Six Metaphysical Meditations

by René Descartes

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Title: Six metaphysical meditations

Wherein it is proved that there is a God and that mans mind is really distinct from his body

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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK SIX METAPHYSICAL MEDITATIONS ***

SIX METAPHYSICAL MEDITATIONS; Wherein it is Proved That there is a GOD. And that Mans MIND is really distinct from his BODY. Written Originally in Latin By RENATUS DES-CARTES.

Hereunto are added the OBJECTIONS made against these Meditations By THOMAS HOBBES Of Malmesbury. With the AUTHORS Answers.

All Faithfully Translated into ENGLISH, with a short Account of Des-Cartes's Life. By WILLIAM MOLYNEUX.

London, Printed by B.G. for Benj. Tooke at the Ship in St. Pauls Church-yard, 1680.

Some Books sold by John Lawrence, at the Angel in Cornhill, near the Royal Exchange.

A Collection of Letters for the improvement of Husbandry and Trade, intended to be continued Monthly, by John Houghton, fellow of the Royal Society, 'tis designed that every Letter shall be usefull to Mankind, and by degrees for most persons of both Sexes.

The Merchant Royal, (a very pleasant Sermon) Preached before the King at White-Hall, upon the Nuptials of an Honourable Lord and his Lady, in Quarto, price 6d.

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THE TRANSLATORS Preface. TO THE READERS.

Had honor or applause and not the publick advantage of English Readers been the design of this Undertaking, the consideration of the common Fate of Translations had discouraged Me from permitting this even to have seen the light; for meer Versions do alwayes carry with them this Property, that if not well done they may much disgrace, but if well, not much commend the doers.

And certainly I might well have expected the same chance, had this been the Translation of an History, Play or Romance; wherein there is requisite not onely a bare version but a conformation of Idiom and language, manner and customary expression; But the nature of this present Work will not admit of the like liberty, and therefore, I hope, amongst Judicious Readers it may be exempt from the common Fate of Translations; for if we look upon it as a Philosophical or Metaphysical Tract, or rather as (really it is) a Physico-Mathematical Argumentation, we shall find that a great strictness of Expression is requisite to be observed therein. So that had a Translator taken upon him to use his own liberty of Phrase, he would thereby have endanger'd the sense and force of the Arguments; for Politeness of language might as well be expected in a Translation of Euclide as in this. And all that are acquainted with this famous Authors design, do very well know, that it was his intention in these Meditations Mathematically to demonstrate, that there is a God, and that mans mind is incorporeal. And it was his opinion, that metaphysicks may as clearly be demonstrated as mathematicks, as witness his expression in the Dedicatory Epistle of this Work to the Sorbone Doctors, Eas (Rationes scilicet) quibus hic utor certitudine & evidentiâ Geometricas æquare, vel etiam superare existimem; That he reputed his Arguments used in these Meditations, to equal if not excell Geometrical certainty.

And this, I suppose, is sufficient to make the Reader, not expect herein any smoothness of phrase or quaintness of Expression; what is here delivered in English is immediately taken, as it is naturally in the Original. The words, we hope, may be apposite enough, and fit to express what is here designed, and I think it a derogation

from the Authors skill to draw the Picture of his mind in any other Colours, than what his own Copy expresses.

Thus far in vindication of the Philosophical plain stile and rough Language of the following Translation. I shall add a line or two, first relating to the Readers, secondly of the Author, and lastly of the Meditations themselves, together with the Motives which excited me to this Work.

As to the Readers, ’tis, I suppose, so evident that candour of mind, and freedome from prejudice is requisite to all that desire to advantage themselves by reading other mens notions, that it need not be here insisted on with much earnestness; yet considering the Antiquity of this subject, and the novelty of the Arguments here produced, it seems to be more than ordinarily requisite for an impartial perusal of the ensuing Tract. Neither are the following Meditations to be slightly passed over, but with diligence and attention to be read; for as in mathematical demonstration, the careless missing of any one single Position may render the Conclusion obscure and sometimes inconsequent, so in these metaphysical Demonstrations, which (as, before has been noted from the illustrious Author thereof) for certainty do equal, if not excel Geometrical Propositions, the slight attention to any one particular Argument may frustrate the design of the whole discourse.

The Reasoning therefore here being close and solid, and (as in Mathematicks) the knowledge of the latter depending on the knowledge of what went before, ’tis the duty of every Reader seriously to attend the Particulars, as also the connexion of the whole. Let him weigh the Arguments and perpend the Conclusions, and after a clear and distinct Knowledge, lett him pass his judgement.

And to this end I shall make it my request to every Reader, that he would not be content with a single perusal of the following Discourses, but that he would often repeat his reading them over; for by this means the force of those Arguments, which at first may by chance escape the most diligent and attentive Peruser, by a second or

third Essay may offer themselves more fully to his Consideration. This was the desire of our Author in an other of his pieces, I mean his Principles of Philosophy, which I am sure do not require so strict an attention of mind, as these abstracted speculations; and therefore if it were his Request in that case, we may Reasonably think that ’twas no less his desire in this.

When we come to speak of the Incomparable Author of these Meditations, we have reason to lament our own Ignorance, and to blame the Ingratitude of the Age wherein he lived, for not transmitting to Posterity more certain and ample Records of the Life and Conversation of this Excellent Philosopher, all that has been Written in this kind gives us only so much light into the Life of this Prodigious Man, as may make us wish for more; imparting which, I shall recommend the Readers to a further enquiry into the inward Thoughts, (largly discover’d in the Writings) of our Famous Author, of whose outward actions and condition we have so small knowledge.

Renatus Des-Cartes was born on the last day of March in the year 1596. at Tours, or at Castrum Eraldum a Town near Tours in France; He came of an Antient and Noble Family, being by Descent Lord of Perron, His Father was a Senator of his Country, and a Man of no mean estate, leaving to this his only Son by a second Wife between six and seven thousand pounds a year.

He was Educated in his younger years according to the manner of his Country (and as he himself recommends in one of his Epistles, viz. Epist. 90. partis secundæ to One for the Instruction of his Son) in the Aristotelian principles of Philosophy, a whole course whereof he had run through at the Age of seventeen in the Schools of Flexia, or La Flesche a Town in the Province of Anjou, famous for the Colledge of Jesuites there establish’d by Henry the 4th.

But to this he did not Continue long devoted, giving early testimonies of his dislike to the unsatisfactory Notions, and verbose emptiness of the Peripatetick Philosophy; He used therefore his utmost endeavours (as he himself testifies in his Dissertatio de

Methodo) to get loose from those Chains and Fetters of Mind to which the weakness of his tender years had subjected him.

To this end he betook himself to a long course of Travel, that by the variety of Objects, which he was likely to meet with in his journeys, the memory of his past Notions might be blotted out; In his travel he applied himself much to the study of the Art Military, and Mathematicks; In the latter he has left the World large testimonies of his Excellence in his Book of Geometry; and in the former we have reason to believe him most expert, for He was personally present at some Sieges and Battles both in France and Germany, as particularly at the Siege of Rochel, of Gava near Genoa, of Breda, at the Battle of Prague, &c. so that we may conclude that he had a Genius fitted (according to the Motto of the noble Sir W. Raliegh) Tam Marti, quam Mercurio, For the Pike as well as Pen. And as the Glorious Roman Emperour became a Cæsar by his Book as well as Sword, by the Conquests of his mind as well as those of his arm; so our Famous Author was Ex Utroque Clarus.

In his Travels he spent many years, in all which time he was not Idle, but highly improved himself by his converse with the Beaux Esprits, which he met with in several Regions he visited; The first Place he betook himself to, was Italy, then he went into Denmark, Germany, Hungary, &c. And after a Long but advantagious Peregrination he return'd to Amsterdam, where he intended to take up his Rest, had he not been called by the French King upon very Honourable terms to Paris; During his Continuance there he so order'd his annual Revenue, that he might be supplied by the hands of a Friend wherever he was. He staid at Paris three years, and then retired Himself to a solitary village in Holland called Egmond, where he lived twenty five years, during which time he apply'd himself wholly to the Restauration of true Philosophy, wherein he gave the World such mighty testimonies of his Excellence, that in a short time he became celebrated in the mouths of all Learned Men. Neither were the Courts of Princes silent in his deserved Praises; for after a Retirement of twenty five years he was Invited by Christina Queen of Sweedland to

her Court; Thither upon the intreaty of this brave and Learned Princess he betook himself, where he had not continued Long before he was struck with a Peripneumonia or Inflammation of the Lungs (contracted, as it is thought by the long Discourses which he used to hold bare headed with the Queen, continuing them sometimes till far in the Night,) of which unhappy distemper he Died the seventh Day after he sicken'd.

Thus Expired this Wonder of his Own and succeeding Ages, desired and lamented by all men, Æqual'd by none. He was buried in a costly Monument consisting of four sides, upon which were inscribed Epitaphs; bestow'd upon him by many Renown'd Persons.

What shall we now say sufficient to express our Grief for the untimely Decease of this Worthy Philosopher? But Especially what shall we now do to recover our Loss? Let us endeavour to Redeem what we have lost by well Husbanding and careful improvement of what is left; which may be done in Part by a Diligent Perusal of the Works written by this Excellent Author; This, This only is the way of Reviving him again, and of giving him Immortality in spight of his untimely Fate. And so let him for ever live celebrated by the Deserved Praises of all ingenious Enquirers after truth, and Learning.

Let us therefore cast our eye upon the Present Work of this extroardinary Philosopher, and therein let us admire his profound Judgment and vigorous Fancy, for if we seriously consider it, we shall hardly find a more solid close piece of Reasoning either in this or Foregoing ages; Here, what was commonly asserted without proof, is not only proved but Mathematically Demonstrated, viz. That God is the Fountain and Original of Truth; His sharp Wit, like Hannibals Vinegar, hath eaten thro the Mazing and overtowring hills of Errors, a Plain and Pleasant Way to the Divine seat of Knowledge.

In fine, such is the Excellence of these six Meditations, that I cannot resemble his

Performance herein better than to the Six Days Work of the Supream Architect; and certainly next to the Creation of All things out of Nothing, the Restauration of Truth out of Errors is the most Divine Work; so that (with Reverence be it spoken) the Incomparable Des-Cartes does hereby deserve as it were the name of a Creatour. In the first Meditation we are Presented with a Rude and Indigested Chaos of Errours and Doubts, till the Divine spirit of the Noble Des-Cartes (pardon the Boldness of the Expression) moves upon the confused face of these Waters, and thereout produces some clear and distinct Light; by which Sun-shine he proceeds to bring forth and cherish other Branches of Truth; Till at last by a six Days Labour he Establishes this Fair Fabrick (as I may call it) of the Intellectual World on foundations that shall never be shaken. Then sitting down with rest and satisfaction he looks upon this his Off-spring and Pronounces it Good.

These Things Consider'd, I need not make any long Apologies for my undertaking a translation thereof; The excellency of the Original is sufficient to vindicate my endeavours to present the English World with a Copy, and he that shall blame my Intentions of Communicating the Methods of Truth to those that have only the English Tongue, may as well find fault with those English that propagate the Christian Religion among savage Indians, and translate the Scriptures into their Language, because they have not the English Tongue. To understand Latin is no (or at most a very small) part of Learning, and that which certainly every Cobler in Rome was once endow'd with; and therefore must there then be no translations out of Greek into Latin? I doubt not, but there are many Persons in our Nations, who tho wanting Latin, are notwithstanding very capable of the most abstracted speculations; the late disturbances of our Kingdomes occasion'd many Youths, who were then in a fair way of Instruction, to forsake their learning, and divert their intentions from Literature to Arms, and yet many of these have afterwards become Men of extraordinary nary abilities and qualifications for learning notwithstanding their deficiency in the Roman Tongue. And I see no Reason why it should not be the

desire, and consequently the endeavour of every true English man, to make his language as universal as is now the French, into which the best Books in all sorts of Learning, both Poetry and Prose, are daily translated out of all languages, but especially out of Greek and Latine. Among which these Meditations are to be found, entituled, Les Meditations Metaphysiques De Rene Des Cartes touchant la Premiere Philosophie. This was translated out of the Authors Latine into French by Monsieur le D. D. L. N. S. The several Objections also, which were made by divers learned Persons against these Meditations, with the Authors Answers, were translated into French by M. B. L. R. And, I hope, no one will assert, that the French are more fit to receive those metaphysical Notions delivered herein than the English Nation.

But ’twas none of the smallest motives I had to this undertaking, that tho some famous English Authours have taken notice of the Arguments here produced (for the proof of a Deity drawn from the Idea we have of God in our Mind, &c.) Particularly the most excellent and learned Dr. Stillingfleet in the first Chapter of the third Book in his Origines Sacræ, who refers his Readers to a further search into these Meditations in the 400 page of that Discourse; as also the Reverend Dr. Henry More in his Antidote against Atheism, and more fully in his Appendix annex’d thereto, hath treated of our Authors demonstration; and yet nothing of the genuine original from whence they have borrowed all their Copies (tho some of them drawn in a larger size, yet I question whether so expressive) nothing of our Authors proper management hath ever appear’d in English. Those that assert these Arguments to have been long before thought upon by some of the Fathers, I shall refer to our Authors just vindication of himself in his several Answers to Objections made against these Discourses.

And here I shall dismiss the Reader detaining him no longer from that satisfaction which he may reasonably expect from the perusal of the following Meditations; this Translation is dedicated to no one in particular, but is humbly submitted to the moderate censure of all candid Readers, by

Their humble servant Will. Molyneux.

Dublin Feb. 19. 1679/80.

The Contents.

ERRATA.

Pag. 1. line 8. dele off. p. 3. l. 21. there wants the sign of Interrogation. p. 8. l. 10. r. Premeditated. ib. l. 14. r. falshoods. p. 18. l. 15. r. that it may. p. 20. l. 11. r. suffers. In the two or three first chapters there are Astericks wanting. p. 33. l. 10. dele I. p. 39. l. 25. r. formally. p. 49. l. 14 r. Duration and Continuance. p. 54. l. 2 for the Point put a Comma. p. 61. l. ult. r. I enquire. p. 91. r. in the margin doubted. p. 124. l. 6. r. have no affinity.

