses of an act of selfishness, of cruelty, or of oppression; whether we ourselves are the sufferers or not; we are not only inspired with aversion and hatred towards the delinquent, but find it difficult to restrain our indignation from breaking loose against him. By this natural impulse of the mind, a check is imposed on the bad passions of individuals; and a provision is made, even before the establishment of positive laws, for the good order of society.

211. In our own case; when we are conscious of doing well, we feel that we are entitled to the esteem and attachment of our fellow-creatures; and we know with the evidence of a perception, that we enjoy the approbation of the invisible witness of our conduct. Hence it is, that we have not only a sense of merit, but an anticipation of reward, and look forward to the future with increased confidence and hope.

212. The feelings of remorse which accompany the consciousness of guilt, involve, in like manner, a sense of ill-desert, and an anticipation of future punishment.

213. Although, however, our sense of merit and demerit, must convince the philosopher of the connection which the Deity has established between virtue and happiness, he does not proceed on the supposition, that, on particular occasions, miraculous interpositions are to be made in his favour. That virtue is, even in this world, the most direct road to happiness, he sees to be a fact; but he knows that the Deity governs by general laws; and when he feels himself disappointed in the attainment of his wisdom, he acquiesces in his lot, and consoles himself with the prospect of futurity. It is an error of the vulgar to expect, that good or bad fortune are always to be connected, in particular instances, with good or bad actions;—a prejudice which is a source of much disappointment in human life, but of which the prevalence in all ages and countries, affords a striking illustration of the natural connection between the ideas of virtue and of merit.

Article Third.—Of Moral Obligation.

214. According to some systems, moral obligation is founded entirely on our belief, that

virtue is enjoined by the command of God. But how, it may be asked, does this belief impose an obligation? Only one of two answers can be given. Either, that there is a moral fitness that we should conform our will to that of the Author and the Governor of the universe; or that a rational self-love should induce us, out of prudence, to study every means of rendering ourselves acceptable to the Almighty Arbiter of happiness and misery. On the first supposition, we reason in a circle. We resolve our sense of moral obligation into our sense of religion; and the sense of religion into that of moral obligation.

215. The other system which makes virtue a mere matter of prudence, although not so obviously unsatisfactory, leads to consequences which sufficiently shew that it is erroneous. Among others, it leads us to conclude, 1. That the disbelief of a future state absolves from all moral obligation, excepting in so far as we find virtue to be conducive to our present interest: —2. That a being independently and completely happy, cannot have any moral perceptions, or any moral attributes.

216. But farther, the notions of reward and punishment presuppose the notions of right and wrong. They are sanctions of virtue, or additional motives to the practice of it; but they

suppose the existence of some previous obligation.

217. In the last place, if moral obligation be constituted by a regard to our situation in another life, how shall the existence of a future state be proved by the light of nature? or how shall we discover what conduct is acceptable to the Deity? The truth is, that the strongest argument for such a state is deduced from our natural notions of right and wrong, of merit and demerit; and from a comparison between these and the general course of human affairs.

218. It is absurd, therefore, to ask, why we are bound to practise virtue? The very notion of virtue implies the notion of obligation. Every being, who is conscious of the distinction between Right and Wrong, carries about with him a law which he is bound to observe; notwithstanding he may be in total ignorance of a future state. "What renders obnoxious to punishment, is not the foreknowlegge of it, but merely the violating a known obligation."*

219. From what has been stated, it follows, that the moral faculty, considered as an active power of the mind, differs essentially from all the others hitherto enumerated. The least violation of its authority fills us with remorse. On the contrary, the greater the sacrifices we

* Butler.

make, in obedience to its suggestions, the greater are our satisfaction and triumph.

220. The supreme authority of conscience, although beautifully described by many of the ancient moralists, was not sufficiently attended to by modern writers, as a fundamental principle in the science of ethics, till the time of Dr Butler. Too little stress is laid on it by Lord Shaftesbury; and the omission is the chief defect of his philosophy.

221. If this distinction between the moral faculty and our other active powers, be acknowledged, it is of the less consequence what particular theory we adopt concerning the origin of our moral ideas; and accordingly Mr Smith, though he resolves moral approbation ultimately into a feeling of the mind, represents the supremacy of conscience as a principle which is equally essential to all the different systems that have been proposed on the subject. "Upon whatever we suppose our moral faculties to be founded, whether upon a certain modification of reason, upon an original instinct, called a moral sense, or upon some other principle of our nature, it cannot be doubted that they were given us for the direction of our conduct in this life. They carry along with them the most evident badges of this authority, which denote that they were set up within us to be the su-

preme arbiters of all our actions, to superintend all our senses, passions, and appetites, and to judge how far each of them was either to be indulged or restrained. It is the peculiar office of these faculties to judge, to bestow censure or applause upon all the other principles of our nature.

SECTION VII.

OF CERTAIN PRINCIPLES WHICH CO-OPERATE WITH OUR MORAL POWERS IN THEIR INFLUENCE ON THE CONDUCT.

222. In order to secure still more completely the good order of society, and to facilitate the acquisition of virtuous habits, nature has superadded to our moral constitution a variety of auxiliary principles, which sometimes give rise to a conduct agreeable to the rules of morality, and highly useful to mankind; where the merit of the individual, considered as a moral agent, is extremely inconsiderable. Hence, some of them have been confounded with our moral powers, or even supposed to be of themselves sufficient to account for the phenomena of moral perception, by authors whose views of human nature have not been sufficiently comprehensive. The most important principles of this description are, 1. A regard to Character. 2. Sym-

pathy. 3. The sense of the Ridiculous. And, 4. Taste.—The principle of Self-love (which was treated of in a former section) co-operates powerfully to the same purposes.

I.—Of Decency, or a Regard to Character.

223. It was before observed (126.), that the desire of esteem operates in children before they have a capacity of distinguishing right from wrong ; and that the former principle of action continues for a long time to be much more powerful than the latter. Hence, it furnishes a most useful and effectual engine in the business of education; more particularly, by training us early to exertions of self-command and self-denial. It teaches us, for example, to restrain our appetites within those bounds which *decency* prescribes, and thus forms us to habits of moderation and temperance. And, although our conduct cannot be denominated virtuous, so long as a regard to the opinion of others is our only motive, yet the habits we thus acquire in infancy and childhood render it more easy for us, as we advance to maturity, to subject our passions to the authority of reason and conscience.

224. That our sense of duty is not resolvable into a desire of obtaining the good opinion of

our fellow-creatures, may be inferred from the following considerations.

(1.) The desire of esteem can only be effectually gratified by the actual possession of those qualities for which we wish to be esteemed.

(2.) The merit of a virtuous action is always enhanced in the opinion of mankind, when it is discovered in those situations of life, where the individual cannot be suspected of any view to the applauses of the world.

(3.) When a competition takes place between our sense of duty and a regard to public opinion; if we sacrifice the former to the latter, we are filled with remorse and self-condemnation; and the applauses of the multitude afford us but an empty and unsatisfactory recompence; whereas a steady adherence to the right never fails to be its own reward, even when it exposes us to calumny and misrepresentation.

II.—Of Sympathy.

225. That there is an exquisite pleasure annexed to the sympathy or fellow-feeling of other men, with our joys and sorrows, and even with our opinions, tastes and humours, is a fact obvious to vulgar observation. It is no less evident, that we feel a disposition to accommodate the state of our own minds to that of our companions, wherever we feel a benevolent affection

towards them; and that this accommodating temper is in proportion to the strength of our affection. In such cases, sympathy would appear to be grafted on benevolence; and perhaps it might be found, on an accurate analysis, that the greater part of the pleasures which it yields, is resolvable into those which arise from the exercise of kindness, and from the consciousness of being beloved.

226. The same word *sympathy* is applied in a loose and popular sense, to various phenomena in the Animal Economy; to the correspondence, for example, in the motions of the eyes; and to the connection which exists between different organs of the body, in respect of health, or of disease. It is also applied to those contagious bodily affections which one person is apt to catch from another; such as yawning, stammering, squinting, sore eyes, and the disorders commonly distinguished by the name of Hysterical.

227. In all these different instances, there is no doubt, a certain degree of analogy; such as completely accounts for their being comprehended, in ordinary discourse, under one general name; but, where philosophical precision is aimed at, there is ground for many distinctions. Hence the necessity of limiting, by an accurate definition, the sense in which this very vague

and equivocal word is to be understood, when it is introduced into any scientific discussion.

228. The facts generally referred to *sympathy*, have appeared to Mr Smith so important and so curiously connected, that he has been led to attempt an explanation, from this single principle, of all the phenomena of moral perception.

229. The large mixture of valuable truth contained in this most ingenious Theory, and the light which it throws on a part of our frame, formerly very little attended to by Philosophers, entitle the Author to the highest rank among Systematical Moralists; but, on a closer examination of the subject, it will be found, that he has been misled, like many other eminent writers, by an excessive love of simplicity; mistaking a subordinate principle in our moral constitution (or rather a principle *superadded* to our moral constitution, as an auxiliary to the sense of duty) for that Faculty, which distinguishes Right from Wrong; and which (by what name soever we may choose to distinguish it) recurs on us constantly, in all our ethical disquisitions, as an ultimate fact in the nature of man.

III.—Of the Sense of the Ridiculous.

230. The natural and proper object of Ridi-

cule, is those smaller improprieties in character and manners which do not rouse our feelings of moral indignation, nor impress us with a melancholy view of human depravity.

231. While this part of our constitution enlarges the fund of our enjoyment, by rendering the more trifling imperfections of our fellow-creatures a source of amusement to their neighbours, it excites the exertions of every individual to correct those imperfections by which the ridicule of others is likely to be provoked. As our eagerness, too, to correct these imperfections may be presumed to be weak in proportion as we apprehend them to be, in a moral view, of trifling moment, we are so formed, that the painful feelings produced by ridicule, are often more poignant than those arising from the consciousness of having rendered ourselves the objects of resentment or of hatred.

232. The sense of the Ridiculous, although it has a manifest reference to such a scene of imperfection as we are placed in at present, is one of the most striking characteristics of the human constitution, as distinguished from that of the lower animals; and has an intimate connection with its highest and noblest principles. In the education of youth, nothing requires more serious attention, than its proper regulation.

IV.—Of Taste, considered in its Relation to Morals.

233. From the explanation formerly given (202, 203, 204.) of the import of the phrases *Moral Beauty*, and *Moral Deformity*, it may be easily conceived, in what manner the character and the conduct of our fellow-creatures may become subservient to the gratification of Taste. The use which the Poet makes of this class of our intellectual pleasures, is entirely analogous to the resources which he borrows from the charms of external nature.

234. The power of moral taste, like that which has for its object the beauty of material forms, and the various productions of the fine arts, requires much exercise for its development and culture. The one species of taste also, as well as the other, is susceptible of a false refinement, injurious to our own happiness, and to our usefulness as members of society.

235. Considered as a principle of action, a cultivated moral taste, while it provides an effectual security against the grossness necessarily connected with many vices, cherishes a temper of mind friendly to all that is amiable, or generous, or elevated in our nature. When separated, however, as it sometimes is, from a strong sense of duty, it can scarcely fail to prove

a fallacious guide; the influence of fashion, and of other casual associations, tending perpetually to lead it astray. This is more particularly remarkable in men to whom the gratifications of *Taste in general* form the principal object of pursuit; and whose habits of life encourage them to look no higher for their rule of judgment, than the way of the world.

236. The language employed by some of the Greek Philosophers in their speculations concerning the nature of virtue, seems, on a superficial view, to imply, that they supposed the moral faculty to be wholly resolvable into a sense of the Beautiful. And hence, Lord Shaftesbury and others have been led to adopt a phraseology which has the appearance of substituting Taste, in contradistinction to Reason and Conscience, as the ultimate standard of Right and Wrong.

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237. From each of the four principles now enumerated, unfortunate consequences result, wherever it prevails in the character, as the leading motive to action. Where they all maintain their due place, in subordination to the moral faculty, they tend, at once, to fortify virtuous habits; and to recommend them, by the influence of amiable example, to the imitation of others.

238. A partial consideration of the phenomena of moral perception, connected with one or other of these principles, has suggested some of the most popular theories concerning the origin of our moral ideas. An attention to the moral faculty alone, without regard to the principles which were intended to operate as its auxiliaries, and which contribute, in fact, so powerfully to the good order of society, has led a few Philosophers into an opposite extreme;—less dangerous, undoubtedly, in its practical tendency, but less calculated, perhaps, to recommend ethical disquisitions to the notice of those who are engrossed with the active concerns of life.

SECTION VIII.

OF MAN'S FREE AGENCY.

239. All the foregoing inquiries concerning the moral constitution of man, proceed on the supposition, that he has a freedom of choice between good and evil; and that when he deliberately performs an action which he knows to be wrong, he renders himself justly obnoxious to punishment. That this supposition is agreeable to the common apprehensions of mankind, will not be disputed.

240. From very early ages, indeed, the truth of the supposition has been called in question by a few speculative men, who have contended, that the actions we perform are the necessary result of the constitutions of our minds, operated on by the circumstances of our external situation; and that what we commonly call moral delinquencies are as much a part of our destiny, as the corporeal or intellectual qualities we have received from nature. The argument in support of this doctrine has been proposed in various forms, and has been frequently urged with the confidence of demonstration.

241. Among those, however, who hold the language of Necessitarians, an important distinction must be made; as some of them not only admit the reality of moral distinctions, but insist, that it is on their hypothesis alone, that these distinctions are conceivable. With such men, the scheme of necessity may be a harmless opinion: and there is ground even for suspecting, that it might be found to differ from that of their antagonists, more in appearance than in reality, if due pains were taken to fix the meaning of the indefinite and ambiguous terms, which have been employed on both sides of the argument.

