

Philosophical dissertations, with proper reflections : proving I. The non-eternity of matter and that there is a vacuum. II. That there must necessarily be one self-existent being in three self-existent properties ... III. That the light and heat of the sun ... are purely spiritous ... IV. That the soul is immortal / By Benjamin Parker.

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Philosophical Dissertations, ⁵

WITH PROPER

REFLECTIONS,

PROVING

I. THE Non-Eternity of Matter; and that there is a Vacuum.

II. THAT there must necessarily be one Self-Existent Being in Three Self-Existent Properties, with Attributes infinitely perfect. Prov'd *a Priori*.

III. THAT the Light and Heat of the *Sun*, dis-

perfed into the Planetary System, are purely Spirituous, and carry along with them no Particles or Effluvia of Real Matter, as hath been suppos'd by the Defendants of a Plenum.

IV. THAT the Soul is Immortal.

By BENJAMIN PARKER,
Author of the PHILOSOPHICAL MEDITATIONS.

The SECOND EDITION.

BIRMINGHAM:

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M,DCC,XXXVIII.

Philosophical Diffusions

WITH PROPER

REFLECTIONS

PROVING

I. The Non-Existence of Matter; and that there is a Vacuum.
II. That there must necessarily be one Self-Existent Being in Three Self-Existing Persons, with Attributes entirely different from one another.
III. That the Light and Heat of the Sun, diffused into the Planets, are purely airy Systems, and carry Spontaneous, and carry along with them no Particles or Effluvia of Real Matter, as hath been asserted by the Philosophers of a Plethora of the Soul is impossible.

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By BENJAMIN PARKER,
Author of the Philosophical Meditations.

The Second Edition.

BIRMINGHAM:

Printed by T. WARREN, for the Author,
at Messrs. Daker, and sold by the
Booksellers in London and the Country.

THE
P R E F A C E.

PHILOSOPHICAL Enquiries, before the clear Light of the Gospel, tho' they furnished Men with some Expectations of a future State of Rewards and Punishments, yet it was but in obscure uncertainty, and it is very truly observ'd that the Gospel of Christ hath brought Life and Immortality to Light; but as there are too too many, who would choose the Works of Darknefs in the midst of this Light, by rejecting the glorious Light of it; it is become necessary to have recourse to Reason and Philosophy to ascertain such Truths which the Gospel reveals; and as the Revelation of the Gospel gives Light to the Understandings of those, who are prepared to receive its Truths, so does it add to the Illumination of the Mind in all modern Enquiries into true Philosophy.

And as the Gospel is found to give Light to Reason and Philosophy, it must necessarily be a Divine Revelation, since nothing less could have remov'd the Mists of Error and Ignorance, that the World before labour'd under.

Now the following Dissertations (which hang together in a Chain) are chiefly design'd to prove,

form natural Reason, the Being and Attributes of God, and the Immortality of the Soul, which we are assur'd of from the Gospel Revelation; whereby it may be observ'd that what the Gospel assures us of, is agreeable to natural Reason, illuminated by it, so that where Reason and Revelation thus join together; as Philosophy proves the Truth of Revelation, so Revelation ascertains the Truth of such Philosophy; which indeed had need to join their Forces to put a stop to the Growth of Atheism and Infidelity.

And as the Authority of Divine Revelation will give Life and Energy to my following Dissertations; so my following Dissertations are design'd to add to the Belief of, and the Obedience to the Gospel of Christ.

B. P.

Philo-

Philosophical Dissertations.

D I S S E R T A T I O N I.

That Matter is not Eternal, and that there is a Vacuum.

WHATEVER is Eternal must be uncreated, and whatever is uncreated must be of its self a necessary Being; and that Being, which is necessary has no Dependance upon any other, but all other Beings must depend upon and exist in that necessary Being as its Original and first Cause.

Now whether Matter or Spirit is the original or first Cause of all Things will easily appear from considering the Power of each : Matter is of its self incapable of Perception, Action, or Self-Motion; but being actuated by Spirit becomes capable of all ; Spirit must therefore be the first, the only Intelligent, the only unoriginated and eternal Being : And therefore this unoriginated Existence began to Act, and to produce Place out of Space and Time out of Eternity, there could be no such Thing as Matter in Being, which was only created on Purpose to be serviceable to such Creatures, who were to be made up of Body and Spirit : For it must be absurd to imagine, as some have, that Matter should be Eternal, or, as others, That the Divine and necessary Being hath never been without Creatures, but that from Eternity he has produced other Beings, or he must necessarily have been an Eternity Idle.

THE very Nature of the Word Creation implies a Beginning of the Thing *created*; and if whatever is created must have a Beginning, as it necessarily must, then must there be an Eternity past before that Beginning; but to imagin Creatures from Eternity must be absurd and Nonsense; for this would suppose Creatures necessary as well as the Creator, and whatever is necessary cannot be subject to Alteration or Change, or could it require a Creation; for only what is created can be subjected to Alteration, according to the Will of its Creator, and as its Acts of free Agency are directed to those Laws given it.