Transcriber’s Note: These errata have been corrected, along with some obvious typos. The spelling in this book is not only of its time, but also wildly variable, and has been left well alone.

THE Metaphysical Meditations OF Renatus Des-Cartes, &c.

Meditat. I. Of Things Doubtful.

Some years past I perceived how many Falsities I admitted as Truths in my Younger years, and how Dubious those things were which I raised from thence; and therefore I thought it requisite (if I had a designe to establish any thing that should prove firme and permanent in sciences) that once in my life I should clearly cast aside all my former opinions, and begin a new from some First principles. But this seemed a great Task, and I still expected that maturity of years, then which none could be

more apt to receive Learning; upon which Account I waited so long, that at last I should deservedly be blamed had I spent that time in Deliberation which remain'd only for Action.

This day therefore I conveniently released my mind from all cares, I procured to my self a Time Quiet, and free from all Business, I retired my self Alone; and now at length will I freely and seriously apply my self to the General overthrow of all my former Opinions.

To the Accomplishment of Which, it will not be necessary for me to prove them all false (for that perhaps I shall never atcheive) But because my reason perswades me, that I must withdraw my assent no less from those opinions which seem not so very certain and undoubted, then I should from those that are Apparently false, it will be sufficient if I reject all those wherein I find any Occasion of doubt.

Neither to effect this is it necessary, that they all should be run over particularly (which would be an endles trouble) but because the Foundation being once undermin'd, whatever is built thereon will of its own accord come to the ground, I shall therefore immediately assault the very principle, on which whatever I have believed was grounded. Viz.

Whatever I have hitherto admitted as most true, that I received either from, or by my Senses; but these I have often found to deceive me, and 'tis prudence never certainly to trust those that I have (tho but once) deceived us.

1 Doubt. But tho sometimes the senses deceive us being exercised about remote or small objects, yet there are many other things of which we cannot doubt tho we know them only by the senses? as that at present I am in this place, that I am sitting by a fire, that I have a Winter gown on me, that I feel this Paper with my hands; But how can it be denied that these hands or this body is mine? Unless I should compare my self to those mad men, whose brains are disturbed by such a disorderly melancholick vapour, that makes them continually profess themselves to be Kings,

tho they are very poor, or fancy themselves cloathed in Purple Robes, tho they are naked, or that their heads are made of Clay as a bottle, or of glass, &c. But these are mad men, and I should be as mad as they in following their example by fancying these things as they do.

1 Solution. This truly would seem very clear to those that never sleep, and suffer the same things (and sometimes more unlikely) in their repose, then these mad men do whilst they are awake; for how often am I perswaded in a Dream of these usual occurrences, that I am in this place, that I have a Gown on me, that I am sitting by a fire, &c. Tho all the while I am lying naked between the Sheets.

But now I am certain that I am awake and look upon this Paper, neither is this head which I shake asleep, I knowingly and willingly stretch out this hand, and am sensible that things so distinct could not happen to one that sleeps. As if I could not remember my self to have been deceived formerly in my sleep by the like thoughts; which while I consider more attentively I am so far convinced of the difficulty of distinguishing sleep from waking that I am amazed, and this very amazement almost perswades me that I am asleep.

2 Doubt. Wherefore let us suppose our selves asleep, and that these things are not true, viz. that we open our eyes, move our heads, stretch our hands, and perhaps that we have no such things as hands or a body. Yet we must confess, that what we see in a Dream is (as it were) a painted Picture, which cannot be devised but after the likeness of some real thing; and that therefore these Generals at least, viz. eyes, head, hands, and the whole body are things really existent and not imaginary; For Painters themselves, (even then when they design Mermaids and Satyrs in the most unusual shapes) do not give them natures altogether new, but only add the divers Parts of different Animals together; And if by chance they invent any thing so new that nothing was ever seen like it, for that ’tis wholy fictitious and false, yet the colours at least of which, they make it must be true Colours; so upon the same

account, tho these General things as eyes, head, hands, &c. may be imaginary; yet nevertheless we must of necessity confess the more simple and universal things to be True, of which (as of true Colours) these Images of things (whether true or false) which are in our minds are made; such as are the nature of a body in General, and its Extension, also the shape of things extended, with the quantity or bigness of them; their number also, and place wherein they are, the time in which they continue, and the like, and therefore from hence we make no bad conclusion, that Physick, both Natural, and Medicinal, Astronomy, and all other sciences, which depend on the consideration of compound things, are Doubtful. But that Arithmetick, Geometry, and the like (which treat only of the most simple, and General things not regarding whether they really are or not) have in them something certain and undoubted; for whether I sleep or wake, two and three added make five; a square has no more sides than four &c. neither seems it possible what such plain truths can be doubted off.

2 Solution. But all this While there is rooted in my mind a certain old opinion of the being of an Omnipotent God, by whom I am created in the state I am in; and how know I but he caused that there should be no Earth, no Heaven, no Body, no Figure, no Magnitude, no Place, and yet that all these things should seem to me to be as now they are? And as I very often judge others to Erre about those things which they think they Throughly understand, so why may not I be deceived, whenever I add two and three, or count the sides of a Square, or whatever other easy Matter can be thought of?

3. Doubt. But perhaps God wills not that I should be deceived, for he is said to be Infinitely Good.

3. Solution. Yet if it were Repugnant to his Goodness to create me so that I should be always deceived, it seems also unagreeable to his Goodness to permit me to be deceived at any time; Which last no one will affirme: Some there are truely who had rather deny Gods Omnipotence, then beleive all things uncertain; but there at present

we may not contradict. And we will suppose all this of God to be false; yet whether they will suppose me to become what I am by Fate, by Chance, by a continued chain of causes, or any other way, because to erre is an Imperfection, by how much the less power they will Assigne to the Author of my Being, so much the more Probable it will be, that I am so Imperfect as to be alwayes deceived.

To which Arguments I know not what to answer but am forced to confess, that there is nothing of all those things which I formerly received as Truths, whereof at present I may not doubt; and this doubt shall not be grounded on inadvertency or Levity, but upon strong and Premeditated reasons; and therefore I must hereafter (if I designe to discover any truths) withdraw my assent from them no less then from apparent falshoods.

But ’tis not sufficient to think only Transiently on these things, but I must take care to remember them; for dayly my old opinions returne upon me, and much against my Will almost possesse my Beleife tyed to them, as it were by a continued use and Right of Familiarity; neither shall I ever cease to assent and trust in them, whilst I suppose them as in themselves they really are, that is to say, something doubtful (as now I have proved) yet notwithstanding highly Probable, which it is much more Reasonable to beleive then disbeleive.

Wherefore I conceive I should not do amiss, if (with my mind bent clearly to the contrary side) I should deceive my self, and suppose them for a While altogether false and Imaginary; till at length the Weights of prejudice being equal in each scale, no ill custome may any more Draw my Judgement from the true Conception of things, for I know from hence will follow no dangerous Error, and I can’t too immoderately pamper my own Incredulity, seeing What I am about, concernes not Practice but Speculation.

To Which end I will suppose, not an Infinitely perfect God, the Fountain of truth, but that some Evil Spirit which is very Powerful and crafty has used all his

endeavours to deceive me; I will conceive, the Heavens, Air, Earth, Colours, Figures, Sounds, and all outward things are nothing else but the delusions of Dreams, by which he has laid snares to catch my easy beleif; I will consider my self as not having hands, Eyes, Flesh, Blood, or Sences, but that I falsely think that I have all these; I will continue firmly in this Meditation; and tho it lyes not in my power to discover any truth, yet this is in my power, not to assent to Falsities, and with a strong resolution take care that the Mighty deceiver (tho never so powerful or cunning) impose not any thing on my beleife.

But this is a laborious intention, and a certain sloth reduces me to the usual course of life, and like a Prisoner who in his sleep perhaps enjoy'd an imaginary liberty, and when he begins to suppose that he is asleep is afraid to waken, but is willing to be deceived by the Pleasant delusion; so I willingly fall into my opinions, and am afraid to be Roused, least a toilsome waking succeeding a pleasant rest I may hereafter live not in the light, but in the confused darkness of the doubts now raised.

Meditat. II. Of the nature of Mans mind, and that 'tis easier proved to be then our body.

By yesterdays Meditation I am cast into so great Doubts, that I shall never forget them, and yet I know not how to answer them, but being plunged on a suddain into a deep Gulf, I am so amazed that I can neither touch the bottome, nor swim at the top.

Nevertheless, I will endeavour once more, and try the way I set on yesterday, by removing from me whatever is in the least doubtful, as if I had certainly discover'd it to be altogether false, and will proceed till I find out some certainty, or if nothing else, yet at least this certainty, That there is nothing sure.

Archimedes required but a point which was firm, and immoveable that he might move the whole Earth, so in the perfect undertaking Great things may be expected, if I can discover but the least thing that is true and indisputable.

Wherefore I suppose all things I see are false, and believe that nothing of those things are really existent, which my deceitful memory represents to me; ’tis evident I have no senses, that a Body, Figure, Extension, Motion, Place, &c. are meer Fictions; what thing therefore is there that is true? perhaps only this, That there is nothing certain.

Doubts and Solutions.

But how know I that there is nothing distinct from all these things (which I have now reckon’d) of which I have no reason to doubt? Is there no God (or whatever other name I may call him) who has put these thoughts into me? Yet why should I think this? When I my self perhaps am the Author of them. Upon which Account, therefore must not I be something? ’tis but just now that I denied that I had any senses, or any Body. Hold a while—Am I so tied to a Body and senses that I cannot exist without them? But I have perswaded my self that there is nothing in the World, no Heaven, no Earth, no Souls, no Bodies; and then why not, that I my self am not? Yet surely if I could perswade my self any thing, I was.

But there is I know not what sort of Deceivour very powerful and very crafty, who always strives to deceive Me; without Doubt therefore I am, if he can decieve me; And let him Deceive me as much as he can, yet he can never make me not to Be, whilst I think that I am. Wherefore I may lay this down as a Principle, that whenever this sentence I am, I exist, is spoken or thought of by Me, ’tis necessarily True.

But I do not yet fully understand who I am that now necessarily exist, and I must hereafter take care, least I foolishly mistake some other thing for my self, and by that means be deceived in that thought, which I defend as the most certain and evident of all.

Wherefore I will again Recollect, what I believed my self to be heretofore, before I had set upon these Meditations, from which Notion I will withdraw whatever may be Disproved by the Foremention’d Reasons, that in the End, That only may Remain

which is True and indisputable.

What therefore have I heretofore thought my self? A Man. But what is a man? Shall I answer, a Rational Animal? By no means; because afterwards it may be asked, what an Animal is? and what Rational is? And so from one question I may fall into greater Difficulties; neither at present have I so much time as to spend it about such Niceties.

But I shall rather here Consider, what heretofore represented it self to my thoughts freely, and naturally, whenever I set my self to understand What I my self was.

And the first thing I find Representing it self is, that I have Face, Hands, Arms, and this whole frame of parts which is seen in my Body, and which I call my Body.

The next thing represented to me was, that I was nourish'd, could walk, had senses, and could Think; which functions I attributed to my Soul. Yet what this soul of mine was, I did not fully conceive; or else supposed it a small thing like wind, or fire, or aire, infused through my stronger parts.

As to my Body truly I doubted not, but that I rightly understood its Nature, which (if I should endeavour to describe as I conceive it) I should thus Explain, viz. By a Body I mean whatever is capable of Shape, or can be contained in a place, and so fill's a space that it excludes all other Bodys out of the same, that which may be touch'd, seen, heard, tasted, or smelt, and that which is capable of various Motions and Modifications, not from it self, but from any other thing moving it, for I judged it against (or rather above) the nature of a Body to move it self, or perceive, or think, But rather admired that I should find these Operations in certain Bodys.

But How now (since I suppose a certain powerful and (if it be lawful to call him so) evil deluder, who useth all his endeavours to deceive me in all things) can I affirme that I have any of those things, which I have now said belong to the nature of a Body? Hold— Let me Consider—, Let me think—, Let me reflect— I can find no Answer, and I am weary with repeating the same things over-again in vain.

But Which of these Faculties did I attribute to my Soul, my Nutritive, or Motive faculty? yet now seeing I have no Body, these also are meer delusions. Was it my sensitive faculty? But this also cannot be perform'd without a Body, and I have seem'd to perceive many things in my sleep, of which I afterwards understood my self not to be sensible. Was it my Cogitative Faculty? Here I have discovered it, 'tis my Thought, this alone cannot be separated from Me, I am, I exist,—tis true, but for what time Am I? Why I am as long as I think; For it May be that When I cease from thinking, I may cease from being. Now I admit of nothing but what is necessarily true: In short therefore I am only a thinking thing that is to say, a mind, or a soul, or understanding, or Reason, words which formerly I understood not; I am a Real thing, and Really Existent, But what sort of thing? I have just now said it, A thinking thing.

* Places noted with their Asterisk are refer'd to in the following Objections.

But am I nothing besides? I will consider—I am not that structure of parts, which is called a Mans Body, neither am I any sort of thin Air infused into those Parts, nor a Wind, nor Fire, nor Vapour, nor Breath, nor whatever I my self can feign, for all these things I have supposed not to Be. Yet my Position stands firm; Nevertheless I am something. Yet perhaps it so falls out that these very things which I suppose not to exist (because to me unknown) are in reallity nothing different from that very Self, which I know. I cannot tell, I dispute it not now, I can only give my opinion of those things whereof I have some knowledge. I am sure that I exist, I ask who I am whom I thus know, certainly, the knowledge, of Me (precisely taken) depends not on those things, whose existence I am yet ignorant of; and therefore not on any other things that I can feign by my imagination.