242. By other philosophers, the consequences which are generally supposed to be connected

with this system, have been admitted in all their extent; or rather, the system has been inculcated, with a view to establish these consequences. When proposed in this form, it furnishes the most interesting subject of discussion which can employ human ingenuity; and upon which our speculative opinions can hardly fail to affect very materially both our conduct and our happiness.

243. Dr Cudworth, who wrote towards the end of the seventeenth century, observes, that "the scepticism which flourished in his time, grew up from the doctrine of the fatal necessity of all actions and events, as from its proper root." The same remark will be found to apply to the sceptical philosophy of the present age.

244. It is sufficient, in these Outlines, to mark the place which the question seems naturally to occupy in the order of study. Detached hints would throw but little additional light on a controversy, which has been industriously darkened by all the powers of sophistry.

CHAPTER II.

OF THE VARIOUS BRANCHES OF OUR DUTY.

245. The different theories which have been proposed concerning the nature and essence of

Virtue, have arisen chiefly from attempts to trace all the branches of our duty to one principle of action; such as a rational Self-love, Benevolence, Justice, or a disposition to obey the will of God.

249. In order to avoid those partial views of the subject, which naturally take their rise from an undue love of system, the following inquiries proceed upon an arrangement, which has, in all ages, recommended itself to the good sense of mankind. This arrangement is founded on the different objects to which our duties relate. 1. The Deity. 2. Our Fellow-creatures. And, 3. Ourselves.

SECTION I.

OF THE DUTIES WHICH RESPECT THE DEITY.

247. As our duties to God (so far as they are discoverable by the light of nature), must be inferred from the relation in which we stand to Him as the Author and the Governor of the Universe, an examination of the principles of Natural Religion forms a necessary introduction to this section. Such an examination, besides, being the reasonable consequence of those impressions which his works produce on every attentive and well-disposed mind, may be

itself regarded, both as one of the duties we owe to Him, and as the expression of a moral temper sincerely devoted to truth, and alive to the sublimest emotions of gratitude and of benevolence.

PRELIMINARY INQUIRY INTO THE PRINCIPLES OF NATURAL RELIGION.

Article First.—Of the Existence of the Deity.

248. On this subject two modes of reasoning have been employed, which are commonly distinguished by the titles of the Arguments *a priori* and *a posteriori:* the former, founded on certain metaphysical propositions which are assumed as axioms; the latter appealing to that systematical order, and those combinations of means to ends which are every where conspicuous in Nature.

249. The argument *a priori* has been enforced with singular ingenuity by Dr Clarke, whose particular manner of stating it seems to have been suggested to him by the following passage in Newton's Principia:—"Æternus est et infinitus, omnipotens et omnisciens; id est, durat ab æterno in æternum, et adest ab infinito in infinitum. Non est æternitas et infinitas, sed æternus et infinitas; non est duratio

et spatium, sed durat et adest. Durat semper, et adest ubique; et existendo semper et ubique, durationem et spatium constituit."* Proceeding on the same principles, Dr Clarke argues, that "space and time are only abstract conceptions of an immensity and eternity, which force themselves into our belief; and, as immensity and eternity are not substances, they must be the attributes of a Being who is necessarily immense and eternal."——"These (says Dr Reid) are the speculations of men of superior genius; but whether they be as solid as they are sublime, or whether they be the wanderings of imagination in a region beyond the limits of human understanding, I am unable to determine."

250. Without calling in question the solidity of Clarke's demonstration, we may be allowed to say, that the argument *a posteriori* is more level to the comprehension of ordinary men, and more satisfactory to the philosopher himself. Indeed, in inquiries of this sort, the presumption is strongly in favour of that mode of reasoning which is the most simple and obvious,—"Quicquid nos vel meliores vel beatiores facturum est, aut in aperto, aut in proximo, posuit natura."

251. The existence of a Deity, however, does

* Newton, Princ. Scholium generale.

not seem to be an intuitive truth. It requires the exercise of our reasoning powers to present it, in its full force, to the mind. But the process of reasoning consists only of a single step; and the premises belong to that class of first principles, which form an essential part of the human constitution, (§ 71. 3.) These premises are two in number. The one is, That every thing which begins to exist must have a cause. The other, That a combination of means conspiring to a particular end, implies intelligence.

I. *Of the Foundations of our Reasoning from the Effect to the Cause, and of the Evidences of Active Power exhibited in the Universe.*

252. It was before observed (Introd. § 3.) that our knowledge of the course of nature is entirely the result of observation and experiment; and that there is no instance in which we perceive such a connection between two successive events, as might enable us to infer the one from the other as a necessary consequence.

253. From this principle, which is now very generally admitted by philosophers, Mr Hume has adduced an objection to the argument *a posteriori* for the existence of the Deity. After having proved that we cannot get the idea of necessary connection, from examining the conjunction between any two events; he takes for

granted, that we have no other idea of Cause and Effect, than of two successive events which are invariably conjoined; that we have therefore no reason to think, that any one event in nature is necessarily connected with another, or to infer the operation of power from the changes which we observe in the universe.

254. To perceive the connection between Mr Hume's premises and his conclusion, it is necessary to recollect, that, according to his system, "all our ideas are nothing but copies of our impressions; or, in other words, that it is impossible for us to *think* of any thing, which we have not antecedently *felt*, either by our external or internal senses." Having proved, therefore, that external objects, as they appear to our senses, give us no idea of power or of necessary connection, and also that this idea cannot be copied from any internal impression (that is, cannot be derived from reflection on the operations of our own minds), he thinks himself warranted to conclude, that we have no such idea. "One event (says he) follows another, but we never observe any tie between them. They seem *conjoined*, but never *connected*. And as we can have no idea of any thing, which never appeared to our outward sense or inward sentiment, the necessary conclusion seems to be, That we have no idea of con-

nection or power at all; and that these words are absolutely without any meaning, when employed either in philosophical reasonings or common life."

255. Are we, therefore, to reject as perfectly unintelligible, a word which is to be found in all languages, merely because it expresses an idea, for the origin of which we cannot account upon a particular philosophical system? Would it not be more reasonable to suspect, that the system was not perfectly complete, than that all mankind should have agreed in employing a word which conveyed no meaning?

256. With respect to Mr Hume's theory concerning the origin of our ideas, it is the less necessary to enter into particular discussions, that it coincides, in the main, with the doctrine of Locke, to which some objections, which appear to be insurmountable, were formerly stated (§ 199.) Upon neither theory is it possible to explain the origin of those simple notions, which are not received immediately by any external sense, nor derived immediately from our own consciousness; but which are necessarily formed by the mind, while we are exercising our intellectual powers upon their proper objects.

257. These very slight hints are sufficient to shew, that we are not entitled to dispute the reality of our idea of power, because we cannot

trace it to any of our senses. The only question is, If it be certain, that we annex any idea to the word power, different from that of mere succession? The following considerations, among many others, prove, that the import of these two expressions is by no means the same.

(1.) If we have no idea of cause and effect, different from that of mere succession, it would appear to us no less absurd to suppose two events disjoined, which we have constantly seen connected, than to suppose a change to take place without a cause. The former supposition, however, is easy in all cases whatever. The latter may be safely pronounced to be impossible.

(2.) Our experience of the established connections of physical events, is by far too narrow a foundation for our belief that every change must have a cause. Mr Hume himself has observed, that "the vulgar always include the idea of *Contiguity in place* in the idea of causation;" or, in other words, that they conceive matter to produce its effects by impulse alone. If, therefore, every change which had fallen under our notice, had been preceded by apparent impulse, experience might have taught us to conclude, from observing a change, that a previous impulse had been given; or, according to Mr Hume's notion of *a cause*, that a cause had operated to produce this effect. Of the

changes, however, which we see, how small a number is produced by apparent impulse? And yet, in the case of every change, without exception, we have an irresistible conviction of the operation of some cause. How shall we explain, on Mr Hume's principles, the foundation of this conviction, in cases in which impulse has apparently no share.

258. The question, however, still recurs; In what manner do we acquire the idea of Causation, Power, or Efficiency? But this question, if the foregoing observations be admitted, is comparatively of little consequence; as the doubts which may arise on the subject tend only (without affecting the reality of the idea or notion) to expose the defects of particular philosophical systems.

259. The most probable account of the matter seems to be, that the idea of causation, or of power, necessarily accompanies the perception of change, in a way somewhat analogous to that in which sensation implies a being who feels, and thought, a being who thinks. A power of beginning motion for example, is an attribute of mind, no less than sensation or thought; and wherever motion commences, we have evidence that mind has operated.

260. Are we therefore to conclude, that the divine power is constantly exerted to produce

the phenomena of the material world, and t suppose, that one and the same cause produce that infinite multiplicity of effects which ar every moment taking place in the universe?

261. In order to avoid this conclusion, whic has been thought, by many, too absurd to de serve a serious examination, various hypothese have been proposed. The most important o these may be referred to the following heads.

(1.) That the phenomena of nature are th result of certain active powers essentially inhe rent in matter. This doctrine is commonly called *Materialism*.

(2.) That they result from certain activ powers communicated to matter at its first for mation.

(3.) That they take place in consequence o general laws established by the Deity.

(4.) That they are produced by "a vital and spiritual, but unintelligent and necessary agent created by the Deity for the execution of his purposes."*

(5.) That they are produced by *minds* con nected with the particles of matter.

(6.) That the universe is a machine formed and put in motion by the Deity; and that the multiplicity of effects which take place, may perhaps have all proceeded from one single act of his power.

* Cudworth.

262. These different hypotheses (some of which will be found, on examination, to resolve into unmeaning or unintelligible propositions, and all of which are liable to insurmountable objections), have been adopted by ingenious men, in preference to the simple and sublime doctrine, which supposes the order of the universe to be not only at first established, but every moment maintained, by the incessant agency of One Supreme Mind ;—a doctrine against which no objection can be stated, but what is founded on prejudices resulting from our own imperfections.—This doctrine does not exclude the possibility of the Deity's acting occasionally by subordinate agents or instruments.

263. The observations, indeed, hitherto made are not sufficient of themselves to authorise us to form any conclusion with respect to the unity of God ; but when properly illustrated, they will be found to warrant fully the following inference ;—That the phenomena of the universe indicate the constant agency of power, which cannot belong to matter ; or in other words, that they indicate the constant agency of Mind. Whether these phenomena, when compared together, bear marks of a diversity or of an unity of design ; and, of consequence, whether they suggest the Government of one Almighty Ruler, or of a plurality of indepen-

dent divinities, are inquiries which belong to the next head of our argument.

II. *Of the Evidences of Design exhibited in the Universe.*

264. The proof of the existence of God, drawn from the Order of the universe, is commonly called the argument from Final Causes. The expression (which was first introduced by Aristotle) is far from being proper; but is retained in this treatise, in compliance with established use.

265. It is justly remarked by Dr Reid, that the argument from Final Causes, when reduced to a syllogism, contains two propositions. The major is, That Design may be traced from its effects: The minor, That there are appearances of Design in the universe. The ancient sceptics, he says, granted the first, but denied the second. The moderns (in consequence of the discoveries in natural philosophy) have been obliged to abandon the ground which their predecessors maintained, and have disputed the major proposition.

266. Among those who have denied the possibility of tracing design from its effects, Mr Hume is the most eminent. According to him, all such inferences are inconclusive, being neither demonstrable by reasoning, nor deducible from experience.

267. In examining Mr Hume's argument on this subject, Dr Reid admits, that the inferences we make of design from its effects, are not the result of reasoning, or of experience; but still he contends, that such inferences may be made with a degree of certainty, equal to what the human mind is able to attain in any instance whatever. The opinions we form of the talents of other men, nay, our belief that other men are intelligent beings, are founded on this very inference of design from its effects. Intelligence and design are not objects of our senses, and yet we judge of them every moment from external conduct and behaviour, with as little hesitation as we pronounce on the existence of what we immediately perceive.

268. Other philosophers have opposed the major proposition of the syllogism, by an argument somewhat different.—In order to judge of the wisdom of any design, it is necessary (they observe), to know, first, what end the artist proposes to himself, and then, to examine the means which he has employed to accomplish it. But in the universe all we see is, that certain things *are* accomplished, without having an opportunity of comparing them with a plan previously proposed.—A stone thrown at random must necessarily hit one object or another. When we see, therefore, such an effect pro-

duced, we are not entitled, independently of other information, to praise the dexterity of the marksman.

269. Among a great variety of considerations, which might be urged in reply to this objection, the following seem to deserve particular attention.

(1.) Although from a single effect, we may not be entitled to infer intelligence in the cause, yet the case is different, when we see a number of causes conspiring to *one* end. We here see not only that an effect takes place, but have an intuitive conviction, that this was the very effect intended. From seeing a single stone strike an object, we may not be authorised to conclude that this was the object aimed at. But what conclusion should we draw, if we saw the same object invariably hit by a number of stones thrown in succession?

(2.) A multiplicity of cases might be mentioned, in which we have really an opportunity of comparing the wisdom of nature with the ends to which it is directed. Of this, many remarkable examples occur in the economy of the human body. When any accident or disease injures our frame, it is well known that the body possesses within itself a power of alleviating or remedying the evil. In such instances, we not only see an effect produced; but we see

the operation of natural causes directed to the particular purpose of restoring the healthful state of the system.