It must be absurd to reason from the Inactivity of this Necessary Being, that had he not had Creatures from Eternity he must necessary have been an Eternity Idle: This necessary Existent Being, being in himself infinitely Perfect, and his Eternity admits no Measure or Progression as Times does; and the nearest we can conceive of his Eternity past before he began his Creations; is, that no Time was past before this Beginning; for *Time* only commenced with the Beginning of Creation; but to imagin him an Eternity idle, is making Time and Eternity similar to each other; whereas Eternity before the Creation was no more to the supreme, infinite, unoriginated Being than any present Instant of Time is to us, which we can neither measure nor continue, but by its constantly flowing as it comes and makes no stay, is that which alone gives Time a Name and Duration to us,
created

created Beings ; which, before the Commencement of Time and Duration, had not a Being in the unoriginated Existence ; nor does the Commencement of Time and Matter make any Change in his Eternity, who has created Time and Place subservient only to his Creatures, which make no Change in himself no more than if he had yet remained without them : And till Time commenced 'tis impossible he could be idle ; for to imagin one to be idle and have no *Time* to work in, is expecting Work to be done without Time to do it in, and could it be supposed that any Work could be done without Time, then might God work from Eternity, but this is absurd : 'Twas sufficient, when God began his Creations, that he should with them produce Time to perform them in, without which no Creature could have been produced, therefore no Creature can be from Eternity, which to suppose would form an Hypothesis to destroy the very Nature of Eternity, and make Time its self of the same Date.

N o w whatever is a necessary Being must be every where, for whatever necessary exists of its self any where, without Cause or Origination, must, for the same Reason, exist every where, because the necessity of its Existence, in the very Idea of it, must imply an Impossibility, of its Non-Existence (of which in the next Dissertation) and where there is an Impossibility of Non-Existence it must be impossible but that such Existence must exist every where, for whatever may be excluded from any Place cannot be unoriginated or Eternal, but may be sup-

posed to be excluded from other Places, *ad infinitum*, until it may be supposed to be excluded from any where, and consequently be no where.

BUT Matter is not every where (of which hereafter) therefore not a necessary Being or unoriginated, but created in Time, not from Eternity, and if not from Eternity then was it created out of nothing by the Will and Pleasures of the only unoriginated, necessary, Self-Existent infinitely Wise, and Powerful, Spiritual Existence of the supreme GOD over all his Works, blessed for ever.

Now that Matter is not every where or that there is a *Vacuum* appears, first from all the Planetary Bodies of our System describing equal *Areas* in Equal Times, or by finishing their Revolutions exactly in the same *Periods*, one Time after another, which they could not do if they mov'd in a *Plenum*, for then must their Motions be retarded, for Matter (according to the known Laws of Nature) must necessarily resist their Motions, and cause them to grow slower and slower, and at last to cease.

IF it be objected that the *Plenum* is its self moved along with the Bodies in it, and is therefore no Let or Hindrance to their Motions.

THIS Objection is easily remov'd, by observing, that if this was so, then all the Revolutions of the whole System of Bodies at what Distance soever would be perform'd in one and the same *Time*; for supposing a *Plenum* and that this *Plenum* moves along with the whole System, then from the *Center* of the *Plenum* the whole must have the Motion commensurate, and so
the

the Distance give no Alteration, as to Time to the Motions of the whole System; nay the whole Universe (upon this Hypothesis) must be concern'd in it; which appears, even in our own System, *de facto*, it is not, Witness, the Revolutions of our Primary Planets, whose Revolutions vary according to their Distances from their central Luminary the *Sun*, whose Magnitudes, Weights, and Distances are proportion'd to a proper Velocity to preserve them in their common Orbs either from flying off in their Tangents or from being let fall into the Center of Attraction.

So likewise the Attendants of the Primary Planets, *viz.* our *Moon*, with the *Satellites* of *Saturn* and *Jupiter* cannot be mov'd in their Orbs upon Supposition of the Motion of a Plenum because such a Movement must necessarily throw their Motions into Confusion; but upon Supposition of theirs and the others Movements in a Vacuum all Motions both of the Primary and Secondary Planets are easily and without any Perplexities accounted for.

2dly, THAT there is a Vacuum appears from the Reflection of the Sun's Rays upon any thing of Matter, for so far as the Sun meets with any Matter to receive its Rays it certainly reflects them; which is observable of the Sun's Rays in our Atmosphere as far as they reach before its Rising and after its Setting; by which it appears that our Atmosphere is not extended above fifty Miles from the Surface of the Earth: Now suppose our Atmosphere was extended to the Orb of the Moon, then would
there

there be no more Darknefs in a clear Night than in a cloudy Day ; because the Sun's Rays would be entertain'd therein, and reflected to us again, all a-round, within the Circumference of the Earth's Shadow at the Moon's Distance, which would only be about three Times the Breadth of the Moon's Diameter (as may be observ'd by her Eclipses) and signify but little towards the depriving us of a surrounding Reflection of the Sun's Rays, and be only a Shade from its Heat ; for if the Moon it self can cast such a Lustre by reflecting its Rays from so small a Body, what then must the Light of its Rays be, if entertain'd by a Plenum and reflected thereby, when the whole System, as far as its Rays could reach, would not be without its Entertainment, and consequently not without its Reflection ? But this *de facto* is not so, therefore there is a Vacuum.