And this very Word (feign) puts me in mind of my error, for I should feign in deed, if I should imagine my self any thing; for to imagine is nothing else but to think upon the shape or image of a corporeal thing; but now I certainly know that I am,

and I know also that ’tis possible that all these images, and generally whatever belongs to the Nature of a Body are nothing but deluding Dreams. Which things Consider’d I should be no less Foolish in saying, I will imagine that I may more throughly understand what I am, then if I should say, at Present I am awake and perceive something true, but because it appears not evidently enough, I shall endeavour to sleep, that in a Dream I may perceive it more evidently and truely.

Wherefore I know that nothing that I can comprehend by my imagination, can belong to the Notion I have of my self, and that I must carefully withdraw my mind from those things that it may more distinctly perceive its own Nature.

Let me ask therefore What I am, A Thinking Thing, but What is That? That is a thing, doubting, understanding, affirming, denying, willing, nilling, imagining also, and sensitive. These truely are not a few Properties, if they all belong to Me. And Why should they Not belong to me? For am not I the very same who at present doubt almost of All things; yet understand something, which thing onely I affirm to be true, I deny all other things, I am willing to know more, I would not be deceived, I imagine many things unwillingly, and consider many things as coming to me by my senses. Which of all these faculties is it, which is not as true as that I Exist, tho I should sleep, or my Creatour should as much as in him lay, strive to deceive Me? which of them is it that is distinct from my thought? which of them is it that can be seperated from me? For that I am the same that doubt, understand, and will is so evident, that I know not how to explain it more manifestly, and that I also am the same that imagine, for tho perhaps (as I have supposed) no thing that can be imagined is true, yet the imaginative Power it self is really existent, and makes up a part of my Thought; and last of all that I am the same that am sensitive, or perceive corporeal things as by my senses, yet that I now see light, hear a noise, feel heat, these things are false, for I suppose my self asleep, but I know that I see, hear, and am heated, that cannot be false; and this it is that in me is properly called Sense, and this strictly taken is the same with thought.

By these Considerations I begin a little better to understand My self what I am; But yet it seems, and I cannot but think that Corporeal Things (whose Images are formed in my thought, and which by my senses, I perceive) are much more distinctly known, then that confused Notion of My Self which imagination cannot afford me. And yet ’tis strange that things doubtful, unknown, distinct from Me, should be apprehended more clearly by Me, then a Thing that is True, then a thing that is known, or then I my self; But the Reason is, that my Mind loves to wander, and suffers not it self to be bounded within the strict limits of Truth.

Let it therefore Wander, and once more let me give it the Free Reins, that hereafter being conveniently curbed, it may suffer it self to be more easily Govern’d.

Let me consider those things which of all Things I formerly conceived most evident, that is to say, Bodies which we touch, which we see, not bodies in General (for those General Conceptions are usually Confused) but some one Body in particular.

Let us chuse for example this piece of Bees-wax, it was lately taken from the Comb, it has not yet lost all the tast of the Honey, it retains something of the smell of the Flowers from whence ’twas gather’d, its colour, shape, and bigness are manifest, ’tis hard, ’tis cold, ’tis easily felt, and if you will knock it with your finger, ’twill make a noise: In fine, it hath all things requisite to the most perfect notion of a Body.

But behold whilst I am speaking, ’tis put to the Fire, its tast is purged away, the smell is vanish’d, the colour is changed, the shape is alter’d, its bulk is increased, its become soft, ’tis hot, it can scarce be felt, and now (though you strike it) it makes no noise. Does it yet continue the same Wax? surely it does, this all confess, no one denies it, no one doubts it. What therefore was there in it that was so evidently known? surely none of those things which I perceived by my senses; for what I smelt, tasted, have seen, felt, or heard, are all vanish’d, and yet the Wax remains. Perhaps ’twas this only that I now think on, viz. that the Wax it self was not that tast of Honey, that smell of Flowers, that whiteness, that shape, or that sound, but it was

a Body which awhile before appear'd to me so and so modified, but now otherwise. But what is it strictly that I thus imagine? let me consider: And having rejected whatever belongs not to the Wax, let me see what will remain, viz. this only, a thing extended, flexible, and mutable. But what is this flexible, and mutable? is it that I imagine that this Wax from being round may be made square, or from being square can be made triangular? No, this is not it; for I conceive it capable of innumerable such changes, and yet I cannot by my imagination run over these Innumerables; Wherefore this notion of its mutability proceeds not from my imagination. What then is extended? is not its Extension also unknown? For when it melts 'tis greater, when it boils 'tis greater, and yet greater when the heat is increas'd; and I should not rightly judge of the Wax, did I not think it capable of more various Extensions than I can imagine. It remains therefore for me only to confess, that I cannot imagine what this Wax is, but that I perceive with my Mind what it is. I speak of this particular Wax, for of Wax in general the notion is more clear.

But what Wax is this that I only conceive by my mind? 'Tis the same which I see, which I touch, which I imagine, and in fine, the same which at first I judged it to be. But this is to be noted, that the perception thereof is not sight, the touch, or the imagination thereof; neither was it ever so, though at first it seem'd so. But the perception thereof is the inspection or beholding of the Mind only, which may be either imperfect and confused, as formerly it was; or clear and distinct, as now it is; the more or the less I consider the Composition of the Wax.

In the interim, I cannot but admire how prone my mind is to erre; for though I revolve these things with my self silently, and without speaking, yet am I intangled in meer words, and am almost deceived by the usual way of expression; for we commonly say, that we see the Wax it self if it be present, and not, that we judge it present by its colour or shape; from whence I should immediately thus conclude, therefore the Wax is known by the sight of the eye, and not by the inspection of the mind only. Thus I should have concluded, had not I by chance look'd out of my

window, and seen men passing by in the Street; which men I as usually say that I see, as I do now, that I see this Wax; and yet I see nothing but their Hair and Garments, which perhaps may cover only artificial Machines and movements, but I judge them to be men; so that what I thought I only saw with my eyes, I comprehend by my Judicative Faculty, which is my Soul. But it becomes not one, who desires to be wiser than the Vulgar, to draw matter of doubt from those ways of expression, which the Vulgar have invented.

Wherefore let us proceed and consider, whether I perceived more perfectly and evidently what the Wax was, when I first look'd on't, and believed that I knew it by my outward senses, or at least by my common sense (as they call it) that is to say, by my imagination; or whether at present I better understand it, after I have more diligently enquired both what it is, and how it may be known. Surely it would be a foolish thing to make it matter of doubt to know which of these parts are true; What was there in my first perception that was distinct? What was there that seem'd not incident to every other Animal? But now when I distinguish the Wax from its outward adherents, and consider it as if it were naked, with it's coverings pull'd off, then I cannot but really perceive it with my mind, though yet perhaps my judgment may erre.

But what shall I now say as to my mind, or my self? (for as yet I admit nothing as belonging to me but a mind.) Why (shall I say?) should not I, who seem to perceive this Wax so distinctly, know my self not only more truly and more certainly, but more distinctly and evidently? For if I judge that this Wax exists, because I see this Wax; surely it will be much more evident, that I my self exist, because I see this Wax; for it may be that this that I see is not really Wax, also it may be that I have no eyes wherewith to see any thing; but it cannot be, when I see, or (which is the same thing) when I think that I see, that I who think should not exist. The same thing will follow if I judge that this Wax exists, because I touch, or imagine it, &c. And what has been said of Wax, may be apply'd to all other outward things.

Moreover, if the notion of Wax seems more distinct after it is made known to me, not only by my sight or touch, but by more and other causes; How much the more distinctly must I confess my self known unto my self, seeing that all sort of reasoning which furthers me in the perception of Wax, or any other Body, does also encrease the proofs of the nature of my Mind. But there are so many more things in the very Mind it self, by which the notion of it may be made more distinct, that those things which drawn from Body conduce to its knowledge are scarce to be mention'd.

And now behold of my own accord am I come to the place I would be in; for seeing I have now discover'd that Bodies themselves are not properly perceived by our senses or imagination, but only by our understanding, and are not therefore perceived, because they are felt or seen, but because they are understood; it plainly appears to me, that nothing can possibly be perceived by me easier, or more evidently, than my Mind.

But because I cannot so soon shake off the Acquaintance of my former Opinion, I am willing to stop here, that this my new knowledge may be better fixt in my memory the longer I meditate thereon.

Meditat. III. Of GOD, and that there is a God.

Now will I shut my eyes, I will stop my ears, and withdraw all my senses, I will blot out the Images of corporeal things clearly from my mind, or (because that can scarce be accomplish'd) I will give no heed to them, as being vain and false, and by discoursing with my self, and prying more rightly into my own Nature, will endeavour to make my self by degrees more known and familiar to my self.

I am a Thinking Thing, that is to say, doubting, affirming, denying, understanding few things, ignorant of many things, willing, nilling, imagining also, and sensitive. For (as before I have noted) though perhaps whatever I imagine, or am sensible of, as without me, Is not; yet that manner of thinking which I call sense and imagination

(as they are only certain Modes of Thinking) I am certain are in Me. So that in these few Words I have mention'd whatever I know, or at least Whatever as yet I perceive my self to know.

Now will I look about me more carefully to see Whether there Be not some other Thing in Me, of Which I have not yet taken Notice. I am sure That I am a Thinking Thing, and therefore Do not I know what is Required to make certain of any Thing? I Answer, that in this My first knowledge 'tis Nothing but a clear, and distinct perception of What I affirm, Which would not be sufficient to make me certain of the Truth of a Thing, if it were Possible that any thing that I so clearly and distinctly Perceive should be false. Wherefore I may lay this Down as a Principle. Whatever I Clearly and Distinctly perceive is certainly True.

But I have formerly Admitted of many Things as very Certain and manifest, Which I afterwards found to be doubtful. Therefore What sort of Things were they? Viz. Heaven, Earth, Stars, and all other things which I perceived by my Senses. But What did I Perceive of These Clearly? Viz. That I had the Ideas or Thoughts of these things in my mind, and at Present I cannot deny that I have these Ideas in Me. But there was some other thing Which I affirm'd, and Which (by Reason of the common Way of Belief) I thought that I Clearly Perceived; Which nevertheless, I did not really Perceive; And that was, that there were Certain Things Without Me from whence these Ideas Proceeded, and to which they were exactly like. And this it was, Wherein I was either Deceived, or if by Chance I Judged truly, yet it Proceeded not from the strength of my Perception.

But When I was exercised about any single and easie Proposition in Arithmetick or Geometry, as that two and three added make five, Did not I Perceive them Clearly enough to make me affirm them True? Truly concerning these I had no other Reason afterwards to Doubt, but That I thought Perhaps there may be a God who might have so created me, that I should be Deceived even in those things which seem'd most

Clear to me. And as often as this Pre-conceived opinion of Gods great Power comes into my Mind, I cannot but Confess that he may easily cause me to Err even in those things which I Think I perceive most Evidently with my Mind; yet as often as I Consider the Things themselves, which I Judge my self to perceive so Clearly, I am so fully Perswaded by them, that I easily Break out into these Expressions, Let Who can Deceive Me, yet he shall never Cause me Not to Be whilst I think that I Am, or that it shall ever be True, that I never was, Whilst at Present ’tis True that I am, or Perhaps, that Two and Three added make More or Less then Five; for in These things I Percieve a Manifest Repugnancy; And truely seeing I have no reason to Think any God a Deceiver, Nor as yet fully know Whether there Be any God, or Not, ’Tis but a slight and (as I may say) Metaphysical Reason of Doubt, which depends only on that opinion of which I am not yet Perswaded.

Wherefore That this Hindrance may be taken away, When I have time I ought to Enquire, Whether there Be a God, And if there be One, Whether he can be a Deceiver, For whilst I am Ignorant of this, I cannot possibly be fully Certain of any Other thing.

But now Method seems to Require Me to Rank all My Thoughts under certain Heads, and to search in Which of them Truth or Falshood properly Consists. Some of them are (as it were) the Images of Things, and to these alone the Name of an Idea properly belongs, as When I think upon a Man, A Chimera or Monster, Heaven, an Angel, or God. But there are others of them, that have superadded Forms to them, as when I Will, when I Fear, when I Affirm, when I Deny. I know I have alwayes (when ever I think) some certain Thing as the subject or object of my Thought, but in this last sort of thoughts there is something more which I Think upon then Barely the likeness of the Thing. And of these Thoughts some are called Wills and Affections, and Others of them Judgments.

Now as touching Ideas, if they be Consider’d alone as they are in themselves,

without Respect to any other Things, they cannot Properly be false; for Whether I Imagine a Goat or a Chimera, ’tis as Certain that I Imagine one as t’other. Also in the Will and Affections I need not Fear any Falshood, For tho I should Wish for evil Things, or Things that are Not, it is not therefore Not true that I Wish for them.

Wherefore there onely Remains my Judgments of Things, in which I must take Care that I be not deceived. Now the Chief and most usual Error that I discover in them is, That I Judge Those Ideas that are within me to be Conformable and like to certain things that are without Me; for truely if I Consider those Ideas as certain Modes of my Thought, without Respect to any other Thing, they will scarce afford me an Occasion of Erring.

Of these Ideas some are Innate, some Adventitious, and some Others seem to Me as Created by my self; For that I understand what A Thing Is, What is Truth, What a Thought, seems to Proceed meerly from my own Nature. But that I now hear a Noise, see the Sun, or feel heat, I have alwayes Judged to Proceed from Things External. But Lastly, Mermaids, Griffins, and such like Monsters, are made meerly by My self. And yet I may well think all of them either Adventitious, or all of them Innate, or all of them made by my self, for I have not as yet discover’d their true Original.

But I ought cheifly to search after those of them which I count Adventitious, and which I consider as coming from outward objects, that I may know what reason I have to think them like the things themselves, which they represent. Viz. Nature so teaches Me; and also I know that they depend not on my Will, and therefore not on me; for they are often present with me against my inclinations, or (as they say) in spite of my teeth, as now whether I will or no I feel heat, and therefore I think that the sense or Idea of heat is propagated to me by a thing really distinct from my self, and that is by the heat of the Fire at which I sit; And nothing is more obvious then for me to judge that That thing should transmit its own Likeness into me, rather then

that any other thing should be transmitted by it. Which sort of arguments whether firme enough or not I shall now Trie.