(3.) There are many cases, particularly in the animal economy, in which the same effect is produced in different instances, by very different means; and in which, of consequence, we have an opportunity of comparing the wisdom of nature with the ends she has in view. "Art and means (says Baxter) are designedly multiplied, that we might not take it for the effect of chance; and in some cases, the method itself is different, that we might see it is not the effect of sure necessity."—The science of comparative anatomy, furnishes beautiful confirmations of the foregoing doctrine. From observing the effect produced by a particular organ in the case of any one animal, we might not perhaps be warranted to conclude, that it was in order to produce this effect, that the organ was contrived. But when, in the case of different species of animals, we see the same effect brought about by means extremely different, it is impossible for us to doubt, that it was this common end which, in all these instances, Nature had in view. Nor is this all. In comparing the anatomy of different tribes of animals, we find that the differences observable in their structure have a reference to their way of life, and

the habits for which they are destined; so that, from knowing the latter, we might be able, in particular cases, to frame conjectures *a priori* concerning the former.

270. From the foregoing hints, it sufficiently appears, that design may be inferred from its effects; and, also, that design may be traced in various parts of the universe, from an actual examination of the means employed to accomplish particular ends.—Another inquiry, however, and a still more important, remains,—to consider the characters of this design, as it is displayed in the universe; or, in other words, to consider, how far the design seems to indicate Wisdom; and whether it seems to operate in conformity to One uniform plan. The first investigation is useful, by its tendency to elevate our conceptions of the Supreme Being; and the second is necessary for the demonstration of his Unity.

271. The study of philosophy, in all its various branches, both natural and moral, affords, at every step, a new illustration of the subject to which these investigations relate; insomuch that the truths of natural religion gain an accession of evidence, from every addition that is made to the stock of human knowledge. Hence, in the case of those individuals who devote themselves, with fair and candid minds, to the

pursuits of science, there is a gradual progress of light and conviction, keeping pace with the enlargement of their information and of their views; and hence, a strong presumption that the influence which these truths have, even in the present state of society, on the minds of the multitude, will continually increase, in proportion as the order of the material universe shall be more fully displayed by the discoveries of philosophy, and as the plan of Providence in the administration of human affairs, shall be more completely unfolded in the future history of our species.

272. In considering the universe, with a view to the illustration of the wisdom and unity of God, it is, in a peculiar degree satisfactory, to trace the relations which different parts of it bear to each other, and to remark the concurrence of things apparently unconnected and even remote, in promoting the same benevolent purposes. The following hints may be of use in suggesting reflections on this subject.

(1.) The adaptation of the bodies and of the instincts of animals to the laws of the material world:—Of the organs of respiration, for example, and of the instinct of suction, to the properties of the atmosphere;—of the *momentum* of light to the sensibility of the retina;—of the fabric of the eye to the laws of refrac-

tion ;—of the size and strength of animals and vegetables to the laws of gravitation and of cohesion.

(2.) The adaptation of the bodies and of the instincts of animals to those particular climates and districts of the earth for which they are destined.

(3.) The relations subsisting between particular animals and particular vegetables ; the latter furnishing to the former salutary food in their healthful state, and useful remedies in the case of disease.

(4.) The connection which appears, from the pneumatical discoveries of modern chemistry, to exist between the processes of nature in the animal and in the vegetable kingdoms.

(5.) The relations which different tribes of animals bear to each other, one tribe being the natural prey of another, and each of them having their instruments of offence or defence provided accordingly.

(6.) The relations which the periodical instincts of migrating animals bear to the state of the season, and to the vegetable productions of distant parts of the globe.

273. This view of the subject is peculiarly striking when we consider the relations which subsist between the nature of man and the circumstances of his external situation. An exa-

mination of his perceptive faculties in particular, and of his intellectual powers as they are adapted to the structure and to the laws of the material world, opens a wide field of curiou speculation.

274. The accommodation of the objects around him to his appetites, to his physical wants, and to his capacities of enjoyment, is no less wonderful; and exceeds so far what we observe in the case of other animals, as to authorise us to conclude, that it was chiefly with a view to his happiness and improvement, that the arrangements of this lower world was made.

275. There is another view of nature which tends remarkably to illustrate that unity of design which is the foundation of our belief of the unity of God;—to trace the analogies which are observable between the different departments of the universe which fall under our notice,—Of such analogies many instances may be derived from a comparative examination; 1. Of the structures of different tribes of animals; 2. Of the animal and of the vegetable kingdoms; And, 3. Of the various laws which regulate the phenomena of the material world.

276. It is pleasing to consider, that this uniform and regular plan has been found to extend to the remotest limits to which the inquiries of philosophers have reached. The an-

cients, in general, supposed, that the phenomena of the heavens were regulated by laws perfectly unlike those which obtain within the circle of our experience. The modern discoveries have shewn how widely they were mistaken; and indeed, it was a conjecture *a priori* that their ideas on this subject might perhaps be erroneous, which led the way to the theory of gravitation. Every subsequent discovery has confirmed the conjecture.

277. Nor is it only the more general laws of terrestrial bodies, which extend to the remote parts of the universe. There is some ground for suspecting that the particular arrangements of things on the surfaces of the different planets, are not wholly unlike those which we observe on our own.

278. Amusing and interesting as these physicals peculations may be, it is still more delightful to trace the uniformity of design which is displayed in the *moral* world;—to compare the instincts of men with those of the brutes, and the instincts of the different tribes of brutes with each other; and to remark, amidst the astonishing variety of means which are employed to accomplish the same ends, a certain analogy characterize them all;—or to observe, in the minds of different individuals of our own species, the workings of the same affections and passions,

and to trace the uniformity of their operation in men of different ages and countries.—It is this which gives the great charm to what we call *nature* in epic and dramatic composition, when the poet speaks a language to which every heart is an echo, and which, amidst all the effects of education and fashion in modifying and disguising the principles of our constitution, reminds all the various classes of readers or of spectators, of the existence of those moral ties which unite us to each other and to our common Parent.

279. Before leaving this subject, it is proper to remark, that the metaphysical reasonings which have been occasionally employed in illustration of it, ought not to be considered as forming any part of the argument for the existence of God, which (as was already observed) is an immediate and necessary consequence of the two principles formerly mentioned (§ 251). The scope of these reasonings is not to confirm the truth of the proposition, but to obviate the sceptical cavils which have been urged against it.

280. Reasoning and reflection are indeed necessary to raise the mind to worthy conceptions of the Divine attributes, and to cure it of those prejudices which arise from limited and erroneous views of nature. While men confine their attention to detached and insulated

appearances, Polytheism offers itself as the most natural creed, and it is only by slow and gradual steps that philosophy discovers to us those magnificent views of the universe which connect together all events, both physical and moral, as parts of *one* system, and conspiring to *one* end.

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281. Besides the sceptical objections already mentioned, to the speculation concerning Final Causes, some others have been proposed with very different views. Des Cartes, in particular, taking for granted the existence of God as sufficiently established by other proofs, has rejected altogether this speculation from philosophy, as an impious and absurd attempt to penetrate into the designs of Providence. Some observations, much to the same purpose, occur in the works of Maupertuis and of Buffon.—To this class of objections against Final Causes, a satisfactory answer is given by Mr Boyle, in an essay written expressly on the subject.

282. The authority of Lord Bacon has been frequently quoted in support of the opinion of these French philosophers. But if his writings be carefully examined, it will be found, that the censures he bestows on Aristotle and his followers for their conjectures concerning the ends and intentions of Nature, are applicable only

to the abuse of this doctrine in the Peripatetic school. It is a doctrine, according to him, which belongs properly to metaphysics or to natural theology, and not to natural philosophy; and which contributed much to mislead the Peripatetics in their physical inquiries. In a work, of which it was the principle aim to explain the true plan of philosophical investigation, it was necessary to point out the absurdity of blending physical and final causes together, and of substituting conjectures concerning the intentions of nature for an account of her operations. Perhaps it was prudent even to recommend the total exclusion of such conjectures from physics, in an age when the just rules of inquiry were so imperfectly understood.—That Bacon did not mean to censure the speculation about Final Causes, when confined to its proper place, and applied to its proper purpose, appears clearly from a variety of particular passages, as well as from the general strain and tendency of his writings.

283. In the present age, when the true method of philosophizing in physics is pretty generally understood, it does not seem to be so necessary as formerly to banish Final Causes from that branch of science; provided always they be kept distinct from Physical Causes, with which there is now but little danger of their

being unwarily confounded. If this caution be attended to, the consideration of Final Causes, so far from leading us astray, may frequently be of use in guiding our researches. It is, in fact, a mode of reasoning familiar to every philosopher, whatever his speculative opinions on the subject of natural religion may be. Thus, in the study of anatomy, every man proceeds on the maxim, that nothing in the body of an animal was made in vain; and when he meets with a part of which the use is not obvious, he feels himself dissatisfied, till he discovers some, at least, of the purposes to which it is subservient. "I remember (says Mr Boyle) that, when I asked our famous Harvey what were the things that induced him to think of a circulation of the blood? he answered me, that when he took notice that the valves in the veins of so many parts of the body were so placed, that they gave a free passage to the blood towards the heart, but opposed the passage of the venal blood the contrary way; he was invited to imagine, that so provident a cause as Nature had not placed so many valves without design; and no design seemed more probable, than that, since the blood could not well, because of the interposing valves, be sent by the veins to the limbs, it should be sent through the arteries, and return through the

veins, whose valves did not oppose its course that way."

284. An explanation of the use and abuse of the speculation concerning Final causes, in the study of natural philosophy, is still a *desideratum* in science, and would form an important addition to that branch of logic, which professes to state the rules of philosophical investigation.

Article Second.—Of the Moral Attributes of the Deity.

285. The observations made in the last Article contain some of the principal heads of the argument for the existence of God; and also for his unity, for his power, and for his wisdom. Of the two last of these attributes, we justly say that they are *infinite;* that is, that our imagination can set no bounds to them, and that our conceptions of them always rise, in proportion as our faculties are cultivated, and as our knowledge of the universe becomes more extensive. The writers on Natural religion commonly give a particular enumeration of attributes, which they divide into the natural, the intellectual, and the moral; and of which they treat at length in a systematical manner. This view of the subject, whatever may be its advantages, could not be adopted with pro-

priety here. The remarks which follow are confined to the evidences of the Divine goodness and justice;—those attributes which constitute the moral perfection of the Deity, and which render him a proper object of religious worship.

I. *Of the Evidences of Benevolent Design in the Universe.*

286. Our ideas of the moral attributes of God must be derived from our own moral perceptions. It is only by attending to these, that we can form a conception of what his attributes are; and it is in this way we are furnished with the strongest proofs that they really belong to him.

287. The peculiar sentiment of approbation with which we regard the virtue of beneficence in others, and the peculiar satisfaction with which we reflect on such of our own actions as have contributed to the happiness of mankind; to which we may add the exquisite pleasure accompanying the exercise of all the kind affections, naturally lead us to consider benevolence or goodness as the supreme attribute of the Deity. It is difficult, indeed, to conceive what other motive could have induced a Being, completely and independently happy, to have called his creatures into existence.

288. In this manner, without any examina-

tion of the fact, we have a strong presumption for the goodness of the Deity; and it is only after establishing this presumption *a priori*, that we can proceed to examine the fact with safety. It is true, indeed, that independently of this presumption, the disorders we see would not demonstrate ill intention in the Author of the universe; as it would be still possible that these might contribute to the happiness and the perfection of the whole system. But the contrary supposition would be equally possible; that there is nothing absolutely good in the universe, and that the communication of suffering is the ultimate end of the laws by which it is governed.

289. The argument for the goodness of God, derived from our own moral constitution, and strengthened by the consideration of our ignorance of the plans of Providence, affords an answer to all the objections which have been urged against this attribute of the Deity.—And the answer is conclusive, whatever the state of the fact may be with respect to the magnitude of the evils of which we complain.

290. But although this answer might silence our objections, something more is requisite, on a subject so momentous, to support our confidence, and to animate our hopes. If no account could be given of the evils of life, but that they

may possibly be good relatively to the whole universe;—still more, if it should appear, that the sufferings of life overbalance its enjoyments; it could hardly be expected, that any speculative reasoning would have much effect in banishing the melancholy suggestions of scepticism.—We are therefore naturally led, in the first place, to inquire, whether some explanation may not be given of the origin of evil, from a consideration of the facts which fall under our notice? and, secondly, to compare together the happiness and the misery which the world exhibits.

291. The question concerning the origin of evil, has, from the earliest times, employed the ingenuity of speculative men: and various theories have been proposed to solve the difficulty. The most celebrated of these are the following.

(1.) The doctrine of Pre-existence.

(2.) The doctrine of the Manicheans.

(3.) The doctrine of Optimism.

292. According to the first hypothesis, the evils we suffer at present are punishments and expiations of moral delinquencies, committed in a former stage of our being. This hypothesis, it is obvious, (to mention no other objection,) only removes the difficulty a little out of sight, without affording any explanation of it.

293. The Manicheans account for the mixture of good and evil in the universe, by the

opposite agencies of two co-eternal and independent principles. Their doctrine has been examined and refuted by many authors, by reasonings *a priori;* but the most satisfactory of all refutations, is its obvious inconsistency with that unity of design which is every where conspicuous in nature.

294. The fundamental principle of the Optimists is, that all events are ordered for the best; and that the evils which we suffer, are parts of a great system conducted by almighty power, under the direction of infinite wisdom and goodness.