3dly, IF Matter necessarily existed then could it not be excluded from any where (as is before observ'd of a necessary Existent Being) but the whole infinite Extension must be filled with Matter, without Pores or Parts or Center of Gravity ; whereas we find, *de facto*, no such Matter in Being ; for the hardest Mettals, as Gold for Instance, is found to have more Pores than Parts, for Water by much Pressure has been forced thro' its Pores ; and if Mettals and Minerals admit of Vacuities, much more must other lighter Solids, and still more the sponginess of the Air : And if these Things, which contain in them real substantial Matter, admit of more Vacuities than Matter its self, then must there be a Vacuum perfectly distinct from Matter ;

ter; therefore the Divine and Spiritual Essence is the only unoriginated and necessary Existence from whom all Things that ARE have receiv'd their Beginnings, and upon whom their *Existence* depends.

D I S S E R T A T I O N II.

That there must necessarily be one Self-Existent Being in three Self-Existent Properties, with Attributes, infinitely Perfect.

IT has been prov'd, from the present Order and Disposition of Things, that Matter is not necessarily Existent, but dependant upon an Original and first Cause; and the same will likewise be evident to Reason from considering what Ideas we can frame of the Nature of a Self-Existent, and Independent Being.

It has also been observ'd that a Self-Existent Being, exists without Cause or Original, and must therefore be every where, and whatever is every where must be infinite.

AND its as certain, that *Infinity* must necessarily exist in, and from Eternity, as that there has been an Eternity past, which is evident there must have been, tho' beyond the reach of our present Comprehensions, because immeasurable, and can only come within the Compass of our Notions or Ideas that it must necessary be so, so *Infinity* may furnish us with the very same Apprehensions and Ideas, that it must necessarily

rily Exist eternally in Space ; and *Infinity* cannot be without *Perfections*, nor *Perfections* without *Intelligence* ; for without *Intelligence* there can be nothing Perfect ; nor can there be a necessary Existence without Infinite Perfections, (as will appear hereafter ;) *Matter* cannot therefore be Self - Existent because Incapable of Intelligence or Perception.

It therefore follows, that a necessary Self-Existent Being must be Spiritual, since nothing could be infinite and eternal, that was incapable of Perception, Thinking, or Intelligence ; which Acts, *Matter* being incapable of, must necessarily render it incapable of Self-Existence, since the very Nature of Self-Existence must imply Intelligence ; because that which was Incapable of Intelligence must imply Non-Existence in its own Nature and Necessity.

AND it being imposible, but that there must be some Existence from Eternity, it must therefore follow that that eternal Existence must be indued with Intelligence as a necessary consequence of his Eternal and necessary Existence.

Now that there has been an Eternity Past without Worlds and Inhabitants, and yet no Time was ever without them, is easy and natural to imagin, as necessarily there must, and it cou'd not be otherwise, as appears from the foregoing Proofs of the *Non-Eternity of Matter* ; so must Space be as necessarily Infinite and Eternal ; *Infinity* then was necessarily existent in Space ; otherwise Space cou'd have nothing in it to be call'd Existence ; and Intelligence must necessarily exist in Infinity ; and in Infinite Intelligence

telligence there must necessarily be absolute Perfections.

As Space must therefore necessarily contain Infinity, Infinity must necessarily exist in Space, and Space be necessarily fill'd with Infinity: for otherwise Space wou'd have no Existence in it, for unthinking Nothingness destroys the very Nature of Infinity, and wou'd render Space itself Non-Existent, since Existence implies the *Being* of SOMETHING that does exist; but unthinking nothing cannot be said to exist at all: There must then be something that necessarily must exist infinitely, and that which thus necessarily exists must equally exist every where, and it is manifest that Space does thus exist, from whence we call it Infinite Space.

Now as above observ'd, whatever is Infinite must be perfect, and Perfection must imply Intelligence, as necessarily *Existent* in Infinity, as Infinity in Space; and because that Space must necessarily contain *Infinity*; Infinity must as necessarily contain the Perfections which must accompany *Infiniteness*; from whence will necessarily flow the Attributes of infinite Perfections; as infinite *Presence*, infinite *Knowledge*, infinite *Power*, infinite *Love*, infinite *Mercy*, infinite *Goodness*, infinite *Justice*, infinite *Truth* and in a word infinite *Holiness*; and every thing that is *Good* as the necessary Result of *infinte Perfections*.

AND as Space thus contains *Infinity*, the Infinity it contains must needs be a *Spiritual Essence* of infinite Extention, unbounded and unlimited in *Presence*, *Power*, and in all the afore-said

said attributes, derived, as before observ'd from *infinite Perfections*, independently existing; and of necessity so existing, that it is impossible it shou'd not so exist*.

* Whatever may be prov'd to have the Nature of *Eternal Existence* in itself, must be without Cause or Origination, and whatever so exists must be a *Property* of the Deity.

For whatever is necessary, or Self-Existent, must be without Beginning, without Cause, and without Creation, which are manifestly Properties of *God*, and are not to be met with in any other Existence.