When I here say, that nature so teaches me, I understand only, that I am as it were willingly forced to beleive it, and not that ’tis discover’d to me to be true by any natural light; for these two differ very much. For whatever is discover’d to me by the Light of nature (as that it necessarily Follows that I am, because I think) cannot possibly be doubted; Because I am endowed with no other Faculty, in which I may put so great confidence, as I can in the Light of nature; or which can possibly tell me, that those things are false, which natural light teaches me to be true; and as to my natural Inclinations, I have heretofore often judged my self led by them to the election of the worst part, when I was in the choosing one of two Goods; and therefore I see no reason why I should ever trust them in any other thing.

And then, tho these Ideas depend not on my will, it does not therefore follow that they necessarily proceed from things external. For as, Altho those Inclinations (which I but now mention’d) are in me, yet they seem distinct and different from my will; so perhaps there may be in me some other faculty (to me unknown) which may prove the Efficient cause of these Ideas, as hitherto I have observed them to be formed in me whilst I dream, without the help of any External Object.

And last of all, tho they should proceed from things which are different from me, it does not therefore follow that they must be like those things. For often times I have found the thing and the Idea differing much. As for example, I find in my self two divers Ideas of the Sun, one as received by my senses (and which cheifly I reckon among those I call adventitious) by which it appears to me very smal, * another as taken from the arguments of Astronomers (that is to say, consequentially collected, or some other ways made by me from certain natural notions) by which ’tis rendred something bigger then the Globe of the Earth. Certainly both of these cannot be like that sun which is without me, and my reason perswades me, that that Idea is most

unlike the Sun, which seems to proceed Immediately from it self.

All which things sufficiently prove, that I have hitherto (not from a true judgement, but from a blind impulse) beleived that there are certain things different from my self, and which have sent their Ideas or Images into me by the Organs of my senses, or some other way.

But I have yet an other Way of inquiring, whether any of those Things (whose Ideas I have within Me) are Really Existent without Me; And that is Thus: As those Ideas are only Modes of Thinking, I acknowledge no Inequality between them, and they all proceed from me in the same Manner. But as one Represents one thing, an other, an other Thing, 'tis Evident there is a Great difference between them. * For without doubt, Those of them which Represent Substances are something More, or (as I may say) have More of Objective Reallity in them, then those that Represent only Modes or Accidents; and again, That by Which I understand a Mighty God, Eternal, Infinite, Omniscient, Omnipotent Creatour of all things besides himself, has certainly in it more Objective Reallity, then Those Ideas by which Finite Substances are Exhibited.

But Now, it is evident by the Light of Nature that there must be as much at least in the Total efficient Cause, as there is in the Effect of that Cause; For from Whence can the effect have its Reallity, but from the Cause? and how can the Cause give it that Reallity, unless it self have it?

And from hence it follows, that neither a Thing can be made out of Nothing, Neither a Thing which is more Perfect (that is, Which has in it self more Reallity) proceed from That Which is Less Perfect.

And this is Clearly True, not only in those Effects whose Actual or Formal Reallity is Consider'd, But in Those Ideas also, Whose Objective Reallity is only Respected; That is to say, for Example of Illustration, it is not only impossible that a stone, Which was not, should now begin to Be, unless it were produced by something, in

Which, Whatever goes to the Making a Stone, is either Formally or Virtually; neither can heat be Produced in any Thing, which before was not hot, but by a Thing which is at least of as equal a degree of Perfection as heat is; But also ’tis Impossible that I should have an Idea of Heat, or of a Stone, unless it were put into me by some Cause, in which there is at Least as much Reallity, as I Conceive there is in heat or a Stone. For tho that Cause transfers none of its own Actual or Formal Reality into my Idea, I must not from thence conclude that ’tis less real; but I may think that the nature of the Idea it self is such, that of it self it requires no other formal reality, but what it has from my thought, of which ’tis a mode. But that this Idea has this or that objective reallity, rather then any other, proceeds clearly from some cause, in which there ought to be at least as much formal reallity, as there is of objective reallity in the Idea it self. For if we suppose any thing in the Idea, which was not in its cause, it must of necessity have this from nothing; but (tho it be a most Imperfect manner of existing, by which the thing is objectively in the Intellect by an Idea, yet) it is not altogether nothing, and therefore cannot proceed from nothing.

Neither ought I to doubt, seeing the reallity which I perceive in my Ideas is only an objective reallity, that therefore it must of necessity follow, that the same reallity should be in the causes of these Ideas formally. But I may conclude, that ’tis sufficient that this reallity be in the very causes only objectively. For as that objective manner of being appertains to the very nature of an Idea, so that formal manner of being appertains to the very nature of a cause of Ideas, at least to the first and chiefest causes of them; For tho perhaps one Idea may receive its birth from an other, yet we cannot proceed in Infinitum, but at last we must arrive at some first Idea, whose cause is (as it were) an Original copy, in which all the objective reallity of the Idea is formally contain’d. So that I plainly discover by the light of nature, that the Ideas, which are in me, are (as it were) Pictures, which may easily come short of the perfection of those things from whence they are taken, but cannot contain any thing greater or more perfect then them: And the longer and more

diligently I pry into these things, so much the more clearly and distinctly do I discover them to be true.

But what shall I conclude from hence? Thus, that if the objective reallity of any of my Ideas be such, that it cannot be in me either formally or eminently, and that therefore I cannot be the cause of that Idea, from hence it necessarily Follows, that I alone do not only exist, but that some other thing, which is cause of that Idea, does exist also.

But if I can find no such Idea in me, I have no argument to perswade me of the existence of any thing besides my self for I have diligently enquired, and hitherto I could discover no other perswasive.

Some of these Ideas there are (besides that which represents my self to my self, of which in this place I cannot doubt) which represent to me, one of them a God, others of them Corporeal and Inanimate things, some of them Angels, others Animals, and lastly some of them which exhibite to me men like my self.

As touching those that represent Men or Angels or Animals, I easily understand that they may be made up of those Ideas which I have of my self, of Corporeal things, and of God, tho there were neither man (but my self) nor Angel, nor Animal in being.

And as to the Ideas of Corporeal things, I find nothing in them of that perfection, but it may proceed from my self; for if I look into them more narrowly, and examine them more particularly, as yesterday (in the second Medit.) I did the Idea of Wax, I find there are but few things which I perceive clearly and distinctly in them, viz. Magnitude or extension in Longitude, Latitude, and Profundity, the Figure or shape which arises from the termination of that Extension, the Position or place which divers Figured Bodies have in respect of each other, their motion or change of place; to which may be added, their substance, continuance, and number; as to the other, such as are, Light, Colours, Sounds, Smels, Tasts, Heat, and Cold, with the other

tactile qualities, I have but very obscure and confused thoughts of them, so that I know not, whether they are true or false, that is to say, whether the Ideas I have of them are the Ideas of things which really are, or are not. For altho falshood formally and properly so called, consists only in the judgement (as before I have observed) yet there is an other sort of material falshood in Ideas, when they represent a thing as really existent, tho it does not exist; so, for example, the Ideas I have of heat and cold are so obscure and confused, that I cannot collect from them, whether cold be a privation of heat, or heat a privation of cold, or whether either of them be a real quality, or whether neither of them be real. And since every Idea must be like the thing it represents, if it be true that cold is nothing but the privation of heat, that Idea which represents it to me as a thing real and positive may deservedly be called false. The same may be apply'd to other Ideas.

And now I see no necessity why I should assigne any other Author of these Ideas but my self; for if they are false, that is, represent things that are not, I know by the light of nature that they proceed from nothing; that is to say, I harbour them upon no other account, but because my nature is deficient in something, and imperfect. But if they are true, yet seeing I discover so little reality in them, that that very reality scarce seems to be realy, I see no reason why I my self should not be the Author of them.

But also some of those very Ideas of Corporeal things which are clear and distinct, I may seem to have borrow'd from the Idea I have of my self, viz. Substance, duration, number, and the like; For when I conceive a stone to be a substance (that is, a thing apt of it self to exist) and also that I my self am a substance, tho I conceive my self a thinking substance and not extended, and the stone an extended substance and not thinking, by which there is a great diversity between both the conceptions, yet they agree in this, that they are both substances. So when I conceive my self as now in being, and also remember, that heretofore I have been; and since I have divers thoughts, which I can number or count; from hence it is that I come by

the notions of duration and number; which afterwards I apply to other things.

As to those other things, of which the Idea of a body is made up, as extension, figure, place and motion, they are not formally in me, seeing I am only a thinking thing; yet seeing they are only certain modes of substance, and I my self also am a substance, they may seem to be in me eminently.

* Wherefore there only Remains the Idea of a God, wherein I must consider whether there be not something included, which cannot possibly have its original from me. By the word God, I mean a certain Infinite Substance, Independent, Omniscient, Almighty, by whom both I my self, and every thing else that is (if any thing do Actualy exist) was created. All which Attributes are of such an high nature, that the more attentively I consider them, the less I conceive my self possible to be the Author of these notions.

From what therefore has been said I must conclude that there is a God; for tho the Idea of substance may arise in me, because that I my self am a substance, yet I could not have the Idea of an Infinite substance (seeing I my self am finite) unless it proceeded from a substance which is really Infinite. Neither ought I to think that I have no true Idea of Infinity, or that I perceive it only by the negation of what is finite, as I conceive rest and darkness by the negation or absence of motion or light. But on the contrary I plainly understand, that there is more reality in an Infinite substance, then in a Finite; and that therefore the perception of an Infinite (as God) is antecedent to the notion I have of a finite (as my self). For how should I know that I doubt or desire, that is to say, that I want something, and that I am not altogether perfect, unless I had the Idea of a being more perfect then my self, by comparing my self to which I may discover my own Imperfections.

Neither can it be said that this Idea of God is false Materialiter, and that therefore it proceeds from nothing, as before I observed of the Ideas of heat and cold, &c. For on the contrary, seeing this notion is most clear and distinct, and contains in it self

more objective reality then any other Idea, none can be more true in it self, nor in which less suspition of falshood can be found. This Idea (I say) of a being infinitely perfect is most true, for tho it may be supposed that such a being does not exist, yet it cannot be supposed that the Idea of such a being exhibites to me nothing real, as before I have said of the Idea of cold. This Idea also is most clear and distinct, for whatever I perceive clearly and distinctly to be real, and true, and perfect, is wholy contain'd in this Idea of God.

Neither can it be objected, that I cannot comprehend an Infinite, or that there are innumerable other things in God, which I can neither conceive, nor in the least think upon; for it is of the very nature of an Infinite not to be apprehendable by me who am finite. And 'tis sufficient to me to prove this my Idea of God to be the most true, the most clear, and the most distinct Idea of all those Ideas I have, upon this account, that I understand that God is not to be understood, and that I judge that whatever I clearly perceive and know Implys any perfection, as also perhaps other innumerable perfections, which I am ignorant of, are in God either formally or eminently.

Doubt. But perhaps I am something more then I take my self to be, and perhaps all these perfections which I attribute to God, are potentially in me, tho at present they do not shew themselves, and break into action. For I am now fully experienced that my Knowledge may be encreased, and I see nothing that hinders why it may not encrease by degrees in Infinitum, nor why by my knowledge so encreased I may not attain to the other perfections of God; nor lastly, why the power or aptitude of having these perfections may not be sufficient to produce the Idea of them in me.

Solution. But none of these will do; for first, tho it be true that my Knowledge is capable of being increased, and that many things are in me potentially, which actually are not, yet none of these go to the making an Idea of God, in which I conceive nothing potentially, for tis a certain argument of imperfection that a thing may be encreased Gradually. Moreover, tho my knowledge may be more and more

encreased, yet I know that it can never be actually Infinite, for it can never arrive to that height of perfection, which admits not of an higher degree. But I conceive God to be actually so Infinite, that nothing can be added to his perfections. And lastly, I perceive that the objective being of an Idea cannot be produced only by the potential being of a thing (which in proper speech is nothing) but requires an actual or formal being to its production.

Of all which forementioned things there is nothing that is not evident by the light of reason to any one that will diligently consider them. Yet because that (when I am careless, and the Images of sensible things blind my understanding) I do not so easily call to mind the reasons, why the Idea of a being more perfect then my self should of necessity proceed from a being which is really more perfect; It will be requisite to enquire further, whether I, who have this Idea, can possibly be, unless such a being did exist. To which end let me aske, from whence should I be? From my self? or from my Parents? or from any other thing less perfect then God? for nothing can be thought or supposed more perfect, or equally perfect with God.

But first, If I were from my self, I should neither doubt, nor desire, nor want any thing, for I should have given my self all those perfections, of which I have any Idea, and consequently I my self should be God; and I cannot think that those things I want, are to be acquired with greater difficulty then those things I have; but on the contrary, ’tis manifest, that it were much more difficult that I (that is, a substance that thinks) should arise out of nothing, then that I should acquire the knowledge of many things whereof I am Ignorant, which is only the accident of that substance. And certainly if I had that greater thing (viz being) from my self, I should not have denyed my self (not only, those things which may be easier acquired, but also) All those things, which I perceived are contain’d in the Idea of a God; and the reason is, for that no other things seem to me to be more difficultly done, and certainly if they were Really more difficult, they would seem more difficult to me (if whatever I have, I have from my self) for in those things I should find my Power put to a stop.

Neither can I Evade the force of these Arguments by supposing my self to have alwaies Been, what now I am, and that therefore I need not seek for an Author of my Being. For the Duration or Continuance of my life may be divided into Innumerable Parts, each of which does not at all depend on the Other Parts; Therefore it will not follow, that because a while ago, I was, I must of necessity now Be. I say, this will not follow, Unless, I suppose some Cause to Create me (as it were) anew for this Moment (that is, Conserve me). For ’tis evident to one that Considers the Nature of Duration, that the same Power and Action is requisite to the Conservation of a Thing each Moment of its Being, as there is to the Creation of that Thing anew, if it did not exist. So that ’tis one of those Principles which are Evident by the Light of Nature: that the Act of Conservation differs only Ratione (as the Philosophers term it) from the Act of Creation.