295. Under this genéral title, however, are comprehended two very different descriptions of Philosophers; those who admit, and those who deny, the freedom of human actions. The former only contend, that every thing is right, so far as it is the work of God; and endeavour to shew, that the creation of beings endowed with free-will, and consequently liable to moral delinquency,—and the government of the world by general laws, from which occasional evils must result,—furnish no solid objection to the perfection of the universe. But they hold, at the same time, that, although the permission of moral evil does not detract from the goodness of God, it is nevertheless imputable to man as a fault, and renders him justly obnoxious to

punishment. This was the system of Plato, and of the best of the ancient philosophers, who, in most instances, state their doctrine in a manner perfectly consistent with man's free will and moral agency.

296. By some modern authors, the scheme of Optimism has been proposed in a form inconsistent with these suppositions, and which leads to a justification of moral evil, even with respect to the delinquent.

297. It is of great importance to attend to the distinction between these two systems, because it is customary among sceptical writers to confound them studiously together, in order to extend to both that ridicule to which the latter is justly entitled. The scope of the argument, as stated in the former system, may be collected from the following hints.

298. All the different subjects of human complaint may be reduced to two classes: Moral and Physical evils. The former comprehends those which arise from the abuse of Free-will; the latter those which result from the established laws of nature, and which man cannot prevent by his own efforts.

299. According to the definition now given of moral evil, the question, with respect to its permission, is reduced to this; Why was man made a free agent? A question to which it

seems to be a sufficient reply: That perhaps the object of the Deity, in the government of the world, is not merely to communicate happiness, but to form his creatures to moral excellence; or that the enjoyment of high degrees of happiness may perhaps necessarily require the previous acquisition of virtuous habits.

300. The sufferings produced by vice are, on this supposition, instances of the goodness of God, no less than the happiness resulting from virtue.

301. These observations justify Providence, not only for the permission of moral evil, but for the permission of many things which we commonly complain of as physical evils. How great is the proportion of these, which are the obvious consequences of our vices and our prejudices; and which, so far from being a necessary part of the order of nature, seem intended to operate in the progress of human affairs, as a gradual remedy against the causes which produce them!

302. Some of our other complaints with respect to the lot of humanity will be found, on examination, to arise from partial views of the constitution of man, and from a want of attention to the circumstances which constitute his happiness, or promote his improvement.

303. Still, however, many evils remain, to

which the foregoing principles do not apply. Such are those produced by what we commonly call the accidents of life:—accidents from which no state of society, how perfect soever, can possibly be exempted; and which, if they be subservient to any benevolent purposes, contribute to none within the sphere of our knowledge.

304. Of this class of physical evils, the explanation must be derived from the general laws by which the government of the Deity appears to be conducted. The tendency of these laws will be found, in every instance, favourable to order and to happiness; and it is one of the noblest employments of philosophy to investigate the beneficent purposes to which they are subservient. In a world, however, which is thus governed, and where the inhabitants are free agents, occasional inconveniences and misfortunes must unavoidably be incurred.

305. In the mean time, from this influence of "Time and Chance," on human affairs, salutary effects arise. Virtue is rendered disinterested, and the characters of men are more completely displayed.

306. Many of our moral qualities, too, are the result of habits which imply the existence of physical evils. Patience, Fortitude, Humanity, all suppose a scene, in which sufferings are

to be endured, in our own case; or relieved, in the case of others.

307. Thus it appears, not only that partial evils *may be good* with respect to the whole system; but that their tendency *is* beneficial on the whole, even to that small part of it which we see.

308. The argument for the goodness of God, which arises from the foregoing considerations, will be much strengthened, if it shall appear farther, that the sum of happiness in human life far exceeds the sum of misery.

309. In opposition to this conclusion, the prevalence of moral evil over moral good, in the characters of men, has been insisted on by many writers; and in proof of it, an appeal has been made to the catalogue of crimes which sully the history of past ages.

310. Whatever opinion we may adopt, with respect to the state of the fact, in this particular instance, no objection can be drawn from it to the foregoing reasonings; for moral evil is alone imputable to the being by whom it is committed. There is, however, no necessity for having recourse to this evasion. Corrupted as mankind are, the proportion of human life which is spent in vice, is inconsiderable when compared with the whole of its extent. History itself is a proof of this; for the events it re-

cords are chiefly those which are calculated, by their singularity, to engage the curiosity, and to interest the passions of the reader. In computing, besides, the moral demerit of mankind, from their external actions, a large allowance ought to be made for erroneous speculative opinions; for false conceptions of facts; for prejudices inspired by the influence of prevailing manners; and for habits contracted insensibly in early infancy.

311. With respect to the balance of physical evil and physical good, the argument is still clearer; if it be acknowledged (§ 304), that the general laws of nature are beneficent in their tendency, and that the inconveniences which arise from them are only occasional.

312. Of these occasional evils, too, no inconsiderable part may be traced to the obstacles, which human institutions oppose to the order of things recommended by nature. How chimerical soever the speculations of philosophers concerning the perfection of legislation may be, they are useful, at least, in illustrating the wisdom and goodness of the Divine government.

313. Nor is it only in those laws which regulate the more essential interests of mankind, that a beneficent intention may be traced. What a rich provision is made for our enjoy-

ment in the pleasures of the understanding, of the imagination, and of the heart; and how little do they depend on the caprice of fortune! The positive accommodation of our sensitive powers to the scene we occupy, is still more wonderful: Of the organ of smell, for example to the perfumes of the vegetable world: of the taste, to the endless profusion of luxuries which the earth, the air, and the waters afford; of the ear, to the melodies of the birds; of the eye, to all the beauties and glories of the visible creation.

314. Among these marks of beneficence in the frame of man, the constitution of his mind, with respect to Habits, must not be omitted. So great is their influence, that there is hardly any situation to which his wishes may not be gradually reconciled; nay, where he will not find himself, in time, more comfortable, than in those which are looked up to with envy by the bulk of mankind. By this power of accommodation to external circumstances, a remedy is, in part, provided for the occasional evils resulting from the operation of general laws.

315. In judging of the feelings of those who are placed in situations very different from our own, due allowances are seldom made for the effects of habit; and, of consequence, our estimates of the happiness of life fall short greatly of the truth.

II. *Of the Evidences of the Moral Government of the Deity.*

316. It was before remarked (§ 286), that, as our first ideas of the moral attributes of God are derived from our own moral perceptions, so it is from the consideration of these, that the strongest proofs of his attributes arise.

317. The distinction between Right and Wrong, as was formerly observed (§ 200), is apprehended by the mind to be eternal and immutable, no less than the distinction between mathematical Truth and Falsehood. To argue, therefore, from our own moral judgments, to the administration of the Deity, cannot be justly censured as a rash extension, to the Divine nature, of suggestions resulting from the arbitrary constitution of our own minds.

318. The power we have of conceiving this distinction, is one of the most remarkable of those which raise us above the brutes; and the sense of obligation which it involves, possesses a distinguished pre-eminence over all our other principles of action (§ 219). To act in conformity to our sense of rectitude, is plainly the highest excellence which our nature is capable of attaining; nor can we avoid extending the same rule of estimation to all intelligent beings whatever.

319. Besides these conclusions, with respect to the divine attributes (which seem to be implied in our very perception of moral distinctions), there are others perfectly agreeable to them, which continually force themselves on the mind, in the exercise of our moral judgments, both with respect to our own conduct and that of other men. The reverence, which we feel to be due to the admonitions of Conscience; the sense of merit and demerit, which accompanies our good and bad actions; the warm interest we take in the fortunes of the virtuous; the indignation we feel at the occasional triumphs of successful villany;—all imply a secret conviction of the moral administration of the universe.

320. An examination of the ordinary course of human affairs adds to the force of these considerations; and furnishes a proof from the fact, that, notwithstanding the seemingly promiscuous distribution of happiness and misery in this life, the reward of virtue, and the punishment of vice, are the great objects of all the general laws by which the world is governed. The disorders, in the mean time, which, in such a world as ours, cannot fail to arise in particular instances; when they are compared with our natural sense of good and of ill desert, afford a presumption, that in a future state, the moral

government, which we see begun here, will be carried into complete execution.

Article Third.—Of a Future State.

321. The consideration of the Divine attributes naturally leads our thoughts to the sequel of that plan of moral administration, which may be traced distinctly amidst all the apparent disorders of our present condition; and which, our own moral constitution, joined to our conclusions concerning the perfections of God, afford us the strongest intimations, will be more completely unfolded in some subsequent stage of our being. The doctrine, indeed, of a future state, seems to be, in a great measure, implied in every system of religious belief; for why were we rendered capable of elevating our thoughts to the Deity, if all our hopes are to terminate here; or why were we furnished with powers which range through the infinity of space and of time, if our lot is to be the same with that of the beasts which perish?—But although the doctrine of a future state be implied in every scheme of religion, the truths of religion are not necessarily implied in the doctrine of a future state. Even absolute Atheism does not destroy all the arguments for the immortality of the soul. Whether it be owing to an over-

ruling intelligence or not, it is a *fact* which no man can deny, that there are general laws which regulate the course of human affairs, and that, even in this world, we see manifest indications of a connection between virtue and happiness. —Why may not *necessity* continue that existence it at first gave birth to; and why may not the connection between virtue and happiness subsist for ever?

I. *Of the Argument for a Future State derived from the Nature of Mind.*

322. In collecting the various evidences which the light of nature affords for a future state, too much stress has commonly been laid upon the soul's Immateriality. The proper use of that doctrine is not to demonstrate that the soul is physically and necessarily immortal; but to refute the objections which have been urged against the possibility of its existing in a separate state from the body. Although our knowledge of the nature of Mind may not be sufficient to afford us any positive argument on this subject; yet, even if it can be shewn, that the dissolution of the body does not necessarily infer the extinction of the soul: and still more, if it can be shewn, that the presumption is in favour of the contrary supposition, the moral proofs of a future retribution will meet with a more easy re-

ception, when the doctrine is freed from the metaphysical difficulties which it has been apprehended to involve.

323. It was before remarked (§ 28.), that our notions both of body and mind are merely relative; that we know the one only by its sensible qualities, and the other by the operations of which we are conscious.—To say, therefore, of Mind, that it is not material, is to affirm a proposition, the truth of which is involved in the only conceptions of Matter and of Mind that we are capable of forming.

324. The doubts that have been suggested, with respect to the essential distinction between Matter and Mind, derive all their plausibility from the habits of inattention we acquire in early infancy to our mental operations. It was plainly the intention of Nature, that our thoughts should be habitually directed to things external; and, accordingly, the bulk of mankind are not only indisposed to study the intellectual phenomena, but are incapable of that degree of reflection which is necessary for their examination. Hence it is, that when we begin to analyze our own internal constitution, we find the facts it presents to us so very intimately associated in our conceptions with the qualities of Matter, that it is impossible for us to draw distinctly and steadily the line between them;

and that when Mind and Matter are concerned in the same event, the former is either entirely overlooked, or is regarded only as an accessory principle, dependent for its existence on the latter.—The tendency which all men have to refer the sensation of colour to the objects by which it is excited, may serve to illustrate the manner in which the qualities of mind and body come to be blended in our apprehensions.

325. If these remarks be well founded, the prejudices which give support to the scheme of Materialism, are not likely to be cured by any metaphysical reasonings, how clear and conclusive soever, so long as the judgment continues to be warped by such obstinate associations as have just been mentioned. A habit of reflecting on the laws of thought, as they are to be collected from our own consciousness, together with a habit of resisting those illusions of the fancy, which lead superficial inquirers to substitute analogies for facts, will gradually enable us to make the phenomena of Matter and those of Mind distinct objects of attention; and, as soon as this happens, the absurdity of Materialism must appear intuitively obvious.

326. It is entirely owing to our early familiarity with material objects, and our early habits of inattention to what passes within us, that Materialism is apt to appear at first sight to be

less absurd than the opposite system, which represents *Mind* as the only existence in the universe. Of the two doctrines, that of Berkeley is at once the safest and the most philosophical; not only as it contradicts merely the suggestions of our perceptions, while the other contradicts the suggestions of our consciousness; but as various plausible arguments may be urged in its favour, from the phenomena of dreaming; whereas no instance can be mentioned, in which sensation and intelligence appear to result from any combination of the particles of Matter.

327. Besides the evidences for the existence of Mind, which our own consciousness affords, and those which are exhibited by other men, and by the lower animals, there are many presented to us by every part of the material world. We are so constituted, that every change in it we see suggests to us the notion of an efficient cause:—and every combination of means conspiring to an end suggests to us the notion of intelligence. And accordingly, the various changes which take place in nature, and the order and beauty of the universe, have in every age been regarded as the effects of power, and wisdom; that is, of the operation of Mind. In the material world, therefore, as well as in the case of animated nature, we are led to conceive Body as a passive subject, and Mind as

the moving and governing agent. And it deserves attention, that, in the former class of phenomena, Mind appears to move and arrange the parts of matter, without being united with it, as in the case of animal life.

328. There are various circumstances which render it highly probable that the union between soul and body which takes place in our present state, so far from being essential to the exercise of our powers and faculties, was intended to limit the sphere of our information, and to prevent us from acquiring, in this early stage of our being, too clear a view of the constitution and government of the universe. Indeed, when we reflect on the difference between the operations of Mind and the qualities of Matter, it appears much more wonderful that the two substances should be so intimately united as we find them actually to be, than to suppose that the former may exist in a conscious and intelligent state when separated from the latter.

329. The most plausible objections, nevertheless, to the doctrine of a future state, have been drawn from the intimacy of this union, From the effects of intoxication, madness, and other diseases, it appears that a certain condition of the body is necessary to the intellectual operations; and, in the case of old men, it is generally found that a decline of the faculties

keeps pace with the decay of bodily health and vigour. The few exceptions that occur to the universality of this fact only prove that there are some diseases fatal to life which do not injure those parts of the body with which the intellectual operations are more immediately connected.