Now *Space* is unbounded and unlimited, and cannot be otherwise conceiv'd of, but that it is necessary of itself without Cause or Original and must therefore be *Self-Existent*; and *Self-Existence* cannot imply *Non-Entity* of *Unthinking Nothing*, for *Non-Entity* is *Non-Existence*; but Existence implies the Being of Something either Spiritual or Material that must either necessarily or dependently exist; and whatever necessarily exists, must exist equally every where; and it is manifest that *Space* doesthus every where so exist, and hath *Eternally* so existed in its own Nature and Necessity; therefore it is *Self-Existent*; and as an immaterial existence, it is an infinite and spiritual existence, a Reality; and not a *Non-Entity* of *Unthinking nothing*, but is in its own Nature Infinite and Eternal.

Infinite and *Eternity* are then Synonymous Properties of *Self-Existence*, which with *Space* have existed, or more properly do evidently exist every where with *Space*.

In these Three Properties, which are manifestly Properties of *Self-Existence*, exists the Fulness of the *Godhead*; in Properties Three, but in *Essence* or *Self-Existence* One. These are the three Properties of *Self-Existence* in the only ONE divine Unoriginated *Essence*. One in *Self-Existence*, One in *Independency*, and therefore One in *Essence*.

No other Existence or Property whatsoever, can challenge *Independency* or *Self-Existence*.

As there are then three, and only three Properties of *Self-Existence*, so these three Properties in one *Self-Existent Essence* answer to the divine unoriginated Spiritual *Essence* of the one undivided *Trinity*, independent of Cause or Original, and is therefore the Object, yea, the only Object of the highest Admiration, Worship and Praise, and of the utmost Obedience to be render'd from all his dependent Creatures.

Thus

THUS *Space, Infinity, and Eternity*, are Immeasurable, and must naturally have existed before time was, and notwithstanding Time has been produced out of Eternity, and Place out of Space, and Finite Beings out of infinity, yet *Eternity, Space, and Infinity* remain unchangeable.

FOR the unoriginated essence of Infinity can never be alter'd by created Time and Duration, nor his Eternity, past and to come, be either lengthned or shortned.

Before Time His Perfections remain'd uncommunicated, and yet they remain'd no Time, uncommunicated, for his Eternity was no Duration of Time, but to him as an instant, a just now, an immeasurable Moment; which still is, and ever will be the same in the Divine and Unoriginated Existence.

THO' this must appear Difficult to our present Comprehensions, since we measure Time by Days, Weeks, Months, and Years, but Space and Eternity admit to Measure or Progression, of which see my *Philosophical Meditations*, Part I. Sect. II.

AND in short, there is just as much difference between Space and Place, and Time and Eternity, as between a finite Creature and infinite Existence.

HENCE we may observe that the Essence of God must be an undivided Essence in Unity and Perfection, as observ'd in the Beginning of the first Sect. of my *Journey thro' the World*.

AND as upon the Beginning of his Creations his Perfections became communicable, so it thereby became necessary for us that he shou'd distinguish the Essence of his Godhead into such Properties, (which for Distinction's Sake we call Personal,) by which he shou'd have Occasion to communicate his Goodness and Perfections to us; and to that End has made himself known to us, as our Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, by the Appellations of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; in which Names we are initiated into his Church-Militant by Baptism by the Authority and Command of Christ himself just before his Ascension into Heaven.

WHETHER this Proof of the Being and Attributes of God be conclusive, I leave to the Judgment of curious Enquirers.

To prove such an Existence is very easy and natural, from the Effects that are produced by such a Cause, and tho' such Proofs, which are numerous, carry along with 'em evident Demonstration, yet we find that all the Pains that can be taken, and all the Proofs that can be given, of the like Nature, little enough; yea, too little to suppress Vice and Immorality, the Roots of Atheism and Infidelity; which plentifully spring up and shoot forth in cumbersome Branches, so that there is need of new Helps to eradicate and root them out; or at least to endeavour to put a stop to their dangerous Growth and further Encrease.

AND as such Curious Enquiries may tend to the setting forth of the Glories of the only unorigi-

unoriginated Existence ; so they must also tend to the weakening and overthrow of the contrary Engagements.

AND as I have hereby endeavour'd to communicate the Ideas I had fram'd in my own Mind, in the Proof of the Being and Attributes of God, a Priori, so I wish it may give my Readers the same Taste I have thereby produced in my own Breast, and excite in them as high an Esteem and Veneration of the Tremendous Majesty of the Adorable unoriginated Existence and Fountain of Infinite Perfections, as the Meditations thereof have rais'd in my own Breast and give them as feeling a delight and pleasure.

FOR tho' it be impossible to find out the Almighty to Perfection : yet every small Ray, every Glimpse we are afforded of his Perfections and Glories will add new Life, new Vigour, new Comforts, new Pleasures, and Refreshments to his faithful Servants.

AND as his Perfections are infinite so they will admit of an Eternity of Admiration and Enjoyment, always extracting fresh Joys, Love and delightful Adoration from all his Creatures, which are or shall be prepar'd by Holiness to enjoy and relish them.