Wherefore I ought to ask my self this Question, whether I, who now Am; have any Power to Cause my self to Be hereafter? (for had I any such power, I should certainly know of it, seeing I am nothing but a Thinking Thing, or at least at present I onely treat of that part of me, which is a Thing that Thinks) to which, I answer, that I can discover no such Power in Me; And consequently, I evidently know that I depend on some Other being distinct from my self.

But what if I say that perhaps this Being is not God, but that I am produced either by my Parents, or some other Causes less perfect then God? In answer to which let me consider (as I have said before) that ’tis manifest that whatever is in the effect, so much at least ought to be in the cause; and therefore seeing I am a thing that thinks, and have in me an Idea of God, it will confessedly follow, that whatever sort of cause I assign of my own Being, it also must be a Thinking Thing, and must have an Idea of all those Perfections, which I attribute to God; Of which Cause it may be again Asked, whether it be from it self, or from any other Cause? If from it self, ’tis evident (from what has been said) that it must be God; For seeing it has the Power of Existing of it self, without doubt it has also the power of actually Possessing all

those Perfections whereof it has an Idea in it self, that is, all those Perfections which I conceive in God. But if it Be from an other Cause, it may again be asked of that Cause whether it be of it self, or from an other; Till at length We arrive at the Last Cause of All, Which will Be God. For ’tis evident, that this Enquiry will not admit of Progressus in Infinitum, especially when at Present I treat not only of that Cause which at first made Me; But chiefly of that which conserves me in this Instant time.

Neither can it be supposed that many partial Causes have concurred to the making Me, and that I received the Idea of one of Gods perfections from One of them, and from an other of them the Idea of an other; and that therefore all these Perfections are to be found scattered in the World, but not all of them Joyn’d in any one which may Be God. For on the contrary, Unity, Simplicity, or the inseparability of All Gods Attributes is one of the chief Perfections which I conceive in Him; and certainly the Idea of the Unity of the Divine Perfections could not be created in me by any other cause, then by That, from whence I have received the Ideas of his other perfections; For ’tis Impossible to make me conceive these perfections, conjunct and inseparable, unless he should also make me know what perfections these are.

Lastly as touching my having my Being from my Parents. Tho whatever Thoughts I have heretofore harbour’d of Them were True, yet certainly they contribute nothing to my conservation, neither proceed I from them as I am a Thing that Thinks, for they have onely predisposed that material Thing, wherein I, that is, my mind (which only at present I take for my self) Inhabits. Wherefore I cannot now Question that I am sprung from them. But I must of necessity conclude that because I am, and because I have an Idea of a Being most perfect, that is, of God, it evidently follows that there is a God.

* Now it only remains for me to examine, how I have received this Idea of God. For I have neither received it by means of my Senses, neither comes it to me without my Forethought, as the Ideas of sensible things use to do, when such things Work on the

Organs of my Sense, or at least seem so to work; Neither is this Idea framed by my self, for I can neither detract from, nor add any thing thereto. Wherefore I have only to conclude that it is Innate, even as the Idea of me my self is Natural to my self.

And truly ’tis not to be Admired that God in Creating me should Imprint this Idea in me, that it may there remain as a stamp impressed by the Workman God on me his Work, neither is it requisite that this stamp should be a Thing different from the Work it self, but ’tis very Credible (from hence only that God Created me) that I am made as it were according to his likeness and Image, and that the same likeness, in which the Idea of God is contain’d, is perceived by Me with the same faculty, with which I perceive my Self; That is to say, whilst I reflect upon my self, I do not only perceive that I am an Imperfect thing, having my dependance upon some other thing, and that I am a Thing that Desires more and better things Indefinitely; But also at the same time I understand, that He on whom I depend contains in him all those wish’d for things (not only Indefinitely and Potentially, but) Really, Indefinitely; and that therefore he is God. The whole stress of which * Argument lies thus, because I know it Impossible for Me to Be of the same Nature I am, Viz. Having the Idea of a God in me, unless really there were a God, a God (I say) that very same God, whose Idea I have in my Mind (that is, Having all those perfections, which I cannot comprehend, but can as it were think upon them) and who is not subject to any Defects.

By which ’tis evident that God is no Deceiver; for ’tis manifest by the Light of Nature, that all fraud and deceit depends on some defect. But before I prosecute this any farther, or pry into other Truthes which may be deduced from this, I am willing here to stop, and dwell upon the Contemplation of this God, to Consider with my self His Divine Attributes, to behold, admire, and adore the Loveliness of this Immense light, as much as possibly I am able to accomplish with my dark Understanding. For as by Faith we believe that the greatest happiness of the next Life consists alone in the Contemplation of the Divine Majesty, so we find by

Experience that now we receive from thence the greatest pleasure, whereof we are capable in this Life; Tho it be much more Imperfect then that in the Next.

Meditat. IV. Of Truth and Falshood.

Of late it has been so common with me to withdraw my Mind from my sences, and I have so throughly consider'd how few things there are appertaining to Bodies that are truly perceived, and that there are more Things touching Mans mind, and yet more concerning God, which are well known; that now without any difficulty I can turn my Thoughts from things sensible, to those which are only Intelligible, and Abstracted from Matter. And truely I have a much more distinct Idea of a Mans mind (as it is a Thinking Thing, having no Corporeal Dimensions of Length, Breadth, and Thickness, nor having any other Corporeal Quality) then the Idea of any Corporeal Thing can be. And when I reflect upon my self, and consider how that I doubt, that is, am an imperfect dependent Being, I from hence Collect such a clear and distinct Idea of an Independent perfect Being, which is God, and from hence only that I have such an Idea, that is, because I that have this Idea do my self Exist; I do so clearly conclude that God also Exists, and that on him my Being depends each Minute; That I am Confident nothing can be known more Evidently and Certainly by Humane Understanding.

And now I seem to perceive a Method by which, (from this Contemplation of the true God, in whom the Treasures of Knowledge and Wisdome are Hidden) I may attain the Knowledge of other Things.

And first, I know 'tis impossible that this God should deceive me; For in all cheating and deceipt there is something of imperfection; and tho to be able to deceive may seem to be an Argument of ingenuity and power, yet without doubt to have the Will of deceiving is a sign of Malice and Weakness, and therefore is not Incident to God.

I have also found in my self a Judicative faculty, which certainly (as all other things

I possess) I have received from God; and seeing he will not deceive me, he has surely given me such a Judgement, that I can never Err, whilst I make a Right Use of it. Of which truth I can make no doubt, unless it seems, that From hence it will follow, That therefore I can never Err; for if whatever I have, I have from God, and if he gave me no Faculty of Erring, I may seem not to be able to Err. And truly so it is whilst I think upon God, and wholly convert my self to the consideration of him, I find no occasion of Error or Deceit; but yet when I return to the Contemplation of my self, I find my self liable to Innumerable Errors. Enquiring into the cause of which, I find in my self an Idea, not only a real and positive one of a God, that is, of a Being infinitely perfect, but also (as I may so speak) a Negative Idea of Nothing; that is to say, I am so constituted between God and Nothing or between a perfect Being and No-being, that as I am Created by the Highest Being, I have nothing in Me by which I may be deceived or drawn into Error; but as I pertake in a manner of Nothing, or of a No-Being, that is, as I my self am not the Highest Being, and as I want many perfections, ’tis no Wonder that I should be Deceived.

By which I understand that Error * (as it is Error) is not any real Being dependant on God, but it is only a Defect; And that therefore to make me Err there is not requisite a faculty of Erring given me by God, but only it so happens that I Err meerly because the Judicative faculty, which he has given me, is not Infinite.

But yet this Account is not fully satisfactory; for Error is not only a meer Negation, but ’tis a Privation, or a want of a certain Knowledge, which ought (as it were) to be in me. And when I consider the Nature of God, it seems impossible that he should give me any faculty which is not perfect in its kind, or which should want any of its due perfections; for if by how much the more skilful the Workman is, by so much the Perfecter Works proceed from him. What can be made by the Great Maker of all things which is not fully perfect? For I cannot Doubt but God may Create me so that I may never be deceived, neither can I doubt but that he Wills whatever is Best; Is it therefore better for me to be deceived, or not to be deceived?

These things when I Consider more heedfully, it comes into my Mind, First, that ’tis no cause of Admiration that God should do Things whereof I can give no account, nor must I therefore doubt his Being, because there are many things done by him, and I not comprehend Why or How they are done; for seeing I now know that my Nature is very Weak and Finite, and that the Nature of God is Immense, Incomprehensible, Infinite; from hence I must fully, understand, that he can do numberless things, the Causes whereof lie hidden to Me. Upon which account only I esteem all those Causes which are Drawn from the End (viz. Final Causes) as of no use in Natural Philosophy, for I cannot without Rashness Think my self able to Discover Gods Designes.

I perceive this also, that whenever we endeavour to know whether the Works of God are perfect, we must not Respect any one kind of Creature singly, but the Whole Universe of Beings; for perhaps what (if considered alone) may Deservedly seem Imperfect, yet (as it is a part of the World) is most perfect; and tho since I have doubted of all things, I have discover’d nothing certainly to Exist, but my self, and God, yet since I have Consider’d the Omnipotency of God, I cannot deny, but that many other things are made (or at least, may be made) by him, so that I my self may be a part of this Universe.

Furthermore, coming nigher to my self, and enquiring what these Errors of mine, are (which are the Only Arguments of my Imperfection) * I find them to depend on two concurring Causes, on my faculty of Knowing, and on my faculty of Choosing or Freedome of my Will, that is to say, from my Understanding, and my Will together. For by my Understanding alone I only perceive Ideas, whereon I make Judgments, wherein (precisely so taken) there can be no Error, properly so called; for tho perhaps there may be numberless things, whose Ideas I have not in Me, yet I am not properly to be said Deprived of them, but only negatively wanting them; and I cannot prove that God ought to have given me a greater faculty of Knowing. And tho I understand him to be a skilful Workman, yet I cannot Think, that he ought to

have put all those perfections in each Work of his singly, with which he might have endowed some of them.

Neither can I complain that God has not given me a Will, or Freedom of Choise, large and perfect enough; for I have experienced that ’tis Circumscribed by no Bounds.

And ’tis worth our taking notice, that I have no other thing in me so perfect and so Great, but I Understand that there may be Perfecter and Greater, for if (for Example) I consider the Faculty of Understanding, I presently perceive that in me ’tis very small and Finite, and also at the same time I form to my self an Idea of an other Understanding not only much Greater, but the Greatest and Infinite, which I perceive to belong to God. In the same manner if I enquire into memory or imagination or any other faculties, I find them in my self Weak and Circumscribed, but in God I Understand them to be Infinite, there is therefore only my Will or Freedome of Choice, which I find to be so Great, that I cannot frame to my self an Idea of One Greater, so that ’tis by this chiefly by which I Understand my self to Bear the likeness and Image of God. For tho the Will in God be without comparison Greater then Mine, both as to the Knowledge and Power which are Joyn’d therewith, which make it more strong and Effective, and also as to the Object thereof, for God can apply himself to more things then I can. Yet being taken Formally and Precisely Gods Will seems no greater then Mine. For the Freedome of Will consists only in this, that we can Do, or not Do such a Thing (that is, affirm or deny, prosecute or avoid) or rather in this Only, that we are so carried to a Thing which is proposed by Our Intellect to Affirm or Deny, Prosecute or Shun, that we are sensible, that we are not Determin’d to the Choice or Aversion thereof, by any outward Force.

Neither is it Requisite to make one Free that he should have an Inclination to both sides. For on the contrary, by how much the more strongly I am inclined to one side (whether it be that I evidently perceive therein Good or Evil, or Whether it be that

God has so disposed my Inward Thoughts) By so much the more Free am I in my Choice.

Neither truly do Gods Grace or Natural Knowledge take away from my Liberty, but rather encrease and strengthen it. For that indifference which I find in my self, when no Reason inclines me more to one side, then to the other, is the meanest sort of Liberty, and is so far from being a sign of perfection, that it only argues a defect or negation of Knowledge; for if I should always Clearly see what were True and Good I should never deliberate in my Judgement or Choice, and Consequently, tho I were perfectly Free, yet I should never be Indifferent.

From all which, I perceive that neither the Power of Willing precisely so taken, which I have from God, is the Cause of my Errors, it being most full and perfect in its kind; Neither also the Power of Understanding, for whatever I Understand (since ’tis from God that I Understand it) I understand aright, nor can I be therein Deceived.

From Whence therefore proceed all my Errors? To which, I answer, that they proceed from hence only, that seeing the Will expatiates it self farther then the Understanding, I keep it not within the same bounds with my Understanding, but often extend it to those things which I Understand not, to which things it being Indifferent, it easily Declines from what is True and Good; and consequently I am Deceived and Commit sin. * Thus, for example, when lately I felt my self to enquire, Whether any thing doth Exist, and found that from my setting my self to Examine such a thing, it evidently follows that I my self Exist, I could not but Judge, what I so clearly Understood, to be true, not that I was forced thereto by any outward impulse, but because a strong Propension in my Will did follow this Great Light in my Understanding, so that I believed it so much the more freely and willingly, by how much the less indifferent I was thereto. But now I understand, not only, that I Exist as I am a Thing that Thinks, but I also meet with a certain Idea of a

Corporeal Nature, and it so happens that I doubt, whether that Thinking Nature that is in me be Different from that Corporeal Nature, or Whether they are both the same: but in this I suppose that I have found no Argument to incline me either ways, and therefore I am Indifferent to affirm or deny either, or to Judge nothing of either; But this indifferency extends it self not only to those things of which I am clearly ignorant, but generally to all those things which are not so very evidently known to me at the Time when my Will Deliberates of them; for tho never so probable Guesses incline me to one side, yet the Knowing that they are only Conjectures, and not indubitable reasons, is enough to Draw my Assent to the Contrary Part. Which Lately I have sufficiently experienced, when I supposed all those things (which formerly I assented to as most True) as very False, for this Reason only that I found my self able to doubt of them in some manner.