330. The reply which Cicero has made to these objections is equally ingenious and solid. "Suppose a person to have been educated from his infancy in a chamber where he enjoyed no opportunity of seeing external objects but through a small chink in the window-shutter, would he not be apt to consider this chink as essential to his vision, and would it not be difficult to persuade him that his prospects would be enlarged by demolishing the walls of his prison?" Admitting that this analogy is founded merely on fancy; yet if it be granted that there is no absurdity in the supposition, it furnishes a sufficient answer to all the reasonings which have been stated against the possibility of the soul's separate existence, from the consideration of its present union with the body.

331. In support of the foregoing conclusions, many strong arguments might be derived from an accurate examination and analysis of our ideas of Matter and its qualities. But such speculations could not be rendered intelligible

without a previous explanation of some principles too abstruse to be introduced here.

II. *Of the Evidences for a Future State, arising from the Human Constitution, and from the Circumstances in which Man is placed.*

332. The great extent of this subject necessarily confines the following remarks to an enumeration of the principal heads of the argument. These are stated without any illustration.

(1.) The natural desire of immortality; and the anticipations of futurity inspired by hope.

(2.) The natural apprehensions of the mind when under the influence of remorse.

(3.) The exact accommodation of the condition of the lower animals to their instincts and to their sensitive powers,—contrasted with the unsuitableness of the present state of things to the intellectual faculties of man,—to his capacities of enjoyment,—and to the conceptions of happiness and of perfection which he is able to form.

(4.) The foundation which is laid in the principles of our constitution for a progressive and an unlimited improvement.

(5.) The information we are rendered capable of acquiring concerning the more remote parts of the universe, the unlimited range which is

opened to the human imagination through the immensity of space and of time, and the ideas, however imperfect, which philosophy affords us of the existence and attributes of an over-ruling Mind:—acquisitions for which an obvious final cause may be traced on the supposition of a future state, but which, if that supposition be rejected, could have no other effect than to make the business of life appear unworthy of our regard.

(6.) The tendency of the infirmities of age and of the pains of disease, to strengthen and confirm our moral habits; and the difficulty of accounting, upon the hypothesis of annihilation, for those sufferings which commonly put a period to the existence of man.

(7.) The discordance between our moral judgments and feelings, and the course of human affairs.

(8.) The analogy of the material world; in some parts of which the most complete and the most systematical order may be traced; and of which our views always become the more satisfactory, the wider our knowledge extends. It is the supposition of a future state alone that can furnish a key to the present disorders of the moral world; and without it, many of the most striking phenomena of human life must remain for ever inexplicable.

(9.) The inconsistency of supposing that the moral laws which regulate the course of human affairs have no reference to anything beyond the limits of the present scene, when all the bodies which compose the visible universe appear to be related to each other as parts of one great physical system.

333. Of the different considerations now mentioned, there is not one, perhaps, which, taken singly, would be sufficient to establish the truth they are brought to prove; but taken in conjunction, their force appears irresistible. They not only all terminate in the same conclusion, but they mutually reflect light on each other; and they have that sort of consistency and connection among themselves, which could hardly be supposed to take place among a series of false propositions.

334. The same remark may be extended to the other principles of Natural Religion. They all hang together in such a manner, that, if one of them be granted, it facilitates the way for the reception of the rest.

335. Nor is it merely with each other that these principles are connected. They have a relation to all the other principles of Moral Philosophy;—insomuch, that a person who entertains just views of the one, never fails to entertain also just views of the other. Perhaps it

would not be going too far to assert, that they have a relation to almost all the truths we know in the moral, the intellectual, and the material worlds. One thing is certain, that in proportion as our knowledge extends, our doubts and objections disappear, new light continually breaks in upon us from every quarter, and more of order and system appears in the universe.

336. It is a strong confirmation of these remarks, that the most important discoveries, both in moral and physical science, have been made by men friendly to the principles of natural religion; and that those writers who have affected to be sceptical on this last subject, have in general been paradoxical and sophistical in their other inquiries.—This consideration, while it illustrates the connection which different classes of truth have with each other, proves, that it is to a mind well fitted for the discovery and reception of truth in general, that the evidences of Religion are the most satisfactory.

337. The influence which the belief of a future state has on the conduct and on the enjoyments of mankind, also tends to confirm its credibility. This is so remarkable, that it has led some to consider it merely as an invention of politicians, to preserve the good order of society, and to support the feeble mind under

the sufferings of human life. But if it be allowed that it has really such a tendency, can it be supposed that the Author of the universe should have left consequences so very momentous, to depend on the belief of a chimera, which was in time to vanish before the light of philosophy? Is it not more probable, that the enlargement of our knowledge, to which we are so powerfully prompted by the principle of curiosity, will tend to increase, and not to diminish, the virtue and the happiness of mankind; and, instead of spreading a gloom over creation, and extinguishing the hopes which nature inspires, will gradually unfold to us, in the moral world, the same order and beauty we admire in the material?

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338. After the view which has been given of the principles of Natural Religion, little remains to be added concerning the duties which respect the Deity. To employ our faculties in studying those evidences of power, of wisdom, and of goodness, which he has displayed in his works; as it is the foundation, in other instances, of our sense of religious obligation; so it is, in itself, a duty incumbent on us, as reasonable and moral beings, capable of recognising the existence of an Almighty cause, and of feeling corresponding sentiments of devotion. By those

who entertain just opinions on this most important of all subjects, the following practical consequences, which comprehend some of the chief effects of religion on the temper and conduct, will be readily admitted as self-evident propositions.

339. In the first place: If the Deity be possessed of infinite moral excellence, we must feel towards him, in an infinite degree, all those affections of love, gratitude, and confidence, which are excited by the imperfect worth we observe among our fellow-creatures; for it is by conceiving all that is benevolent and amiable in man, raised to the highest perfection, that we can alone form some faint notion of the Divine nature. To cultivate, therefore, an habitual love and reverence of the Supreme Being, may be justly considered as the first great branch of morality; nor is the virtue of that man complete, or even consistent with itself, in whose mind these sentiments of piety are wanting.

340. Secondly: Although Religion can, with no propriety, be considered as the sole foundation of morality, yet, when we are convinced that God is infinitely good, and that he is the friend and protector of virtue, this belief affords the most powerful inducements to the practice of every branch of our duty. It leads

us to consider conscience as the vicegerent of God, and to attend to its suggestions, as to the commands of that Being from whom we have received our existence, and the great object of whose government is to promote the happiness and the perfection of his whole creation.

341. Thirdly: A regard to our own happiness in the future stages of our being (which will be afterwards shewn to constitute a moral obligation) ought to conspire with the other motives already mentioned, in stimulating our virtuous exertions. The moral perceptions we have received from God, more particularly our sense of merit and demerit, may be considered as clear indications of future rewards and punishments, which, in due time, he will not fail to distribute. Religion is therefore a species of authoritative law, enforced by the most awful sanctions, and extending not merely to our actions, but to our thoughts. In the case of the lower orders of men, who are incapable of abstract speculation, and whose moral feelings cannot be supposed to have received much cultivation, it is chiefly this view of Religion, which is addressed to their hopes and fears, that secures a faithful discharge of their social duties.

342. In the last place: A sense of Religion, where it is sincere, will necessarily be attended

with a complete resignation of our own will to that of the Deity; as it teaches us to regard every event, even the most afflicting, as calculated to promote beneficent purposes which we are unable to comprehend; and to promote finally the perfection and happiness of our own nature.

SECTION II.

OF THE DUTIES WHICH RESPECT OUR FELLOW-CREATURES.

343. Under this title, it is not proposed to give a complete enumeration of our social duties, but only to point out some of the most important; chiefly with a view to shew the imperfection of those systems of morals, which attempt to resolve the whole of virtue into one particular principle. Among these, that which resolves virtue into Benevolence is undoubtedly the most amiable; but even this system will appear, from the following remarks, to be not only inconsistent with truth, but to lead to dangerous consequences.

Article First.—Of Benevolence.

344. It has been supposed by some moralists, that benevolence is the only immediate object

of moral approbation; and that the obligation of all our moral duties arises entirely from their apprehended tendency to promote the happiness of society.

345. Notwithstanding the various appearances in human nature, which seem at first view to favour this theory, it is liable to insurmountable objections. If the merit of an action depended on no other circumstance, than the quantity of good intended by the agent, it would follow, that the rectitude of an action could be, in no case, influenced by the mutual relations of the parties;—a conclusion directly contrary to the universal judgments of mankind, with respect to the obligations of Gratitude, of Veracity, and of Justice.

346. Unless we admit these duties to be immediately obligatory, we must admit the maxim that a good end may sanctify whatever means are necessary for its accomplishment; or, in other words, that it would be lawful for us to dispense with the obligations of gratitude, of veracity, and of justice, whenever, by doing so, we had a prospect of promoting any of the essential interests of society.

347. It may perhaps be urged, that a regard to utility, would lead, in such cases, to an invariable adherence to general rules; because, in this way, more good is produced, on the whole,

than could be obtained by any occasional deviations from them ;—that it is this idea of utility which first leads us to approve of the different virtues, and that afterwards habit, and the association of ideas, make us observe their rules, without thinking of consequences. But is not this to adopt that mode of reasoning, which the patrons of the Benevolent system have censured so severely in those philosophers who have attempted to deduce all our actions from Self-love; and may not the arguments they have employed against their adversaries be retorted upon themselves ?

348. That the practice of veracity and justice, and of all our other duties, is useful to mankind, is acknowledged by moralists of all descriptions; and there is good reason for believing, that if a person saw all the consequences of his actions, he would perceive that an adherence to their rules is useful and advantageous on the whole, even in those cases in which his limited views incline him to think otherwise. It is *possible*, that in the Deity, benevolence, or a regard to utility, may be the sole principle of action; and that the ultimate end for which he enjoined to his creatures the duties of veracity and justice, was to secure their own happiness; but still with respect to man, they are indispensable laws; for he has an immediate perception

of their rectitude. And, indeed, if he had not, but were left to deduce their rectitude from the consequences which they have a tendency to produce, it may be doubted if there would be enough of virtue left in the world to hold society together.

349. These remarks are applicable to a considerable variety of moral systems, which have been offered to the world under very different forms; but which agree with each other, in deriving the practical rules of virtuous conduct, from considerations of Utility. All of these systems are but modifications of the old doctrine, which resolves the whole of virtue into Benevolence.

350. But although Benevolence does not constitute the whole of our duty, it must be acknowledged to be, not only one of its most important branches, but the object of a very peculiar and enthusiastic admiration. The plausibility of the systems, to which the preceding observations relate, is a sufficient proof of the rank it is universally understood to hold among the virtues.

351. It may be proper to add, that the Benevolence which is an object of moral approbation, is a fixed and settled disposition to promote the happiness of our fellow-creatures. It is peculiar to a rational nature, and is not to be

confounded with those kind affections, which are common to us with the brutes. These are subsidiary, in fact, to the principle of Benevolence; and they are always amiable qualities in a character; but, so far as they are constitutional, they are certainly in no respect meritorious. Where they are possessed in an eminent degree, we may perhaps consider them as a ground of moral esteem; because they indicate the pains which have been bestowed on their cultivation, and a course of active virtue in which they have been exercised and strengthened. A person, on the contrary, who wants them, is always an object of horror,—chiefly because we know, that they are only to be eradicated by long habits of profligacy; and partly in consequence of the uneasiness we feel, when we see the ordinary course of nature violated in any of her productions.

352. Some of the writers who resolve virtue into Benevolence, have not attended sufficiently to this consideration. They frequently speak of virtuous and vicious affections; whereas these epithets belong, not to affections, but to actions; or, still more properly, to the *dispositions* and *purposes* from which actions proceed.

353. Where a rational and settled Benevolence forms a part of a character, it will render

the conduct perfectly uniform, and will exclude the possibility of those inconsistencies that are frequently observable in individuals, who give themselves up to the guidance of particular affections, either private or public. In truth, all those offices, whether apparently trifling or important, by which the happiness of other men is affected; Civility, Gentleness, Kindness, Humanity, Patriotism, Universal Benevolence; are only diversified expressions of the same disposition, according to the circumstances in which it operates, and the relations which the agent bears to others.

Article Second.—Of Justice.

354. The word Justice, in its most extensive signification, denotes that disposition, which leads us, in cases where our own temper, or passions, or interest, are concerned, to determine and to act, without being biassed by partial considerations.

355. In order to free our minds from the influence of these, experience teaches us either to recollect the judgments we have formerly passed, in similar circumstances, on the conduct of others, or to state cases to ourselves, in which we, and all our personal concerns, are left entirely out of the question.

356. But although expedients of this sort are necessary to the best of men, for correcting their moral judgments upon questions in which they themselves are parties, it will not therefore follow, (as some have supposed,*) that our only ideas of right and wrong, with respect to our own conduct, are derived from our sentiments with respect to the conduct of others. The intention of such expedients is merely to obtain a just and fair view of the circumstances; and after this view has been obtained, the question still remains, what constitutes the obligation upon us to act in a particular manner? For it is of great consequence to remark, that when we have once satisfied ourselves with respect to the conduct which an impartial judge would approve of, we feel that this conduct is *right* for us, and that we are under a moral obligation to act accordingly. If we had had recourse to no expedient for correcting our first judgment, we should still have formed some judgment or other, of a particular conduct, as right, wrong, or indifferent; and the only difference would have been, that we should probably have decided erroneously, from a false or a partial view of the case.