WHEN I consider the infinite Presence fills all things, and that he must necessarily be in every Place in infinite Perfections of Knowledge, Power, Wisdom, Love, Goodness, Mercy, Faithfulness, and Truth ; and that I have received my Being and Existence from this Fountain of infinite Power, Goodness, and Mercy,

and that I am thereby entituled to his special Care and Protection; (if I forfeit not this Right by Rebellion against him) and that he is present with me wherever I go; O then, how can I hope and trust, that I shall, e're long, have the small Rays of his Glories I now behold, as the Dawning of the Day or Twilight of the Morning, break forth upon me in the clear Light of the Shining of his Righteousness into my Soul, when I shall be released from the present Fetters of Mortality?

OH! how shou'd these Thoughts and Expectations raise and continue in us an holy Reverence of his infinite Presence, which fills all things both in Heaven and Earth; And how shou'd this influence all our Actions in all our concerns and affairs of Life that they may be proportion'd in their Performances to be agreeable to his divine Will, and becoming his Presence, as the Spectator of 'em?

AND when we withdraw from the Secular Concerns of this Life to appear before him either in his House, or in our Closets, with what Adoration and awe should we approach to so immediate an Intercourse with his glorious Majesty? With what reverential Fear, and humble Boldness (because not only allowed but commanded it) should we approach his Courts? Where in Spiritual Exercises, we may, by an Eye of Faith, behold his *Presence* filling the House, appointed for his Worship, and the Hearts of every of his faithful Servants, and his Angels ready to join with every devout Heart

Heart in their Praises, and to assist the Prayers, which are offered from unfeigned Lips.

LET us then endeavour by the Meditations of his continual Presence, to have Life and Vigour added to all our Devotions, whether in his house or in our Closets; that may not only *then* elevate us, but may for ever carry us out of the reach of that Ruin, that the Temptations incident to our Present State wou'd plunge us into; and enable us by a life of Holiness to be daily striving after Perfection; so shall daily Comforts encrease upon us here, and everlasting Joys await our Reception, when by Death we shall be born into Life Eternal.

POSTSCRIPT.

IF it be asked how I wou'd infer Perfections from Infinity, and Intelligence from Perfections? I answer,

INFINITY hath no Bounds, and therefore cannot any ways Terminate; but is unlimited in all Respects and Extents, and can admit no Additions; and that which can admit of no Addition must in itself be absolutely perfect: But without Intelligence something must be wanting that might be added, to make it more compleat.

BUT as it is impossible, as I have observ'd, for Infinity to admit of either Addition or Subtraction, so it cannot want any thing that it is not possess'd of, but must be possess'd of all Fulness in Perfections, and Intelligence beyond the Com-

prehensions of all Finite Created Beings, which live and move, and have their *Existences* in it.

INFINITE Space equally exists within and without all Bodies, rational, or irrational Globes or Inhabitants; whereas they terminate in their own Demensions, and may be either added to, or Subtracted from: But the Perfections necessarily accompanying Infinity can admit of neither, there being nothing wanting in it that can be added, being absolutely perfect; nor can any thing belonging to absolute Perfections be diminish'd, chang'd, or taken away from it, which are only unoriginated Properties of necessary Self-Existence and incapable of Communication, in their own Extent and Fulness.

DISSERTATION III.

That the Light and Heat of the SUN, dispersed into the Planetary System, are purely Spirituous.

IT must be allow'd from Calculations and Experimental Observations, that the Planetary Revolutions are perform'd in exactly the same Periods of Time, one Revolution after another, therefore those who suppose a Materiality in the Rays of Light and Heat, which proceed from the Sun, are not quite deliver'd from all the Perplexities, which the PTOLOMAICK System laid them under in accounting for the Laws of Motion in a rational and natural Way, being herein forc'd to recur, for the Non-Retardation of the Planetary Motions, to an Almighty Power continually Acting upon 'em by an external Impulse.

Now

Now if I can make it appear that the Rays of Light and Heat from the Sun, which are communicated to our Planetary System are only and purely Spirituous; then will their Motions, and the Original Causes of 'em appear to be adapted at first, by infinite Wisdom, to be continued merely from the first Laws assigned them; and to which in a natural Way they are bound; and cannot of themselves break thro' or change from, nor by any Power whatsoever, except the same Almighty Power who at first fix'd those Laws should (upon any Occasion arising from the Rational Inhabitants of 'em) repeal or alter them from the Laws and Principles which he at first assign'd them, which in all his admirable Works appear to be perfectly compleat and to have no Laws given, that that Infinite Wisdom cou'd amend.

It being prov'd and granted, as before observ'd, that the Planetary Bodies describe equal Areas in equal Times, is sufficient to prove that they move in a perfect Vacuum, or void Space of Matter, as to the common Course of Nature, and that they do thus Move, without any Continual, Forcible, and external Impulse; from an Innate Principle first Implanted, (by the Almighty and Infinitely wise contriver of the whole Creation, of the universal Globes and Inhabitants, &c.) in all secondary Causes, will appear, I think, indisputable, if the Objection of the Materiality of the Light and Heat of the Sun be fairly answer'd, which

which, I believe is now the only Objection that is made against it.