If I abstain from passing my Judgment, when I do not clearly and distinctly enough perceive what is Truth, ’tis evident that I do well, and that I am not deceived: But if I affirm or deny, then ’tis that I abuse the freedome of my will, and if I turn my self to that part which is false, I am deceived; but if I embrace the contrary Part, ’tis but by chance that I light on the Truth, yet I shall not therefore be Blameless, for ’tis Manifest by the light of Nature that the Perception of the Understanding ought to preceed the Determination of the Will. And ’tis in this abuse of Free-Will that That Privation consists, which Constitutes Error; I say there is a Privation in the Action as it proceeds from Me, but not in the Faculty which I have received from God; nor in the Action as it depends on him.

Neither have I any Reason to Complain that God has not given me a larger Intellective Faculty, or more Natural Light, for ’tis a necessary Incident to a finite Understanding that it should not Understand All things, and ’tis Incident to a Created Understanding to be Finite: and I have more Reason to thank him for what he has bestowed upon me (tho he owed me nothing) then to think my self Robbed by him of those things which he never gave me.

Nor have I Reason to Complain that he has given me a Will larger then my Understanding: for seeing the Will Consists in one thing only, and as it were in an Indivisible (viz. to Will, or not to Will) it seems contrary to its nature that it should be less then ’tis; and certainly by how much the Greater it is, so much the more Thankful I ought to be to him; that Gave it me.

Neither can I Complain that God concurrs with me in the Production of those Voluntary Actions or Judgements in which I am deceived: for those Acts as they depend on God are altogether True and Good; and I am in some measure more perfect in that I can so Act, then if I could not: for that Privation, in which the Ratio Formalis of Falshood and Sin consists, wants not the Concourse of God; For it is not A Thing, and having respect to him as its Cause, ought not to be called Privation, but Negation; for certainly ’tis no Imperfection in God, that he has given me a freedome of Assenting or not Assenting to some things, the clear and distinct Knowledge whereof he has not Imparted to my Understanding; but certainly ’tis an Imperfection in me, that I abuse this liberty, and pass my Judgement on those things which I do not Rightly Understand.

Yet I see that ’tis Possible with God to effect that (tho I should remain Free, and of a Finite Knowledge) I should never Err, that is, if he had endowed my Understanding with a clear and distinct Knowledge of all things whereof I should ever have an Occasion of deliberating; or if he had only so firmly fix’d in my Mind, that I should never forget, this, That I must never Judge of a thing which I do not clearly and distinctly Understand; Either of which things had God done, I easily perceive that I (as consider’d in my self) should be more perfect then now I am, yet nevertheless I cannot deny but that there may be a greater perfection in the whole Universe of Things, for that some of its parts are Obnoxious to Errors, and some not, then if they were all alike. And I have no Reason to Complain, that it has pleased God, that I should Act on the Stage of this World a Part not the chief and most perfect of all; Or that I should not be able to abstain from Error in the first way above specifi’d, which

depends upon the Evident Knowledge of those things whereof I deliberate; Yet that I may abstain from Error by the other means abovemention'd, which depends only on this, That I Judge not of any Thing, the truth whereof is not Evident. For tho I have experienced in my self this Infirmity, that I cannot always be intent upon one and the same Knowledge, yet I may by a continued and often repeated Meditation bring this to pass, that as often as I have use of this Rule I may Remember it, by which means I may Get (as it were) an habit of not erring.

In which thing seeing, the greatest and chief perfection of Man consists, I repute my self to have gain'd much by this days Meditation, for that therein I have discover'd the Cause of Error, and Falshood; which certainly can be no other then what I have now Declared; for whenever in Passing my Judgement, I bridle my Will so that it extend it self only to those things which I clearly and distinctly perceive, it is impossible that I can Err. For doubtless All clear and distinct Perception is something, and therefore cannot proceed from Nothing, but must necessarily have God for its Author (God, I say, Who is infinitely Perfect, and who cannot Deceive) and therefore it Must be True.

Nor have I this Day learnt only what I must beware off that I be not deceived, but also what I must Do to Discover Truth, for That I shall certainly find, if I fully Apply my self to those things only, which I perfectly understand; and if I distinguish between those and what I apprehend but confusedly and obscurely; Both which hereafter I shall endeavour.

Meditat. V. Of the Essence of Things Material. And herein Again of God. And that he does Exist.

There are yet remaining many Things concerning Gods Attributes, and many things concerning the nature of my self or of my Mind, which ought to be searched into: but these perhaps I shall set upon at some other Opportunity. And at Present nothing

seems to me more requisite (feeling I have discover'd what I must avoid, and what I must Do for the Attaining of Truth) then that I imploy my Endeavours to free my self from those doubts into which I have lately fallen, and that I try whether I can have any certainty of Material Things.

But before I enquire whether there be any such things Really Existent without Me, I ought to consider the Ideas of those things, as they are in my Thoughts and try which of them are Distinct, which confused.

In which search I find that I distinctly imagine Quantity, that which Philosophers commonly call continued, that is to say, the Extension of that Quantity or thing continued into Length, Breadth, and Thickness, I can count in it divers Parts, to which parts I can assign Bigness, Figure, Position, and Local Motion, to which Local Motion I can assign Duration. Neither are only these Generals plainly discover'd and known by Me, but also by attentive Consideration, I perceive Innumerable particulars concerning the Shapes, Number, and Motion of These Bodies; The Truth whereof is so evident, and agreeable to my Nature, that when I first discover'd them, I seemed not so much to have Learnt any thing that is new, as to have only remembred what I have known before, or only to have thought on those things which were in me before, tho this be the first time that I have examin'd them so diligently.

One thing there is worthy my Consideration, which is, that I find in my self innumerable Ideas of certain things, which tho perhaps they exist no where without Me, yet they cannot Be said to be Nothing; and tho they are Thought upon by me at my will and pleasure, yet they are not made by Me, but have their own True and Immutable Natures. As when, for example, * I Imagine a Triangle, tho perhaps such a Figure Exists no where out of my Thoughts, nor ever will Exist, yet the Nature thereof is determinate, and its Essence or Form is Immutable and Eternal, which is neither made by me, nor depends on my mind, as appears for that many properties

may be demonstrated of this Triangle, viz. That its three Angles are equal to two right ones, that to its Greatest Angle the Greatest side is subtended, and such like, which I now clearly know whether I will or not, tho before I never thought on them, when I imagine a Triangle, and consequently they could not be invented by Me. And ’tis nothing to the purpose for me to say, that perhaps this Idea of a Triangle came to me by the Organs of sense, because I have sometimes seen bodies of a Triangular Shape; for I can think of Innumerable other Figures, which I cannot suspect to have come in through my senses, and yet I can Demonstrate various properties of them, as well as of a Triangle, which certainly are all true, seeing I know them clearly, and therefore they are something, and not a meer Nothing, for ’tis Evident that what is true is something.

And now I have sufficiently Demonstrated, that what I clearly perceive, is True; And tho I had not demonstrated it, yet such is the Nature of my Mind, that I could not but give my Assent to what I so perceive, at least, as long as I so perceive it; and I remember (heretofore when I most of all relied on sensible Objects) that I held those Truths for the most certain which I evidently perceived, such as are concerning Figures, Numbers, with other parts of Arithmetick, and Geometry, as also whatever relates to pure and abstracted Mathematicks.

Now therefore, if from this alone, That I can frame the Idea of a Thing in my Mind, it follows, That whatever I clearly and distinctly perceive belonging to a thing, does Really belong to it; Cannot I from hence draw an Argument to Prove the Existence of a God? Certainly I find the Idea of a God, or infinitely perfect Being, as naturally in me, as the Idea of any Figure, or Number; and I as clearly and distinctly understand that it appertains to his Nature Always to Be, as I know that what I can demonstrate of a Mathematical Figure or Number belongs to the Nature of that Figure or Number: so that, tho all things which I have Meditated upon these three or four days were not true, yet I may well be as certain of the Existence of a God, as I have hitherto been of Mathematical Truths.

Doubt. Yet this Argument at first sight appears not so evident, but looks rather like a sophism; for seeing I am used in all other things to Distinguish Existence from Essence, I can easily perswade my self that the Existence of God may be distinguish'd from his Essence, so that I may Imagine God not to Exist.

Solution. But considering it more strictly, 'tis manifest, that the Existence of God can no more be seperated from his Essence, then the Equality of the Three Angles to two right ones can be seperated from the Essence of a Triangle, or then the Idea of a Mountain can be without the Idea of a valley; so that 'tis no less a Repugnancy to think of a God (that is, A Being infinitely perfect) who wants Existence (that is, who wants a Perfection) then to think of a Mountain, to which there is no Valley adjoyning.

Doubt. But what if I cannot imagine God but as Existing, or a Mountain without a Vally? yet supposing me to think of a Mountain with a Vally, it does not from thence follow, that there Is a Mountain in the World; so supposing me to think of a God as Existing, yet does it not follow that God Really Exists. For my Thought imposes no necessity on Things, and as I may imagine a Winged Horse, tho no Horse has Wings, so I may imagine an existing God, tho no God exist.

Solution. 'Tis true the Sophism seems to lie in this, yet tho I cannot conceive a Mountain but with a Vally, it does not from hence follow, that a Mountain or Vally do Exist, but this will follow, that whether a Mountain or a Vally do or do not Exist, yet they cannot be seperated: so from hence that I cannot think of God but as Existing, it follows that Existence is Inseperable from God, and therefore that he Really Exists; Not because my Thought does all this, or Imposes any necessity on any Thing, but contrarily, because the necessity of the thing it self (viz. of Gods Existence) Determines me to think thus; for 'tis not in my Power to think a God without Existence (that is, A Being absolutely perfect without the Cheif Perfection) as it is in my Power to imagine a Horse either with or without Wings.

Doubt. And here it cannot be said, that I am forced to suppose God Existing, after I have supposed him endowed with all Perfections, seeing Existence is one of them; but that my First Position (viz. His Absolute Perfection) is not necessary. Thus, for example, 'tis not necessary for me to think all Quadrilateral Figures inscribed in a Circle; But supposing that I think so, I am then necessitated to Confess a Rhombe Inscribed therein, and yet this is evidently False.

Solution. For tho I am not forced at any time to think of a God; yet as often as I cast my Thoughts on a First and Cheif Being, and as it were bring forth out of the Treasury of my Mind an Idea thereof, I must of necessity attribute thereto all Manner of Perfections, tho I do not at that time count them over, or Remark each single One; which necessity is sufficient to make me hereafter (when I come to consider Existence to be a Perfection) conclude Rightly, That the First and Chief Being does Exist. Thus, for example, I am not obliged at any time to imagine a Triangle, yet whenever I please to Consider of a Right-lined Figure having only three Angles, I am then necessitated to allow it all those Requisites from which I may argue rightly, That the Three Angles thereof are not Greater then Two Right Ones, Tho upon the first consideration this came not into my Thought. But when I enquire what Figures may be inscribed within a Circle, I am not at all necessitated to think that all Quadrilateral Figures are of that sort; neither can I possibly imagine this, whilst I admit of nothing, but what I clearly and distinctly Understand: and therefore there is a great Difference between these False suppositions, and True natural Ideas, the first and Chief; whereof is that of a God; For by many wayes I understand That not to be a Fiction depending on my Thought, but an Image of a True and Immutable Nature; As first, because I can think of no other thing but God to Whose Essence Existence belongs. Next because I cannot Imagine Two or More Gods, and supposing that he is now only One, I may plainly perceive it necessary for Him to Have been from Eternity, and will Be to Eternity; And Lastly because I perceive many Other Things in God, Which I cannot Change, and from which I

cannot Detract.

But whatever way of Argumentation I use, it comes All at last to this one Thing, That I am fully perswaded of the Truth of those things only, which appear to me clearly and distinctly. And tho some of those things, which I so perceive, are obvious to every Man, and some are only discover'd by Those that search more nighly, and enquire more carefully, yet when such truths are discover'd, they are esteem'd no less certain than the Others. For Example, Tho it do not so easily appear, that in a Rightangled Triangle, the square of the Base is equal to the squares of the sides, as it appears, that the Base is suspended under its Largest Angle, yet the first Proposition is no less certainly believed when once 'tis perceived, then this Last.

Thus in Reference to God; certainly, unless I am overrun with Prejudice, or have my thoughts begirt on all sides with sensible Objects, I should acknowledge nothing before or easier then him; For what is more self-evident then that there is a Chief Being, or then that a God (to whose essence alone Existence appertains) does Exist? And tho serious Consideration is required to perceive thus much, yet Now, I am not only equally certain of it, as of what seems most certain, but I perceive also that the Truth of other Things so depends on it, that without it nothing can ever be perfectly known.

For tho my nature be such, that during the time of my Clear and Distinct Perception, I cannot but believe it true; yet my Nature is such also, that I cannot fix the Intention of my Mind upon one and the same thing alwayes, so as to perceive it clearly, and the Remembrance of what Judgement I have formerly made is often stirred up, when I cease attending to those reasons for which I passed such a Judgment, other Reasons may then be produced, which (if I did not know God) may easily move me in my Opinion; and by this means I shall never attain to the true and certain Knowledge of any Thing, but Wandring and Unstable opinions. So, for example,

when I consider the Nature of a Triangle, it plainly appears to me (as understanding the Principles of Geometry) that its three Angles are equal to two right ones; And this I must of necessity think True as long as I attend to the Demonstration thereof; but as soon as ever I withdraw my Mind from the Consideration of its Proof (altho I remember that I have once Clearly perceived it) yet perhaps I may doubt of Its Truth, being as yet Ignorant of a God; For I may perswade my self, that I am so framed by Nature, as to be deceived in those things which I imagine my self to perceive most evidently, Especially when I recollect, that heretofore I have often accounted many things True and Certain, which afterward upon other Reasons I have Judged as False. But when I perceive that there is a God; because at the same time I also Understand that all things Depend on Him, and that he is not a Deceiver; and when from hence I Collect that all those Things which I clearly and distinctly perceive are necessarily True; tho I have no further Respects to those Reasons which induced me to believe it True, yet if I do but remember, that I have once clearly and distinctly perceived it, no Argument can be brought on the contrary, that shall make me doubt, but that I have true and certain Knowledge thereof; and not onely of that, but of all other Truths also which I remember that I have once Demonstrated, such as are Geometrical Propositions and the like.