357. As it would be endless to attempt to point out all the various forms in which the

* See Mr Smith's Theory of Moral Sentiments.

disposition of Justice may display itself in life, it is necessary to confine our attention to a few of its more important effects. These may be arranged under two heads, according as it operates,—1*st*, In restraining the partialities of the temper and of the passsions; and, 2*d*, In restraining the partialities of selfishness, where a competition takes place between our interests and those of other men. These two modifications of Justice may be distinguished from each other, by calling the first *Candour*, and the second *Uprightness*, or *Integrity*.

I. *Of Candour.*

358. This disposition may be considered in three points of view; as it is displayed,

(1.) In judging of the talents of others.

(2.) In judging of their intentions.

(3.) In controversy.

359. The difficulty of estimating candidly the Talents of other men, arises, in a great measure, from the tendency of emulation to degenerate into envy. Notwithstanding the reality of the theoretical distinction between these dispositions of mind (§ 139.), it is certain that in practice nothing is more arduous than to realize it completely; and to check that self-partiality, which, while it leads us to dwell on our own personal advantages, and to magnify them in

our own estimation, prevents us either from attending sufficiently to the merits of others, or from viewing them in the most favourable light. Of all this a good man will soon be satisfied from his own experience; and he will endeavour to guard against it as far as he is able, by judging of the pretensions of a rival, or even of an enemy, as he would have done if there had been no interference between his claims and theirs. In other words, he will endeavour to do Justice to their merits; and to bring himself, if possible, to love and to honour that genius and ability which have eclipsed his own. Nor will he retire in disgust from the race, because he has been outstripped by others, but will redouble all his exertions in the service of mankind; recollecting, that if nature has been more partial to others than to him in her intellectual gifts, she has left open to all the theatre of Virtue; where the merits of individuals are determined, not by their actual attainments, but by the use and improvement they make of those advantages which their situation has afforded them.

360. Candour in judging of the Intentions of others, is a disposition of still greater importance. Several considerations were formerly suggested (§ 310.), which render it highly probable, that there is much less vice or criminal

intention in the world than is commonly imagined: and that the greater part of the disputes among mankind, arise from mutual mistake or misapprehension. It is but an instance, then, of that Justice we owe to others, to make the most candid allowances for their apparent deviations, and to give every action the most favourable construction it can possibly admit of. Such a temper, while it renders a man respectable and amiable in society, contributes, perhaps, more than any other circumstance, to his private happiness.

361. Candour in controversy implies a strong sense of Justice, united to disinterested love of Truth; two qualities which are so nearly allied, that they can scarcely be supposed to exist separately. The latter guards the mind against error in its solitary speculations; the former imposes an additional check, when the irritation of dispute disturbs the cool exercise of the understanding. Where they are thus displayed in their joint effect, they evince the purity of that moral rectitude in which the essence of both consists; but so rarely is this combination exhibited in human life, even in the character of those who maintain the fairest reputation for Justice and for Veracity, as to warrant the conclusion, that these virtues (so effectually secured to a certain extent by compul-

sory law, or by public opinion) are, in a moral view, of fully as difficult attainment as any of the others.

362. The foregoing illustrations are stated at some length, in order to correct those partial definitions of Justice, which restrict its province to a rigorous observance of the rules of Integrity or Honesty, in our dealings with our fellow-creatures. So far as this last disposition proceeds from a sense of duty, uninfluenced by human laws, it coincides exactly with that branch of Virtue which has been now described under the title of Candour.

II. *Of Uprightness or Integrity.*

363. These words are commonly employed to express that disposition of mind, which leads us to observe the rules of Justice, in cases where our interest is supposed to interfere with the rights of other men; a branch of Justice so important, that it has, in a great measure, appropriated the name to itself. The observations made by Mr Hume and Mr Smith on the differences between Justice and the other virtues, apply only to this last branch of it; and it is this branch which properly forms the subject of that part of Ethics which is called Natural Jurisprudence. In the remaining paragraphs of this article, when the word Justice occurs, it

is to be understood in the limited sense now mentioned.

364. The circumstances which distinguish Justice from the other virtues are chiefly two. In the first place, its rules may be laid down with a degree of accuracy, of which moral precepts do not, in any other instance, admit.* Secondly, its rules may be enforced; inasmuch as every breach of them violates the rights of some other person, and entitles him to employ force for his defence or security.

365. Another distinction between Justice and the other virtues is much insisted on by Mr Hume. It is, according to him, an artificial and not a natural virtue; and derives all its obligation from the political union, and from considerations of utility.

366. The principal argument alleged in support of this proposition, is, that there is no implanted principle prompting us by a blind impulse to the exercise of Justice, similar to those affections which conspire with and strengthen our benevolent dispositions.

367. But granting the fact upon which this argument proceeds, nothing can be inferred from it that makes an essential distinction between the obligations of Justice and of Beneficence; for, so far as we act merely from the

* Theory of Moral Sentiments.

blind impulse of an affection, our conduct cannot be considered as virtuous. Our affections were given us to arrest our attention to particular objects, whose happiness is connected with our exertions; and to excite and support the activity of the mind, when a sense of duty might be insufficient for the purpose: but the propriety or impropriety of our conduct depends, in no instance, on the strength or weakness of the affection, but on our obeying or disobeying the dictates of reason and of conscience. These inform us, in language which it is impossible to mistake, that it is sometimes a duty to check the most amiable and pleasing emotions of the heart; to withdraw, for example, from the sight of those distresses which stronger claims forbid us to relieve, and to deny ourselves that exquisite luxury which arises from the exercise of humanity.—So far, therefore, as Benevolence is a virtue, it is precisely on the same footing with Justice; that is, we approve of it, not because it is agreeable to us, but because we feel it to be a duty.

368. It may be farther remarked, that there are very strong implanted principles which serve as checks on Injustice; the principles, to wit, of Resentment and of Indignation, which are surely as much a part of the human constitution, as pity or parental affection.—That these

principles imply a sense of Injustice, and consequently of Justice, was formerly observed (§ 155.).

369. In one remarkable instance, too, Nature has made an additional provision for keeping alive among men a sense of those obligations which Justice imposes. That the good offices which we have received from others constitute a Debt which it is morally incumbent on us to discharge by all lawful means in our power, is acknowledged in the common forms of expression employed on such occasions, both by philosophers and the vulgar. As the obligations of Gratitude, however, do not admit (like the rules of honesty strictly so called) of support from the magistrate, Nature has judged it proper to enforce their observance, by one of the most irresistible and delightful impulses of the human frame. According to this view of the subject, Gratitude, considered as a moral duty, is a branch of Justice, recommended to us in a peculiar manner, by those pleasing emotions which accompany all the modes of benevolent affection. It is, at the same time, a branch of what was formerly called rational benevolence; not interfering with the duty we owe to mankind in general, but tending, in a variety of respects, to augment the sum of social happiness. The casuistical questions to which this

part of Ethics has given rise, however perplexing some of them may appear in theory, seldom, if ever, occasion any hesitation in the conduct of those to whom a sense of duty is the acknowledged rule of action :—Such is the harmony among all the various parts of our constitution, when subjected to the control of reason and conscience ; and so nearly allied are the dispositions which prompt to the different offices of a virtuous life.

370. As the rules of Justice, when applied to questions involving the rights of other men, admit, in their statement, of a degree of accuracy peculiar to themselves, that part of Ethics which relates to them, has been formed, in modern times, into a separate branch of the science, under the title of Natural Jurisprudence.

371. The manner in which this subject has been hitherto treated, has been much influenced by the professional habits of those who first turned their attention to it. Not only have its principles been delivered in the form of a system of law ; but the technical language, and the arbitrary arrangements of the Roman code, have been servilely copied.

372. In consequence of this, an important branch of the law of nature has gradually assumed an artificial and scholastic appearance ; and many capricious maxims have insensibly

mingled themselves with the principles of universal jurisprudence.—Hence, too, the frivolous discussions with respect to minute and imaginary questions, which so often occupy the place of those general and fundamental disquisitions that are suggested by the common nature, and the common circumstances, of the human race.

373. A still more material inconvenience has resulted from the professional habits of the earliest writers on jurisprudence. Not contented with stating the rules of Justice in that form and language which was most familiar to their own minds, they have attempted to extend the same plan to all the other branches of Moral Philosophy; and, by the help of arbitrary definitions, to supersede the necessity of accommodating their modes of inquiry to the various nature of their subject. Although Justice is the only branch of Virtue, in which there is always a Right on the one hand, corresponding to an Obligation on the other, they have contrived, by fictions of Imperfect and of External Rights, to treat indirectly of all our different duties, by pointing out the rights which are supposed to be their correlates. It is chiefly owing to this, that a study, which in the writings of the ancients is the most engaging and the most useful of any, has become, in so great

a proportion of modern systems, as uninviting, and almost as useless, as the logic of the schoolmen.

374. Besides these defects in the modern systems of jurisprudence (defects produced by the accidental habits of those who first cultivated the study), there is another essential one, arising from the inaccurate conceptions which have been formed of the object of the science. Although the obligations of Justice are by no means resolvable into considerations of Utility, yet, in every political association, they are so blended together in the institutions of men, that it is impossible for us to separate them completely in our reasonings; and accordingly (as Mr Hume has remarked) the writers on jurisprudence, while they profess to confine themselves entirely to the former, are continually taking principles for granted, which have a reference to the latter. It seems, therefore, to be proper, instead of treating of jurisprudence merely as a system of natural justice, to unite it with politics; and to illustrate the general principles of Justice and of Expediency, as they are actually combined in the constitution of society. This view of the subject (which according to the arrangement formerly mentioned (§ 2.), belongs to the third part of Moral Philosophy), will shew, at the same time, how won-

derfully these principles coincide in their applications; and how partial those conceptions of utility are, which have so often led politicians to depart from what they felt to be just, in quest of what their limited judgment apprehended to be expedient.

Article Third.—Of Veracity.

375. The important rank which Veracity holds among our social duties, appears from the obvious consequences that would result, if no foundation were laid for it in the constitution of our nature.—The purposes of speech would be frustrated, and every man's opportunities of knowledge would be limited to his own personal experience.

376. Considerations of utility, however, do not seem to be the only ground of the approbation we bestow on this disposition. Abstracting from all regard to consequences, there is something pleasing and amiable in sincerity, openness, and truth; something disagreeable and disgusting in duplicity, equivocation, and falsehood. Dr Hutcheson himself, the great patron of that theory which resolves all moral qualities into Benevolence, confesses this; for he speaks of a *sense* which leads us to approve of Veracity, distinct from the *sense* which ap-

proves of qualities useful to mankind.* As this, however, is, at best, but a vague way of speaking, it may be proper to analyze more particularly that part of our constitution, from which our approbation of Veracity arises.

377. That there is in the human mind a natural or instinctive principle of Veracity, has been remarked by many authors;—the same part of our constitution which prompts to social intercourse, prompting also to sincerity in our mutual communications. Truth is always the spontaneous and native expression of our sentiments; whereas, Falsehood implies a certain violence done to our nature in consequence of the influence of some motive which we are anxious to conceal.

378. Corresponding to this instinctive principle of Veracity, there is a principle (coeval with the use of language) determining us to repose faith in testimony.† Without such a disposition, the education of children would be impracticable; and accordingly, so far from being the result of experience, it seems to be, in the first instance, unlimited; nature intrusting its gradual correction to the progress of reason and observation. It bears a striking analogy,

* Phil. Moral. Instit. Compend.

† See Reid's Inquiry, chap. vi. sect. 24.; and Smith's Theory, &c. last edit. vol. ii. page 326.

both in its origin, and in its final cause, to our instinctive expectation of the continuance of those laws which regulate the course of physical events (71. 3.)

379. In infancy, the former principle is, by no means, so conspicuous as the latter; and it sometimes happens, that a good deal of care is necessary to cherish it. But in such cases, it will always be found, that there is some indirect motive combined with the desire of social communication; such as Fear, or Vanity, or Mischief, or Sensuality. An habitual disposition, therefore, to deceit, may be considered as an infallible symptom of some more remote, and perhaps less palpable evil, disordering the moral constitution. It is only by detecting and removing this radical fault, that its pernicious consequences can be corrected.

380. From these imperfect hints it would appear, that every breach of Veracity indicates some latent vice, or some criminal intention, which an individual is ashamed to avow: And hence the peculiar beauty of openness or sincerity; uniting, in some degree, in itself, the graces of all the other moral qualities of which it attests the existence.

381. Fidelity to promises, which is commonly regarded as a branch of Veracity, is perhaps more properly a branch of Justice; but this is

merely a question of arrangement, and of little consequence to our present purpose.

382. If a person give his promise, intending to perform, but fails in the execution, his fault is, strictly speaking, a breach of Justice. As there is a natural faith in testimony, so there is a natural expectation excited by a promise. When I excite this expectation, and lead other men to act accordingly, I convey a right to the performance of my promise, and I act unjustly if I fail in performing it.

383. If a person promises—not intending to perform, he is guilty of a complication of injustice and falsehood; for although a declaration of present intention does not amount to a promise, every promise involves a declaration of present intention.

384. In the cases which have been hitherto mentioned, the practice of Veracity is secured, to a considerable extent, in modern Europe, by the received maxims of *Honour*, which brand with infamy every palpable deviation from the truth in matters of fact; or in the fulfilment of promises. Veracity, however, considered as a moral duty, is not confined to sincerity in the use of speech; but prohibits every circumstance in our external conduct, which is calculated to mislead others, by conveying to them false information. It prohibits, in like manner, the

wilful employment of sophistry in an argument, no less than a wilful misrepresentation of fact. The fashion of the times may establish distinctions in these different cases; but none of them are sanctioned by the principles of morality.