FIRST then, let it be observ'd that the Rays of Light proceeding from the Sun, except they are incorporated with a proper Medium for their Entertainment, are invisible (such as are spiritual Existences, except incorporated with something Material) and therefore passible without Hindrance or Retardation of the Motions of the Planets Revolutions : Notwithstanding the Planets themselves are warm'd and enlightened by the Heat and Light of the Sun's Rays, by having their Atmospheres purposely adapted by infinite Wisdom and Power for the Reception and Entertainment thereof by Refraction and Reflection.

THUS tho' the Sun itself is a material Body, or a Globe of Fire, yet it is so adapted by infinite Wisdom to afford Light and Heat to the Globes within its luminous Reach, and yet the Rays of its Light and Heat obstruct not the Motions of these Globes thus enlightened and warm'd by its benign Influence.

FOR it is plain that the Sun's Rays cease to Illuminate any further than they find Entertainment in a proper Medium, as is observ'd in *our* Atmosphere before its Rising and after its Setting ; so that where they are not incorporate with something Material they become Invisible, and no ways luminous, which proves them to be only Spirituous ; because only luminous and visible thro' their becoming incorporate with the Atmosphere of our *GLOBE*, or those of the
other

other Planets, which are purposely fitted, as before observ'd, for the Entertainment of 'em thereby to answer the wise Designs of its Creation for their Use and Benefit.

THE same may be also observ'd as to the Visibility of the Rays of the reflected Light from the Bodies and Atmospheres of the primary and secondary Planets, which, being themselves illuminated in the same manner as this Globe we inhabit, can again reflect that very Illumination into the same Atmosphere that is capable to entertain the Light of the Sun ; when, at the same Time it must be self-evident, that there can no material Particles arising from their Bodies, accompany that borrowed and reflected Light, and it is certain also that the Rays of Light which shine from them become luminous, visible, and conspicuous in the very same manner, and by the very same Laws of the primary Light itself, so that the Rays of Light are in themselves immaterial and purely spirituous.

It may be objected that the Light of the Sun, and those of the Moon and Planets, which shine with a borrowed Light, are different ; in that the Sun affords Heat along with the Light, but the Moon and Planets afford no Heat, but only a Reflection of that Light they receive from the Sun, and that that *Heat* which proceeds from the primary Fountain, the Sun, must at least carry along with it some very rarified Particles and Effluvia of Matter from its flaming Fountain of FIRE.

IN answer to which, let it be observ'd, that Heat as well as Light must have a proper Medium for Entertainment before any Effects can be produc'd by the Influences of a distant fiery Globe.

WHICH the Sun being allow'd to be, and plac'd in the Center of the Planetary System may be said to be the Soul or Spirit of the inanimate Bodies thereof, by preserving them in their Orbits by its Central Attraction, and affording them Light and Heat, which are both of a pure and spirituous Kind ; I do not mean of any spiritual Intelligence, but of a spirituous Influence ; for there is a spirituous Influence without a spiritual Intelligence, as in most of the Fluids and Solids, which we are acquainted with upon our own Globe, as may be instanced in our Meats and Drinks.

NOW that Heat, as well as Light, communicating from the Sun to its Planetary System, is only Spirituous, and in that kind influences our Globe and the rest of the Planets may appear, not only from the former Accounts of the Non-Retardation of the Planets Motions thro' any Effects of its surrounding Beams of Light and Heat, and of the Invisibilty and none Effects of 'em, where they are not entertain'd in a proper Medium.

BUT also from considering the Sun as the Center of our System, and whatever material Substance may be thrown off from his Surface by the Force of his fiery Flames, must be confin'd to his own Atmosphere and return to its
Body

Body as its own proper Center; for it is plain from the Laws of Nature that whatever Particles of Matter do float in our Atmosphere or in the Atmospheres of any of the Planets, and consequently of any of the Atmospheres of any Globe whatsoever, that they are confin'd within the Limits thereof, and can only make their Returns to the Surface of the Globes to which they belong; as for Instance, the Meteors in our own Atmosphere whether they be watery or endu'd with a fiery Propensity, may be observ'd never to exceed the Limits of our own Atmosphere, but are confin'd within its surrounding Circumference, and only respects this Globe as their proper Center; then it must necessarily follow that the Sun (which is the very Center of our System itself, and unto which the Whole of it pay their Tributes of Gravitation) cannot less confine his own material Substance to his own Body and Atmosphere, than the Planets, which respect him as their Center, do confine every Particle and the Effluvia belonging to 'em within the aforesaid Restrictions, notwithstanding the Communication of their borrowed Lights one to another.

THUS as Illuminated Bodies can return their Lights beyond the reach of their material Effluvia so can the Sun as a Globe of Fire dispose its Heat as well as Light without being accompanied with any material Effluvia out of its own Atmosphere, in such Proportion as the Atmospheres it meets with are adapted for its Entertainment.