What now can be Objected against me? shall I say, that I am so made by Nature, as to be often deceived? No; For I now Know that I cannot be deceived in those Things, which I clearly Understand. Shall I say, that at other times I have esteem'd many Things True and Certain, which afterwards I found to be falsities? No; for I perceived none of those things clearly and distinctly, but being Ignorant of this Rule of Truth, I took them up for Reasons, which Reasons I afterward found to be Weak. What then can be said? Shall, I say, (as lately I objected) that Perhaps I am asleep, and that what I now think of is no more True, then the Dreams of People asleep? But this it self moves not my Opinion; for certainly tho I were asleep, if any thing appear'd evident to my Understanding, 'twould be True.

And Thus I Plainly see, that the Certainty and Truth of all Science Depends on the Knowledge of the True God, so that before I had Known Him, I did Know nothing; But now many things both of God himself, and of other Intellectual Things, as also of Corporeal nature, which is the Object of Mathematicks, may be Plainly Known and Certain to me.

Meditat. VI. Of Corporeal Beings, and Their Existence: As Also of the Real Difference, Between Mind and Body.

It now remains that I examine whether any Corporeal Beings do Exist; And already I know that (as they are the Object of Pure Mathematicks) they May (at least) Exist, for I clearly and distinctly perceive them; and doubtless God is able to make, whatever I am able to perceive, and I never Judged any thing to be beyond his Power, but what was Repugnant to a distinct perception. Moreover, such Material Beings seem to Exist from the faculty of Imagination, which I find my self make use of, when I am conversant about them: for if I attentively Consider what Imagination is, ’twill appear to be only a certain Application of our Cognoscitive or knowing Faculty to a Body or Object that is before it; and if it be before it, It must Exist.

But that this may be made more Plain, I must first examine the difference between Imagination, and pure Intellection, or Understanding. So, for example, when I Imagine a Triangle, I do not only Understand that it is a figure comprehended by three Lines, but I also behold with the eye of my mind those three lines as it were before Me, and this is that which I call imagination. But if I convert my Thoughts to a Chiliogone, or Figure consisting of a Thousand Angles, I know as well that this Is a figure comprehended by a Thousand sides, as I know that a Triangle is a Figure Consisting of three sides; but I do not in the same Manner Imagine, or behold as present those thousand sides, as I do the three sides of a Triangle. And tho at the time when I so think of a Chiliogone, I may confusedly represent to my self some

Figure (because whenever I Think of a Corporeal Object, I am used to Imagine some Shape or other) yet ’tis evident that this Representation is not a Chiliogone, because ’tis in nothing different from what I should Represent to my self if I thought of a Milion-angled figure, or any other Figure of More sides; Neither does such a Confused Representation help me in the least to know those Properties, by which a Chiliogone differs from other Polygones or Manyangled Figures. But if a Question be put concerning a Pentagone, I know I may Understand its Shape, as I Understand the Shape, of a Chiliogone, without the help of Imagination, but I can also imagine it, by applying the Eye of my Mind to its Five sides, and to the Area or space contained by Them; And herein I manifestly perceive that there is required a peculiar sort of Operation in the Mind to imagine a Thing, which I require not to Understand a Thing; which New Operation of the Mind plainly shews the difference between imagination and pure Intellection.

Besides this, I Consider that this Power of Imagination which is in me (as it differs from the Power of Understanding) does not appertain to the Essence of Me, that is, of my mind, for tho I wanted it, yet certainly I should be the same He, that now I am: from whence it seems to follow, that it depends on something different from my self; and I easily perceive that if any Body whatever did Exist, to which my Mind were so conjoyn’d, that it may Apply it self when it pleased to Consider, or (as it were) Look into this Body; From hence, I say, I perceive It may so be, that by this very Body I may Imagine Corporeal Beings: So that this Manner of Thinking differs from pure Intellection only in this, that the Mind, when it Understands, does as it were turn it self, to it self, or Reflect on it self, and beholds some or other of those Ideas which are in it self; But when it Imagines, it Converts it self upon Body, and therein beholds something Conformable to that Idea, which it hath understood, or perceived by Sense.

But ’tis to be remembred, that I said, I easily conceive Imagination May be so performed, supposing Body to Exist. And because no so convenient manner of

Explaining it offers it self, from thence I probably guess, that Body does Exist. But this I only say probably, for tho I should accurately search into all the Arguments drawn from the distinct Idea of Body, which I find in my Imagination, yet I find none of them, from whence I may necessarily conclude, that Body does Exist.

But I have been accustomed to Imagine many other things besides that Corporeal Nature which is the Object of pure Mathematicks; such as are, Colours, Sounds, Tasts, Pain, &c. but none of these so distinctly. And because I perceive these better by Sense, from Which by the Help of the Memory they come to the Imagination, that I may with the Greater advantage treat of them, I ought at the same time to Consider Sence, and to try whether from what I perceive by that way of Thought, which I call Sense, I can deduce any certain Argument for the Existence of Corporeal Beings.

And first I will here reflect with my self, what those things were, which being perceived by Sence I have heretofore thought True, and the Reasons why I so thought: I will then enquire into the Reasons for which I afterwards doubted those things. And last of all I will consider what I ought to think of those Things at Present.

The Reasons why I Trusted my Senses.

First therefore I have always thought that I have had an Head, Hands, Feet, and other Members, of which This Body (which I have look’d upon as a Part of Me, or Perhaps as my Whole self) Consists; And I have also thought that this Body of Mine is Conversant or engaged among many Other Bodies, by which it is Liable to be affected with what is advantagious or hurtful; What was Advantagious I judged by a certain sense of Pleasure, what was Hurtful by a sense of Pain. Furthermore, besides Pleasure and Pain, I perceived in my self Hunger, Thirst, and other such like Appetites, as also certain Corporeal Propensions to Mirth, Sadness, Anger, and other like Passions.

As to What hapned to me from Bodies without, Besides the Extension, Figure, and Motion of those Bodies, I also perceived in them Hardness, Heat, and other tactile Qualities, as also Light, Colours, Smells, Tasts, Sounds, &c. and by the Variation of these I distinguish'd the Heaven, Earth, and Seas, and all other Bodies from each other.

Neither was it wholly without Reason (upon the account of these Ideas of Qualities, which offer'd themselves to my Thoughts, and which alone I properly and Immediately perceived) that I thought my self to Perceive some Things Different from my Thought, viz. The Bodies or Objects from whence these Ideas might Proceed; for I often found these Ideas come upon me without my Consent or Will; so that I can neither perceive an Object (tho I had a mind to it) unless it were before the Organs of my Sense; Neither can I Hinder my self from perceiving it, when it is Present.

And seeing that those Ideas which I take in by sense are much more Lively, Apparent and in their kind more distinct, than any of those which I knowingly and Willingly frame by Meditation, or stir up in my Memory; it seems to me that they cannot proceed from my self. There remains therefore no other way for them to come upon me, but from some other Things Without Me. Of Which Things seeing I have no other Knowledge but from these Ideas, I cannot Think but that these Ideas are like the Things.

Moreover, Because I remember that I first made use of my senses before my Reason; and because I did perceive that those Ideas which I my self did frame were not so Manifest as those which I received by my senses, but very often made up of their parts, I was easily perswaded to think that I had no Idea in my Understanding, which I had not First in my sense.

Neither was it without Reason that I Judged, That Body (which by a peculiar right I call my Own) to be more nighly appertaining to Me then any other Body. For from

It, as from other Bodies, I can never be seperated, I was sensible of all Appetites and Affections in It and for It, and lastly I perceived pleasure and Pain in its Parts, and not in any other Without it. But why from the sense of Pain a certain Grief, and from the sense of pleasure a certain Joy of the Mind should arise, or Why that Gnawing of the stomach, Which I call Hunger, should put me in mind of Eating, or the driness of my Throat of Drinking, I can give no other Reason but that I am taught so by Nature. For to my thinking there is no Affinity or Likeness between that Gnawing of the Stomach, and the desire of Eating, or between the sense of Pain, and the sorrowful thought from thence arising. But in this as in all other judgments that I made of sensible objects, I seem'd to be taught by Nature, for I first perswaded my self that things were so or so, before ever I enquired into a Reason that may prove it.

The Reasons why I doubted my senses.

Medit. I.

But afterwards I discover'd many experiments, wherein my senses so grosly deceived me, that I would never trust them again; for Towers which seem'd Round a far off, nigh at hand appear'd square, and large Statues on their tops seem'd small to those that stood on the ground; and in numberless other things, I perceived the judgements of my outward senses were deceived: and not of my outward only, but of my inward senses also; for what is more intimate or inward than Pain? And yet I have heard from those, whose Arm or Leg was cut off, that they have felt pain in that part which they wanted, and therefore I am not absolutely certain that any part of me is affected with pain, tho I feel pain therein. To these I have lately added two very general Reasons of doubt; The first was, that while I was awake, I could not believe my self to perceive any thing, which I could not think my self sometimes to perceive, tho I were a sleep; And seeing I cannot believe, that what I seem to perceive in my sleep proceeds from outward Objects, what greater Reason have I to think so of what I perceive whilst I am awake? The other Cause of Doubt was, that

seeing I know not the Author of my Being (or at least I then supposed my self not to know him) what reason is there but that I may be so ordered by Nature as to be deceived even in those things which appear'd to me most true. And as to the Reasons, which induced me to give credit to sensible Things, 'twas easie to return an answer thereto, for finding by experience, that I was impelled by Nature to many Things, which Reason disswaded me from, I thought I should not far trust what I was taught by Nature. And tho the perceptions of my senses depended not on my Will, I thought I should not therefore conclude, that they proceeded from Objects different from my self; for perhaps there may be some other Faculty in me (tho as yet unknown to me) which might frame those perceptions.

How far the senses are now to be trusted.

But now that I begin better to know my self and the Author of my Original, I do not think, that all things, which I seem to have from my senses are rashly to be admitted, neither are all things so had, to be doubted. And first because I know that whatever I clearly and distinctly perceive, may be so made by God as I perceive them; the Power of understanding clearly and distinctly one Thing without the other is sufficient to make Me certain that One Thing is different from the Other; because it may at least be placed apart by God, and that it may be esteem'd different, it matters not by what Power it may be so sever'd. And therefore from the knowledge I have, that I my self exist, and because at the same time I understand that nothing else appertains to my Nature or Essence, but that I am a thinking Being, I rightly conclude, that my Essence consists in this alone, that I am a thinking Thing. And tho perhaps (or, as I shall shew presently, 'tis certain) I have a Body which is very nighly conjoyned to me, yet because on this side I have a clear and distinct Idea of my self, as I am only a thinking Thing, not extended; and on the other side because I have a distinct Idea of my Body, as it is onely an extended thing, not thinking, 'tis from hence certain, that I am really distinct from my Body, and that I can exist without it.

Moreover I find in my self some Faculties endow'd with certain peculiar waies of thinking, such as the Faculty of Imagination, the Faculty of Perception or sense; without which I can conceive my whole self clearly and distinctly, but (changing the phrase) I cannot conceive those Faculties without conceiving My self, that is, an understanding substance in which they are; for none of them in their formal Conception includes understanding; from whence I perceive they are as different from me, as the modus or manner of a Thing is different from the Thing it self.

I acknowledge also, that I have several other Faculties, such as changing of place, putting on various shapes, &c. Which can no more be understood without a substance in which they are, then the foremention'd Faculties, and consequently they can no more be understood to Exist without that substance: But yet 'tis Manifest, that this sort of Faculties, to the End they may exist, ought to be in a Corporeal, Extended, and not in an Understanding substance, because Extension, and not Intellection or Understanding is included in the Clear and Distinct conception of them.

But there is also in me a certain Passive Faculty of sense, or of Receiving and Knowing the Ideas of sensible Things; of which Faculty I can make no use, unless there were in my self, or in something else, a certain Active Faculty of Producing and Effecting those Ideas. But this cannot be in my self, for it Pre-supposes no Understanding, and those Ideas are Produced in me, tho I help not, and often against my Will. There remains therefore no Place for this Active Faculty, but that it should be in some substance different from me. In which because all the Reallity, which is contain'd Objectively in the Ideas Produced by that Faculty, ought to be contain'd Formally or Eminently (as I have Formerly taken notice) this substance must be either a Body (in which what is in the Ideas Objectively is contain'd Formally) or it Must Be God, or some Creature more excellent then a Body (In which what is in the Ideas Objectively is contain'd Eminently). But seeing that God is not a Deceivour, 'tis altogether Manifest, that he does not Place these Ideas in me either Immediately

from himself, or Mediately from any other Creature, wherein their Objective Reallity is not * contain'd Formally, but only Eminently. And seeing God has given me no Faculty to discern Whether these Ideas proceed from Corporeal or Incorporeal Beings, but rather a strong Inclination to believe that they are sent from Corporeal Beings, there is no Reason Why God should not be counted a Deceiver, if these Ideas came from any Where, but from Corporeal Things. Therefore we must conclude that there are Corporeal Beings. Which perhaps are not all the same as I comprehend them by my sense (for Perception by sense is in many Things very Obscure and Confused) but those things at least, which I clearly and distinctly Understand, that is to say, all those things which are comprehended under the Object of Pure Mathematicks; those things I say at least are True.

As to What Remains, They are either some Particulars, as that the Sun is of such a Bigness or Shape, &c. or they are Things less Clearly Understood, as Light, Sound, Pain, &c. And tho these and such like Things may be very Doubtful and Uncertain, yet because God is not a Deceiver, and because that (Therefore) none of my Opinions can be false unless God has Given me some Faculty or other to Correct my Error, hence 'tis that I am incouraged with the Hopes of attaining Truth even in these very Things.