385. The same disposition of mind, which leads to the practice of Veracity in our commerce with the world, cherishes the love of Truth in our philosophical inquiries. This active principle (which is indeed but another name for the principle of Curiosity) seems also to be an ultimate fact in the human frame.

386. Although, however, in its first origin, not resolvable into views of utility, the gradual discovery of its extensive effects on human improvement, cannot fail to confirm and to augment its native influence on the mind. The connection between error and misery, between truth and happiness, becomes more apparent, as our researches proceed; producing at last a complete conviction, that even in those cases, where we are unable to trace it, the connection subsists; and encouraging the free and unbiassed exercise of our rational powers, as an expression, at once, of benevolence to man, and of confidence in the righteous administration of the universe.

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387. The duties which have been mentioned

in this article, are all independent of any particular relation between us and other men. But there is a great variety of other duties resulting from such relations. The duties, for example, of Friendship and of Patriotism; besides these relative duties which moralists have distinguished by the titles of Economical and Political. To attempt an enumeration of these, would lead into the details of practical Ethics.

SECTION III.

OF THE DUTIES WHICH RESPECT OURSELVES.

Article First.—General Remarks on this class of our Duties.

388. Prudence, Temperance, and Fortitude, are no less requisite for enabling us to discharge our social duties, than for securing our own private happiness; but as they do not necessarily imply any reference to our fellow-creatures, they seem to belong most properly to this third branch of Virtue.

389. An illustration of the nature and tendency of these qualities, and of the means by which they are to be improved and confirmed, although a most important article of Ethics, does

not lead to any discussions of so abstract a kind, as to require particular attention in a work, of which brevity is a principal object.

390. It is sufficient here to remark, that, independently of all considerations of utility, either to ourselves, or to others, these qualities are approved of, as right and becoming. Their utility, at the same time, or rather necessity, for securing the discharge of our other duties, adds greatly to the respect they command ; and is certainly the chief ground of the obligation we lie under, to cultivate the habits by which they are formed.

391. A steady regard, in the conduct of life, to the happiness and perfection of our own nature, and a diligent study of the means by which these ends may be attained, is another duty belonging to this branch of virtue. It is a duty so important and comprehensive, that it leads to the practice of all the rest ; and is therefore entitled to a very full and particular examination, in a system of Moral Philosophy. Such an examination, while it leads our thoughts "to the end and aim of our being," will again bring under our review, the various duties already considered ; and, by shewing how they all conspire in recommending the same dispositions, will illustrate the unity of design in the human constitution, and the benevolent wisdom

displayed in its formation. Other subordinate duties, besides, which it would be tedious to enumerate under separate titles, may thus be placed in a light more interesting and agreeable.

Article Second.—Of the Duty of employing the Means we possess to promote our own Happiness.

392. According to Dr Hutcheson, our conduct, so far as it is influenced by self-love, is never the object of moral approbation. Even a regard to the pleasures of a good conscience he considered as detracting from the merit of those actions which it encourages us to perform.

393. That the principle of Self-Love, (or, in other words, the desire of happiness,) is neither an object of approbation nor of blame, is sufficiently obvious. It is inseparable from the nature of man, as a rational and a sensitive being, (§ 161.).

394. It is, however, no less obvious, on the other hand, that this desire, considered as a principle of action, has by no means an uniform influence on the conduct. Our animal appetites, our affections, and the other inferior principles of our nature, interfere as often with Self-love as with benevolence; and mislead us from our own happiness as much as from the duties we owe to others.

395. In these cases, every spectator pronounces, that we *deserve* to suffer for our folly and indiscretion; and we ourselves, as soon as the tumult of passion is over, feel in the same manner. Nor is this remorse merely a sentiment of regret for having missed that happiness which we might have enjoyed. We are dissatisfied, not with our condition merely, but with our conduct;—with our having forfeited, by our own imprudence, what we might have attained.*

396. It is true that we do not feel so warm an indignation against the neglect of private good, as against perfidy, cruelty, and injustice: The reason probably is, that imprudence commonly carries its own punishment along with it; and our resentment is disarmed by pity.—Indeed, as that habitual regard to his own happiness, which every man feels, unless when under the influence of some violent appetite, is a powerful check on imprudence; it was less necessary to provide an additional punishment for this vice, in the indignation of the world.

397. From the principles now stated, it follows, that, in a person who believes in a future state, the criminality of every bad action is aggravated by the imprudence with which it is accompanied.

* See Butler's Dissertation on the Nature of Virtue.

398. It follows also, that the punishments annexed by the civil magistrate to particular actions, render the commission of them more criminal than it would otherwise be;—insomuch, that if an action, in itself perfectly indifferent, were prohibited by some arbitrary law, under a severe penalty, the commission of that action (unless we were called to it by some urgent consideration of duty) would be criminal; not merely on account of the obedience which a subject owes to established authority, but on account of the regard which every man ought to feel for his life and reputation.

Article Third.—Of Happiness.

399. The most superficial observation of life is sufficient to convince us, that happiness is not to be attained, by giving every appetite and desire the gratification they demand; and that it is necessary for us, to form to ourselves some plan or system of conduct, in subordination to which all other objects are to be pursued.

400. To ascertain what this system ought to be, is a problem which has, in all ages, employed the speculations of philosophers. Among the ancients, it was the principal subject of controversy which divided the schools; and it was treated in such a manner as to involve almost

every other question of Ethics. The opinions maintained with respect to it by some of their sects, comprehended many of the most important truths to which the inquiry leads; and leave little to be added, but a few corrections and limitations of their conclusions.

I. *Opinions of the Ancients, concerning the Sovereign Good.**

401. These opinions may be all reduced to three; those of the Epicureans, of the Stoics, and of the Peripatetics.

402. According to Epicurus, bodily pleasure and pain are the sole ultimate objects of desire and aversion; and every thing else is desired or shunned, from its supposed tendency to procure the former or to save us from the latter. Even the virtues are not valuable on their own account, but as the means of subjecting our pleasures and pains to our own power.†

403. The pleasures and pains of the mind are all derived (in the system of this Philosopher) from the recollection and anticipation of those of the body; but these recollections and anticipations are represented as of more value to our happiness, on the whole, than the pleasures and pains from which they are derived; for they

* See Institutes of Moral Philosophy, by Dr Ferguson.

† Cicero de Finibus, i. 13.

occupy a much greater proportion of life, and the regulation of them depends on ourselves. Epicurus, therefore, placed the supreme good in ease of body and tranquillity of mind, but much more in the latter than in the former, insomuch that he affirmed that a wise man might preserve his happiness under any degree of bodily suffering.

404. Notwithstanding the errors and paradoxes of this system, and the very dangerous language in which its principles are expressed, it deserves the attention of those who prosecute moral inquiries, on account of the testimony it bears to the connection between Virtue and Happiness. And accordingly, Mr Smith remarks, that "Seneca, though a Stoic, the sect most opposite to that of Epicurus, yet quotes this philosopher more frequently than any other."

405. The Stoics placed the supreme good in rectitude of conduct, without any regard to the event.

406. They did not, however, recommend an indifference to external objects, or a life of inactivity and apathy; but, on the contrary, they taught that Nature pointed out to us certain objects of choice and rejection, and amongst these, some as more to be chosen and avoided than others; and that virtue consisted in choos-

ing and rejecting objects according to their intrinsic value. They only contended that these objects should be pursued, not as the means of our happiness, but because we believe it to be agreeable to nature that we should pursue them; and that, therefore, when we have done our utmost, we should regard the event as indifferent.

407. The scale of desirable objects exhibited in this system, was peculiarly calculated to encourage the social virtues. It taught that the prosperity of two was preferable to that of one, that of a city to that of a family, and that of our country to all partial considerations. On this principle, added to a sublime sentiment of piety, it founded its chief argument for an entire resignation to the dispensations of Providence. As all events are ordered by perfect wisdom and goodness, the Stoics concluded that whatever happens is calculated to produce the greatest possible good to the universe in general. As it is agreeable, therefore, to nature, that we should prefer the happiness of many to that of a few, and of all to that of many, they concluded, that every event which happens is precisely that which we ourselves would have desired if we had been acquainted with the whole scheme of the divine administration.

408. While the Stoics held this elevated language, they acknowledged the weaknesses of hu-

manity; but insisted that it is the business of the philosopher to delineate what is perfect, without lowering the dignity of Virtue by limitations arising from the frailties of mankind.*

409. In the greater part of these opinions, the Peripatetics agreed with the Stoics. They admitted, that Virtue ought to be the law of our conduct, and that no other good was to be compared to it; but they did not represent it as the *sole* good, nor affect a total indifference to things external. "Pugnant Stoici cum Peripateticis," says Cicero: "Alteri negant quidquam bonum esse nisi quod honestum sit; alteri longe longeque plurimum se attribuere honestati; sed tamen et in corpore et extra esse quædam bona.—Certamen honestum, et disputatio splendida."

410. On the whole, it appears (to use the words of Dr Ferguson), that "all these sects acknowledged the necessity of virtue, or allowed, that in every well-directed pursuit of happiness, the strictest regard to morality was required. The Stoics alone maintained that

* The most important doctrines of this school have been illustrated by Dr Ferguson, with that depth and eloquence which distinguish all his writings, in a work lately published on the Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy.

The reader may also consult the Account of the Stoical system in Mr Smith's Theory, last edition; and the notes subjoined by Mr Harris to his Dialogue on Happiness.

this regard itself was happiness, or that to run the course of an active, strenuous, wise, and beneficent mind, was itself the very good which we ought to pursue."

II. *Additional Remarks on Happiness.*

411. From the slight view now given of the systems of philosophers, with respect to the sovereign good, it may be assumed as an acknowledged and indisputable fact, that happiness arises chiefly from the mind. The Stoics perhaps expressed this too strongly, when they said, that to a wise man external circumstances are indifferent. Yet it must be confessed, that happiness depends much less on these than is commonly imagined; and that, as there is no situation so prosperous, as to exclude the torments of malice, cowardice, and remorse; so there is none so adverse, as to withhold the enjoyments of a benevolent, resolute, and upright heart.

412. If from the sublime idea of a perfectly wise and virtuous man, we descend to such characters as the world presents to us, some important limitations of the Stoical conclusions become necessary. Mr Hume has remarked, that "as in the bodily system a *toothache* produces more violent convulsions of pain than a *phthisis* or a *dropsy;* so in the economy of the

mind, although all vice be pernicious, yet the disturbance or pain is not measured out by nature with exact proportion to the degree of vice."—The same author adds, that "if a man be liable to a vice or imperfection, it may often happen, that a good quality which he possesses along with it, will render him more miserable than if he were completely vicious."

413. Abstracting even from these considerations, and supposing a character as perfect as the frailty of human nature admits of, various mental qualities, which have no immediate connection with moral desert, are necessary to insure happiness. In proof of this remark, it is sufficient to consider, how much our tranquillity is liable to be affected,

(1.) By our temper.

(2.) By our imagination.

(3.) By our opinions. And,

(4.) By our habits.

414. In all these respects, the mind may be influenced, to a great degree, by original constitution, or by early education; and when this influence happens to be unfavourable, it is not to be corrected, at once, by the precepts of philosophy. Much, however, may undoubtedly be done, in such instances, by our own persevering efforts; and therefore the particulars now enumerated, deserve our attention, not only from

their connection with the speculative question, concerning the essentials of happiness, but on account of the practical conclusions to which the consideration of them may lead.

Influence of the Temper on Happiness.

415. The word Temper, which has various significations in our language, is here used to express the habitual state of the mind in point of Irascibility;—a part of the character intimately connected with happiness, in consequence of the pleasures and pains attached respectively to the exercise of our benevolent and malevolent affections (§ 147, 157.).

416. Resentment was distinguished (§ 154.) into Instinctive and Deliberate; the latter of which, it was observed (§ 155.) has always a reference to the motives of the person against whom it is directed, and implies a sense of justice, or of moral good and evil.

417. In some men, the animal or instinctive impulse is stronger than in others. Where this is the case, or where proper care has not been taken in early education to bring it under restraint, a quick or irascible temper is the necessary consequence. It is a fault frequently observable in affectionate and generous characters; and impairs their happiness, not so much by the effects it produces on their minds, as

by the eventual misfortunes to which it exposes them.

418. When the animal resentment does not immediately subside, it must be supported by an opinion of bad intention in its object: and, consequently, when this happens to an individual, so habitually, as to be characteristical of his temper, it indicates a disposition, on his part, to put unfavourable constructions on the actions of others. In some instances, this may proceed from a settled conviction of the worthlessness of mankind: but, in general, it originates in self-dissatisfaction, occasioned by the consciousness of vice or folly; which leads the person who feels it, to withdraw his attention from himself, by referring the causes of his ill-humour to the imaginary faults of his neighbours.

419. For curing these mental disorders, nothing is so effectual, as the cultivation of that candour with respect to the motives of others, which results from habits of attention to our own infirmities, and to the numerous circumstances, which, independently of any criminal intention, produce the appearance of vice, in human conduct, (§ 360.).

420. By suppressing, too, as far as possible, the external signs of peevishness, or of violence, much may be done to produce a gradual altera-

tion in the state of the mind; and to render us not only more agreeable to others, but more happy in ourselves.—So intimate is the connection between mind and body, that the mere imitation of any strong expression has a tendency to excite the corresponding passion; and, on the other hand, the suppression of the external sign has a tendency to compose the passion which it indicates.