So

So that the Light and Heat of the Sun, enjoy'd by its concomitant Planets are only of a Spirituous Nature, and bring along with 'em no Particles or Effluvia of Matter from its Body; tho' vulgarly call'd Particles of Light and Heat, from their Incorporating themselves with such Particles and Effluvia in the Atmosphere of our Globe, and those of the other Planets, which are agreeable for their Entertainment and Reception; thereby giving them Light and Heat, as well as preserving them in their Orbs and regular Motions; even as the Souls of Animals give Heat, Life, Vigour, and Motion to their Material Bodies, which they actuate, tho' themselves immaterial.

So that the Sun may be said not only to be the Center, but the Soul (by its spirituous Influence) of this material System, and by its Comforts to Support and Preserve both the animate and inanimate Parts thereof, even the Whole of it. *

* Before the Creation of *Globes* and Inhabitants the whole infinite Extention was a perfect *Void* or *Vacuum*; empty of Matter, or material Particles, Atoms, or Effluvia, tho' full of spiritual *Existence, Intelligence, Wisdom, and Power*; as prov'd in the former Dissertation.

And whatever *Globes* were created in this infinitely extended Space have not at all alter'd or changed the Nature of *Space* or render'd it ever the less; which being *infinite* can neither be added to or subtracted from, but will for ever continue the same, and is still as free from material Atoms, Particles and Effluvia beyond the Circumference of the created Globes and their Atmospheres as it was before their Creation, therefore the Motions of the Globes are free without Hindrance or Retardation, so that a due Order is preserv'd amongst them in all their harmonious Revolutions from the Laws of their central Luminaries

Attraction

AND as it is placed in the Center of our System, and must, as above observ'd, have all material Particles, which are sent off from its Body, by its continual Flames, return'd to it again as their proper Center, I think we may infer, that the Sun may be Created and Constituted by the infinitely Wise, and Powerful contriver of the whole material and immaterial Creation, that notwithstanding its continual Flames, it may suffer no Diminution nor irrecoverable Change; but this I leave to more curious Enquirers.

AND

Attraction, and their Tributes of Gravitation, above observ'd.

The Light and Heat therefore of the central Luminary interfere not with the Motions of its concomitant Planets, but are spirituous and immaterial out of its own Atmosphere; and that its Atmosphere does not reach to any of the Globes or Planets, which are warm'd and enlightened by it, will appear from its Rays not being Luminous and Visible where they are distant from their own Atmosphere, and not incorporated with the Atmospheres of the Globes they warm and enlighten.

For shou'd we suppose the Atmosphere of the Sun to reach thro' the planetary System amongst all the Globes it warms and enlightens, then wou'd the material Particles of its Atmosphere be Luminous and Visible of themselves throughout the whole System; so that all the planetary Bodies thereof wou'd be continually enlighten'd, and no Darkness cou'd approach any parts of their Surfaces whether in the presence of the Sun's Body above, or Absence below their Horizons, but would give a surrounding Illumination when below the Horizon of any Globe, beyond the Circumference of its Shadow.

From hence it appears that the Sun's Atmosphere is only a surrounding Circumference of its visible Lustre, which Atmosphere terminates with its Visibilty; and returns all material Particles and Effluvia to its own body, as properly belonging to it as their Center.

So then the Light and Heat emitted from the Sun into the planetary System, tho' only of a Spirituous Influence must be progressive, and take up some Time to come from its Body and
Atmosphere

AND we may unquestionably observe, that it is adapted to answer all the Ends of infinite Wisdom, so far as it was design'd to be useful and serviceable.

AND from the present View of its Usefulness, who cannot but be fill'd with Wonder and Amazement! Oh! pleasing Wonder and agreeable Amazement! to look into the Works of infinite Power, Goodness, Wisdom, Design and Contrivance,

Atmosphere to the distant Globes it warms and enlightens, which it could not do if its Atmosphere was dispersed thro' the planetary System.

There can be no such thing as *instantaneous* Motion, since all Motion whatsoever must suppose *Progression*, whether that which moves be *material* or *spiritual*. And nothing but that which is *Infinite* can be *instantaneously* every where; and that which is thus *instantaneously* every where can suffer neither *Motion*, *Change*, nor *Scituation*; so that *created* spiritual Intelligence its self must be *Progressive*, for if it was *instantaneous*, then wou'd it comprehend *Infinity*, because then it wou'd be *instantly* every where, which is impossible for any *created Being* to be, since that is only the incommunicable *Property of necessary Self-Existence*.

From hence it will follow, that what is really *Spirituos* or *Spiritual* does not necessarily imply *Instantaneousness*, nor can it be in any *created* spiritual Existence.

So then, tho' the Rays of the Sun be *progressive*, 'tis no Argument at all to prove them *Material*; but their prodigious *Velocity* may be said to exceed the Motions of all material Bodies, as much as *spiritual Intelligence* may exceed the Motion of *spirituous Influence*.

An Opaque Body is also capable to stop or hinder its spirituous Illumination, because emitted from a material Globe, therefore a material opaque Body is capable to receive its Rays only on its Surface; and from thence to reflect them in a transparent Medium, but tho' emitted from a material Globe, yet thro' their spirituous Influence, they will naturally pass thro' the hardest transparent Solids without Force or Reluctancy, thro' which no material Particles whatsoever can so enter.