421. The influence of the temper on happiness is much increased by another circumstance; That the same causes which alienate our hearts from our fellow-creatures, are apt to suggest unfavourable views of the course of human affairs; and lead, by an easy transition, to a desponding scepticism.

422. As the temper has, in these instances, an influence on the opinions; so the views we form of the administration of the universe, and, in particular, of the condition and prospects of man, have a reciprocal influence on the temper. The belief of overruling wisdom and goodness communicates the most heart-felt of all satisfactions; and the idea of prevailing order and happiness, has an habitual effect in composing the discordant affections; similar to what we experience, when, in some retired and tranquil scene, we enjoy the sweet serenity of a summer evening.

Influence of the Imagination on Happiness.

423. One of the principal effects of a liberal education, is to accustom us to withdraw our attention from the objects of our present perceptions, and to dwell at pleasure on the past, the absent, and the future. How much it must enlarge, in this way, the sphere of our enjoyment or suffering, is obvious; for (not to mention the recollection of the past) all that part of our happiness or misery, which arises from our hopes or our fears, derives its existence entirely from the power of Imagination.

424. In some men, indeed, imagination produces little either of pleasure or of pain; its exercise being limited, in a great measure, to the anticipation or recollection of sensual gratifications.

425. To others it is an instrument of exquisite distress;—Where the mind, for instance, has been early depressed with scepticism, or alarmed with the terrors of superstition.

426. To those whose education has been fortunately conducted, it opens inexhaustible sources of delight; presenting continually to their thoughts the fairest views of mankind and of Providence; and, under the deepest gloom of adverse fortune, gilding the prospects of futurity.

427. The liveliness of the pictures which imagination exhibits, depends probably, in part, on original constitution; but much more on the care with which this faculty has been cultivated in our tender years. The complexion of these pictures, in point of gaiety or sadness, depends almost entirely on the associations which our first habits have led us to form.

428. Even on those men whose imaginations have received little or no cultivation, the influence of association is great; and enters more or less into every estimate they form of the value of external objects. Much may be done by a wise education to render this part of our constitution subservient to our happiness (§ 60).

429. Where the mind has been hurt by early impressions, they are not to be corrected wholly by Reasoning. More is to be expected from the opposite associations, which may be gradually formed by a new course of studies and of occupations, or by a complete change of scenes, of habits, and of society.

Influence of Opinions on Happiness.

430. By opinions are here meant, not merely speculative conclusions to which we have given our assent, but convictions which have taken root in the mind, and have an habitual influence on the conduct.

431. Of these opinions a very great and important part, are, in the case of all mankind, interwoven by education with their first habits of thinking; or are insensibly imbibed from the manners of the times.

432. Where such opinions are erroneous, they may often be corrected, to a great degree, by the persevering efforts of a reflecting and a vigorous mind; but as the number of minds capable of reflection, is comparatively small, it becomes a duty on all who have themselves experienced the happy effects of juster and more elevated principles, to impart, as far as they are able, the same blessing to others. The subject is of too great extent to be prosecuted in a treatise of which the plan excludes all attempts at illustration; but the reader will find it discussed at great length, in a very valuable section of Dr Ferguson's Principles of Moral and Political Science.*

Influence of Habits on Happiness.

433. The effects of Habit in reconciling our minds to the inconveniences of our situation, was formerly remarked (§ 314.): and an argument was drawn from it in proof of the goodness of our Creator, who, besides making so rich a provision of objects suited to the prin-

* Part II, Chap. i. sect. 8.

ciples of our nature, has thus bestowed on us a power of accommodation to external circumstances which these principles teach us to avoid.

434. This tendency, however, of the mind to adapt itself to the objects with which it is familiarly conversant, may, in some instances, not only be a source of occasional suffering, but may disqualify us for relishing the best enjoyments which human life affords. The habits contracted during infancy and childhood are so much more inveterate than those of our maturer years, that they have been justly said to constitute a second nature; and if, unfortunately, they have been formed amidst circumstances over which we have no control, they leave us no security for our happiness, but the caprice of fortune.

435. To habituate the minds of children to those occupations and enjoyments alone, which it is in the power of an individual, at all times, to command, is the most solid foundation that can be laid for their future tranquillity. These, too, are the occupations and enjoyments, which afford the most genuine and substantial satisfaction: and if education were judiciously employed to second, in this respect, the recommendations of nature, they might appropriate to themselves all the borrowed charms, which

the vanities of the world derive from casual associations.

436. With respect to pursuits which depend, in the first instance, on our own choice, it is of the last consequence for us to keep constantly in view, how much of the happiness of mankind arises from habit; and in the formation of our plans, to disregard those prepossessions and prejudices which so often warp the judgment in the conduct of life. "Choose that course of action (says Pythagoras) which is best, and custom will soon render it the most agreeable."

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437. The foregoing remarks relate to what may be called the essentials of happiness;—the circumstances which constitute the general state or habit of mind, that is necessary to lay a ground-work for every other enjoyment.

438. This foundation being supposed, the sum of happiness enjoyed by an individual will be proportioned to the degree in which he is able to secure all the various pleasures belonging to our nature.

439. These pleasures may be referred to the following heads:—

(1.) The pleasures of Activity.
(2.) The pleasures of Sense.
(3.) The pleasures of Imagination.

(4.) The pleasures of the Understanding.

(5.) The pleasures of the Heart.

440. An examination and comparison of these different classes of our enjoyments is necessary, even on the Stoical principles, to complete the inquiry concerning happiness; in order to ascertain the relative value of the different objects of choice and rejection.

441. Such an examination, however, would lead into details inconsistent with the plan, and foreign to the design of these Outlines. To those who choose to prosecute the subject, it opens a field of speculation equally curious and useful, and much less exhausted by moralists than might have been expected from its importance.

442. The practical conclusion resulting from the inquiry is, that the wisest plan of economy, with respect to our pleasures, is not merely compatible with a strict observance of the rules of morality, but is, in a great measure, comprehended in these rules; and, therefore, that the happiness, as well as the perfection of our nature, consists in doing our duty, with as little solicitude about the event, as is consistent with the weakness of humanity.

443. It may be useful, once more to remark, (§ 172. 3.) before leaving the subject, that notwithstanding these happy effects of a virtuous

life, the principle of Duty and the desire of Happiness are radically distinct from each other. The peace of mind, indeed, which is the immediate reward of good actions, and the sense of merit with which they are accompanied, create, independently of experience, a very strong presumption in favour of the connection between Happiness and Virtue; but the facts in human life, which justify this conclusion, are not obvious to careless spectators; nor would philosophers, in every age, have agreed so unanimously in adopting it, if they had not been led to the truth, by a shorter and more direct process, than an examination of the remote consequences of virtuous and of vicious conduct.

444. To this observation it may be added, that if the desire of Happiness were the sole, or even the ruling principle of action, in a good man, it could scarcely fail to frustrate its own object, by filling his mind with anxious conjectures about futurity, and with perplexing calculations of the various chances of good and evil. Whereas he, whose ruling principle of action is a Sense of Duty, conducts himself in the business of life with boldness, consistency, and dignity, and finds himself rewarded by that happiness which so often eludes the pursuit of those who exert every faculty of the mind, in order to attain it.

SECTION IV.

OF THE DIFFERENT THEORIES WHICH HAVE BEEN FORMED CONCERNING THE OBJECT OF MORAL APPROBATION.

445. It was before remarked (§ 245.), that the different Theories of Virtue which have prevailed in modern times, have arisen chiefly from attempts to trace all the branches of our duty to one principle of action: such as a rational Self-love, Benevolence, Justice, or a disposition to obey the will of God.

446. That none of these Theories is agreeable to fact, may be collected from the reasonings which have been already stated. The harmony, however, which exists among our various good dispositions, and their general coincidence in determining us to the same course of life, bestows on all of them, when skilfully proposed, a certain degree of plausibility.

447. The systematical spirit, from which they have taken their rise, although a fertile source of error, has not been without its use; inasmuch as it has roused the attention of ingenious men to the most important of all studies, that of the end and destination of human life. The facility, at the same time, with which so

great a variety of consequences may be all traced from distinct principles, affords a demonstration of that unity and consistency of design, which is no less conspicuous in the moral, than in the material world.

SECTION V.

OF THE GENERAL DEFINITION OF VIRTUE.

448. The various duties which have now been considered, all agree with each other in one common quality, that of being *obligatory* on rational and voluntary agents; and they are all enjoined by the same authority;—the authority of conscience. These duties, therefore, are but different articles of one law, which is properly expressed by the word Virtue.

449. The same word (as will be more particularly stated in the next section) is employed to express the moral excellence of a character. When so employed, it seems properly to denote a confirmed Habit of mind, as distinguished from good dispositions operating occasionally. It was formerly said (§ 161.) that the characters of men receive their denominations of Covetous, Voluptuous, Ambitious, &c. from the particular active principle which prevailingly influences the conduct. A man, accordingly,

whose ruling or habitual principle of action is a sense of Duty, or a regard to what is Right, may be properly denominated Virtuous. Agreeably to this view of the subject, the ancient Pythagoreans define Virtue to be, ἑξις του δεοντος: —the oldest definition of virtue of which we have any account, and the most unexceptionable perhaps, which is yet to be found in any system of philosophy.

450. These observations lead to an explanation of what has at first sight the appearance of paradox in the ethical doctrines of Aristotle; that where there is Self-denial there is no Virtue.* That the merit of particular actions is increased by the self-denial with which they are accompanied, cannot be disputed; but it is only when we are learning the practice of our duties, that this self-denial is exercised (for the practice of morality, as well as of everything else, is facilitated by repeated acts); and, therefore, if the word Virtue be employed to express that habit of mind, which it is the great object of a good man to confirm; it will follow, that, in proportion as he approaches to it, his efforts of self-denial must diminish; and that all occasion for them would cease, if his end were completely attained.

* Ancient Metaphysics, vol. iii. p. 12 of the Preface.

SECTION VI.

OF AN AMBIGUITY IN THE WORDS RIGHT AND WRONG, VIRTUE AND VICE.

451. The epithets Right and Wrong, Virtuous and Vicious, are applied sometimes to external actions, and sometimes to the intentions of the agent. A similar ambiguity may be remarked in the corresponding words in other languages.

452. The distinction made by some moralists, between Absolute and Relative Rectitude, was introduced, in order to obviate the confusion of ideas which this ambiguity has a tendency to produce; and it is a distinction of so great importance, as to merit a particular illustration in a system of Ethics.

453. An action may be said to be Absolutely right, when it is in every respect suitable to the circumstances in which the agent is placed; or, in other words, when it is such, as, with perfectly good intentions, under the guidance of an enlightened and well-informed understanding, he would have performed.

454. An action may be said to be Relatively right, when the intentions of the agent are sincerely good;—whether his conduct be suitable to his circumstances or not.

455. According to these definitions, an action may be right, in one sense: and wrong in another:—An ambiguity in language, which, how obvious soever, has not always been attended to by the writers on morals.

456. It is the relative rectitude of an action which determines the moral desert of the agent; but it is its absolute rectitude which determines its utility to its worldly interests, and to the welfare of Society. And it is only so far as relative and absolute rectitude coincide, that utility can be affirmed to be a quality of virtue.

457. A strong sense of duty will indeed induce us to avail ourselves of all the talents we possess, and of all the information within our reach, to act agreeably to the rules of absolute rectitude. And, if we fail in doing so, our negligence is criminal. But, still in every particular instance, our duty consists in doing what appears to us to be right at the time; and if, while we follow this rule, we should incur any blame, our demerit does not arise from acting according to an erroneous judgment, but from our previous misemployment of the means we possessed, for correcting the errors to which our judgment is liable.

458. A distinction similar to that now made between absolute and relative rectitude, was expressed among the Greeks, by the words

καθῆκον and κατόρθωμα; among the Romans, by the phrases *Officium medium* and *Officium perfectum;* and among the Schoolmen, by those of Material and Formal Virtue.

459. From these principles it follows, That actions, although materially right, are not meritorious with respect to the agent, unless performed from a sense of duty. This sense necessarily accompanies every action which is an object of moral approbation.

SECTION VII.

OF THE OFFICE AND USE OF REASON IN THE PRACTICE OF MORALITY.

460. It was observed (§ 457.), that a strong sense of duty, while it leads us to cultivate with care our good dispositions, will induce us to avail ourselves of all the means in our power for the wise regulation of our external conduct. The occasions on which it is necessary for us to employ our reason in this way, are chiefly the three following:

(1.) When we have ground for suspecting that our moral judgments and feelings may have been warped and perverted by the prejudices of education.

(2.) When there appears to be an interference between different duties, so as to render it doubtful in what the exact propriety of conduct consists. To this head may be referred those cases in which the rights of different parties are concerned.

(3.) When the ends at which our duty prompts us to aim, are to be accomplished by means which require choice and deliberation.

461. It is owing to the last of these considerations, that the study of happiness, both private and public, becomes an important part of the science of Ethics. Indeed, without this study, the best dispositions of the heart, whether relating to ourselves or to others, may be in a great measure useless.

462. The subject of happiness, so far as relates to the Individual, has been already considered. The great extent and difficulty of those inquiries, which have for their object to ascertain what constitutes the happiness of a Community, and by what means it may be most effectually promoted, make it necessary to separate them from the other questions of Ethics, and to form them into a distinct branch of the science.

463. It is not, however, in this respect alone, that politics is connected with the other branches of Moral Philosophy. The provisions which

nature has made for the intellectual and moral progress of the species, all suppose the existence of the political union: And the particular form, which this union happens, in the case of any Community, to assume, determines many of the most important circumstances in the character of the people, and many of those opinions and habits which affect the happiness of private life.

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