AND

AND if these small Rays of his wonderful Works are thus capable to surprise us, being only now seen as thro' a Glass Darkly, what then will be the clear Prospect of 'em. *To attain which,*

LET us henceforth endeavour that we may continue that Veneration of the Supreme infinite Creator, and contriver of all his Wonderful Works, that our Wonder and Amazement may put us upon the wings of Heavenly and Delightful Aspirations, to render our Prayers Devout, our Praises Angelical, our Lives Holy, and our future State Happy. AMEN.

POSTSCRIPT.

NECESSARY Existence is that which only is or can be Instantaneous, for Instantaneousness comprehends Infinity both as to Time and Place, being not subject to Motion, Duration, or Situation.

MOTION respects different Situations, Duration respects Time, and Situation respects Place, but that which is Instantaneous includes them all, as being instantly present to 'em all, therefore incapable of Progression, and so immoveable; incapable of Duration or separating Time into Parts, and so unchangeable; incapable of Situation or being confin'd to Place, and so every where instantaneously present.

So that infinite necessary Existence can suffer neither Motion as to different Situations, nor Duration as to Time, since it necessarily is infinitely extended thro' both Place and Time.

BUT

BUT all created Beings whether Material or Spiritual, as they must necessarily have had a Beginning of Existence, must be subjected to Duration, as well as to Place or Motion; for whatever had a Beginning, its future Existence must ever be lengthening, tho' it shou'd exist to Eternity hereafter; therefore its Existence is Progressive tho' Eternal to come, and so may be call'd an eternal Duration.

BUT Necessity of Existence, as it is without Beginning, so it implies an Impossibility of its Non-Existence, and renders such Existence incapable of Progression or Duration, and therefore of its Eternity being either lengthned or shortned, and so incapable of either Additions or Substractions.

D I S S E R T A T I O N IV.

Of the Immortality of the S O U L.

FROM the foregoing Proof of the Being and Attributes of God it appears, that Matter is Incapable of Self-Existence, therefore it may be subjected to Decay and Corruption: And that the Self-Existent Being must necessarily be a spiritual and immaterial Essence, therefore nothing that was created could become capable of Intelligence and Reason that was merely Material, and not actuated with Spirit; for whatever material Bodies are endued with Reason and Intelligence it must be from the Actuation of an immaterial and spiritual Existence in that material Body; and tho' during the Union of this spiritual Existence, or of the Soul with the Body, the Body will enjoy Sensations proper to their joint Connection, yet there are also Sensations

fations or Faculties belonging to the Soul independent of the Body (as consider'd in my Journey thro' the World) therefore the Body may be subjected to such Alterations and Changes as the Soul itself cannot be ; for as the Soul only is the Life, which actuates unthinking Matter, so having once entdr'd into Existence, tho' thro' an Almighty Power, in the curious Composure of the Matter itself ; yet, because it is of a spiritual Kind it will hereafter for ever exist, whether in, or seperate from that Body which it thus actuates, according to the Nature and Reason of Things ; because spiritual Existence is necessarily from Eternity, but material Existence is not, so that whatever is created of a spiritual Nature, must have the Nature of a future eternal Existence communicated to it from its Creation by the spiritual Self-Existence of its Creator, for spiritual Intelligence being necessarily existent in the original Cause, Immortality is from thence communicated to all created spiritual Existences from the Time of their Creation : Thus Mortality can only affect Matter, and not Spirit.

It may likewise be observ'd from the foregoing Dissertations, that Matter being, as of itself, incapable of any Perception, that Perception must be distinct from Matter, and may therefore be either join'd to it or separated from it, and exist either with or without it ; and tho' it began to exist in that material Body as a proper Receptacle, yet the Body which it thus began to exist in being material (the Essence of which was not Eternal, as *Spiritual-
Essence*

Effence was) may be subjected to Decay and Alteration, but the Life which is the Soul being of an immaterial and spiritual *Effence* cannot be subject to Decay with the material and corruptible Body ; for tho' the Spirit may cease to actuate Matter, yet it cannot cease to exist, (being itself Life and Intelligence) when separated from Matter by its corruptible Mortality ; but will exist in a separate State when forc'd out of the Body, either by a natural Decay of it, or when by some accidental Detriment it is render'd incapable to continue the Soul's Habitation any longer.

AND this may be confirm'd by common Observation in Matter of Fact ; in that while the Body is in sensible Decay thro' Age or Sickneſs, the Soul at the ſame time ſuffers no Decay, but will continue to brighten and increaſe in Knowledge ; if it has not been corrupted by giving Way to the Indulgencies of the Bodily Senſes, or thro' ſome Decay or Diſorder of ſuch Parts of the Body that naturally will obſcure and darken its Operation in their preſent Union ; for thoſe who ſuffer a gradual Decay of Body, whoſe Brains are preſerv'd in a regular and due Order, will have the Senſations and Faculties of their Souls clear and bright to the very laſt Minute of their Lives ; which muſt neceſſarily ſhew that the Soul decays not with the Body, and will therefore exiſt without it.

UNDER what an indiſpenſible Obligation are we then, to prepare for the Concerns of another Life ? To help you in which, I ſhall refer you to my Journey thro' the World.

F I N I S.