And certainly it cannot be doubted but whatever I am taught by Nature has something therein of Truth. By Nature in General I understand either God himself, or the Coordination of Creatures Made by God. By my Own Nature in Particular I understand the Complexion or Association of all those things which are given me by God.

Now there is nothing that this my Nature teaches me more expresly then that I have a Body, Which is not Well when I feel Pain, that this Body wants Meat or Drink When I am Hungry or Dry, &c. And therefore I ought not to Doubt but that these things are True. And by this sense of Pain, Hunger, Thirst, &c. My Nature tells me

that I am not in my Body, as a Mariner is in his Ship, but that I am most nighly conjoyn'd thereto, and as it were Blended therewith; so that I with It make up one thing; For Otherwise, when the Body were hurt, I, who am only a Thinking Thing, should not therefore feel Pain, but should only perceive the Hurt with the Eye of my Understanding (as a Mariner perceives by his sight whatever is broken in his Ship) and when the Body wants either Meat or Drink, I should only Understand this want, but should not have the Confused sense of Hunger or Thirst; I call them Confused, for certainly the Sense of Thirst, Hunger, Pain, &c. are only Confused Modes or Manners of Thought arising from the Union and (as it were) mixture of the Mind and Body.

I am taught also by Nature, that there are many other Bodies Without and About my Body, some whereof are to be desired, others are to be Avoided. And because that I Perceive very Different Colours, Sounds, Smells, Tasts, Heat, Hardness, and the Like, from thence I Rightly conclude that there are Correspondent Differences in Bodies, from which these different perceptions of sense proceed, tho perhaps not Alike. And because that some of these perceptions are Pleasant, others Unpleasant, 'tis evidently certain, that my Body, or rather my Whole self (as I am compounded of a Mind and Body) am liable to be Affected by these Bodies which encompass me about.

There are many Other Things Also which Nature seems to teach Me, but Really I am not taught by It, but have gotten them by an ill use of Passing my Judgement Inconsiderately, and from hence it is that these things happen often to be false; as that all space is Empty, in which I find nothing that works upon my Senses; That in a hot Body there is something like the Idea of Heat which is in me; That in a White or Green Body there is the same Whiteness or Greenness which I perceive; And the same Taste in a bitter or sweet Thing, &c. That Stars, Castles, and Other Remote Bodies are of the same Bigness and Shape, as they are Represented to my senses: and such like. But that I may not admit of any Thing in this very matter, which I

cannot Distinctly perceive, it behoves me here to determine more Accurately What I mean when I say, That I am taught a Thing by Nature.

Here I take Nature more strictly, then for the Complication of all those Things which are Given me by God; For in this Complication there are many things contain'd which relate to the Mind alone, as, That I perceive What is done cannot be not Done, and all Other things which are known by the Light of Nature, but of these I speak not at present. There are also many Other Things which belong only to the Body, as, That it tends Downwards and such like, of these also I treat not at Present. But I speak of those Things only which God hath bestowed upon me as I am Compounded of a Mind and Body together, and not differently Consider'd. 'Tis Nature therefore thus taken that teaches me to avoid troublesome Objects, and seek after pleasing Ones; but it appears not that this Nature teaches us to conclude any thing of these Perceptions of our senses, before that we make by our Understanding a diligent examination of outward Objects; for to Enquire into the Truth of Things belongs not to the Whole Compositum of a Man as he Consists of Mind and Body, but to the Mind alone.

So that tho a star affect my eye no more then a small spark of Fire, yet there is in my Eye no Real or Positive Inclination to believe One no bigger then the Other, but thus I have been used to Judge from my Childhood without any Reason: and tho coming nigh the Fire I feel Heat, and Coming too nigh I feel Pain, yet there is no Reason to perswade me, That in the Fire there is any thing like either that Heat or that Pain, but only that there is something therein, Whatever it be, that excites in us those sensations of Heat or Pain: and so tho in some space there may be nothing that Works on my senses, it does not from thence follow, that there is no Body there; for I see that in these and many other things I am used to overturn the Order of Nature, because I use these perceptions of sense (which properly are given me by Nature to make known to the mind what is advantagious or hurtful to the Compositum, whereof the mind is part, and so far only they are Clear and Distinct enough) as

certain Rules immediately to discover the Essence of External Bodies, of Which they make known nothing but very Obscurely and Confusedly.

Medit. 4.

I have * formerly shewn how my Judgement happens to be false notwithstanding Gods Goodness. But now there arises a new Difficulty concerning those very things which Nature tells me I am to prosecute or avoid, concerning my Internal senses, Wherein I find many Errors, as when a Man being deceived by the Pleasant Taste of some sort of Meat, devours therein some hidden Poyson. But in this very Instance it cannot be said, that the Man is impelled by Nature to desire the Poyson, for of that he is wholly Ignorant; but he is said to Desire the Meat only as being of a grateful Taste; and from hence nothing can be concluded but, That Mans-Nature is not All-knowing; which is no Wonder seeing Man is a Finite Being, and therefore nothing but Finite Perfections belong to him.

But We often err even in those things to Which we are Impelled by Nature, as when sick men desire that Meat or Drink, which will certainly prove Hurtful to them. To this it may perhaps be reply'd, That they Err in this because their Nature is Corrupt. But this Answers not the Difficulty, For a sick man is no less Gods Creature then a Man in Health, and therefore 'tis as Absurd to Imagine a Deceitful Nature imposed by God on the One as on the Other; And as a Clock that is made up of Wheels and Weights does no less strictly observe the Laws of its Nature, when it is ill contrived, and tells the hours falsly, as when it answers the Desire of the Artificer in all performances; so if I consider the body of a Man as a meer Machine or Movement, made up and compounded of Bones, Nerves, Muscles, Veins, Blood, and Skin; so that, tho there were no mind in It, yet It would perform all those Motions which now are in it (those only excepted which Proceed from the Will, and consequently from the Mind) I do easily acknowledge, that it would be as natural for him (if for example sake he were sick of a Dropsie) to suffer that Driness of his Throat which

uses to bring into his mind the sense of Thirst, & that thereby his Nerves and other Parts would be so disposed as to take Drink, by Which his disease would be encreased; As (supposing him to be troubled with no such Distemper) by the like Driness of Throat he would be disposed to Drink, when ’tis Requisite. And tho, if I respect the Intended use of a Clock I may say that it Errs from its Nature, when it tells the Hours wrong, and so considering the Movement of a Mans Body as contrived for such Motions as are used to be performed thereby, I may think That also to Err from its Nature, if its Throat is Dry, when it has no want of Drink for its Preservation. Yet I Plainly discover, that this last Acceptation of Nature differs much from that whereof we have been speaking all this While, for this is only a Denomination extrinsick to the Things whereof ’tis spoken, and depending on my Thought, while it Compares a sick man, and a disorderly Clock with the Idea of an healthy man and a Rectified Clock. But by Nature in its former Acceptation I Understand something that is Really in the Things themselves, which therefore has something of Truth in it.

But tho Respecting only a Body sick of a Dropsie it be an Extrinsick Denomination to say, that its Nature is Corrupt, because it has a Dry Throat, and stands in no need of Drink; yet respecting the Whole Compound or Mind joyn’d to such a Body, ’tis not a meer Denomination, but a real Error of Nature for it to thirst when drink is hurtful to it. It remains therefore here to be inquired, how the Goodness of God suffers Nature so taken to be deceivable.

First therefore I understand that a chief difference between my Mind and Body consists in this, That my Body is of its Nature divisible, but my Mind indivisible; for while I consider my Mind or my self, as I am only a thinking Thing, I can distinguish no parts in Me, but I perceive my self to be but one entire Thing; and tho the whole Mind seems to be united to the whole Body, yet a Foot, an Arm, or any other part of the Body being cut off, I do not therefore conceive any part of my Mind taken away; Neither can its Faculties of desiring, perceiving, understanding, &c. be

called its Parts, for ’tis one and the same, mind, that desires, that perceives, that understands; Contrarily, I cannot think of any Corporeal or extended Being, which I cannot easily divide into Parts by my thought, and by this I understand it to be divisible. And this alone (if I had known it from no other Argument) is sufficient to inform me, that my mind is really distinct from my Body.

Nextly I find, that my mind is not immediately affected by all parts of my body, but only by the Brain, and perhaps only by one small part of it, That, to wit, wherein the common sense is said to reside; Which part, as often as it is disposed in the same manner, will represent to the mind the same thing, tho at the same time the other parts of the body may be differently order’d. And this is proved by numberless Experiments, which need not here be related.

Moreover I discover that the nature of my body is such, that no part of it can be moved by an other remote part thereof, but it may also be moved in the same manner by some of the interjacent parts, tho the more remote part lay still and acted not; As for example in the Rope,

A—B—C—D

if its end D. were drawn, the end A. would be moved no otherwise, than if one of the intermediate parts B. or C. were drawn, and the end D. rest quiet. So when I feel pain in my Foot, the consideration of Physicks instructs me, that this is performed by the help of Nerves dispersed through the Foot, which from thence being continued like Ropes to the very Brain, whilst they are drawn in the Foot, they also draw the inward parts of the Brain to which they reach, and therein excite a certain motion, which is ordain’d by Nature to affect the mind with a sense of Pain, as being in the Foot. But because these Nerves must pass through the Shin, the Thighs, the Loins, the Back, the Neck, before they can reach the Brain from the Foot, it may so happen, that tho that part of them, which is in the Foot were not touch’d, but only some of their intermediate parts, yet the same motion, would be caused in the Brain, as when

the Foot it self is ill affected, from whence ’twill necessarily follow, that the mind should perceive the same Pain. And thus may we think of any other Sense.

I understand lastly, that seeing each single motion perform’d in that part of the Brain, which immediately affects the mind, excites therein only one sort of sense, nothing could be contrived more conveniently in this case, than that, of all those Senses which it can cause, it should cause that which cheifly, and most frequently conduces to the conservation of an healthful Man; And experience witnesses, that to this very end all our senses are given us by Nature; and therefore nothing can be found therein, which does not abundantly testifie the Power and Goodness of God. Thus for Example, when the Nerves of the Feet are violently and more than ordinarily moved, that motion of them being propagated through the Medulla Spinalis of the Back to the inward parts of the Brain, there it signifies to the mind, that something or other is to be felt, and what is this but Pain, as if it were in the Foot, by which the Mind is excited to use its indeavours for removing the Cause, as being hurtful to the Foot. But the Nature of Man might have been so order’d by God, that That same motion in the Brain should represent to the mind any other thing, viz. either it self as ’tis in the Brain, or it self as it is in the Foot, or in any of the other forementioned intermediate parts, or lastly any other thing whatsoever; but none of these would have so much conduced to the Conservation of the Body. In the like manner when we want drink, from thence arises a certain dryness in the Throat, which moves the Nerves thereof, and by their means the inward parts of the Brain, and this motion affects the mind with the sense of thirst; because that in this case nothing is more requisite for us to know, then that we want drink for the Preservation of our Health. So of the Rest.

From all which ’tis manifest, that (notwithstanding the infinite Goodness of God) ’tis impossible but the Nature of Man as he consists of a mind and body should be deceivable. For if any cause should excite (not in the Foot but) in the Brain it self, or in any other part through which the Nerves are continued from the Foot to the Brain,

that self same motion, which uses to arise from the Foot being troubled, the Pain would be felt as in the Foot, and the sense would be naturally deceived; for ’tis consonant to Reason (seeing that That same motion of the Brain alwayes represents to the mind that same sense, and it oftner proceeds from a cause hurtful to the Foot, than from any other) I say ’tis reasonable, that it should make known to the mind the Pain of the Foot, rather than of any other part. And so if a dryness of Throat arises (not as ’tis used from the necessity of drink for the conservation of the Body, but) from an unusual Cause, as it happens in a Dropsie, ’tis far better that it should then deceive us; then that it should alwayes deceive us when the Body is in Health, and so of the Rest.

And this consideration helps me very much, not only to understand the Errors to which my Nature is subject, but also to correct and avoid them. For seeing I know that all my Senses do oftener inform me falsly than truely in those things which conduce to the Bodies advantage; and seeing I can use (almost alwayes) more of them than one to Examine the same thing, as also I can use memory, which joyns present and past things together, and my understanding also, which hath already discovered to me all the causes of my Errors, I ought no longer to fear, that what my Senses daily represent to me should be false. But especially those extravagant Doubts of my First Meditation are to be turn’d off as ridiculous; and perticularly the chief of them, viz. That * of not distinguishing Sleep from Waking, for now I plainly discover a great difference, between them, for my Dreams are never conjoyned by my memory with the other actions of my life, as whatever happens to me awake is; and certainly if (while I were awake) any person should suddenly appear to me, and presently disappear (as in Dreams) so that I could not tell from whence he came or where he went, I should rather esteem it a Spectre or Apparition feign’d in my Brain, then a true Man; but when such things occur, as I distinctly know from whence, where, and when they come, and I conjoyn the perception of them by my memory with the other Accidents of my life, I am certain they are represented to me

waking and not asleep, neither ought I in the least to doubt of their Truth, if after I have called up all my senses, memory, and understanding to their Examination I find nothing in any of them, that clashes with other truths; For God not being a Deceiver, it follows, that In such things I am not deceived. But because the urgency of Action in the common occurrences of Affairs will not alwayes allow time for such an accurate examination, I must confess that Mans life is subject to many Errors about perticulars, so that the infirmity of our Nature must be acknowledged by Us.

FINIS.

ADVERTISEMENT CONCERNING THE OBJECTIONS.

Among seven Parcels of Objections made by Divers Learned Persons against these Meditations, I have made choise of the Third in the Latine Copy, as being Penn'd by Thomas Hobbs of Malmesbury, a Man famously known to the World abroad, but especially to his own the English Nation; and therefore 'tis likely that what comes from Him may be more acceptable to his Countrymen, then what proceeds from a Stranger; and as the strength of a Fortification is never better known then by a Forcible Resistance, so fares it with these Meditations which stand unshaken by the Violent Opposition of so Potent an Enemy. And yet it must be Confess'd that the Force of these Objections and Cogency of the Arguments cannot be well apprehended by those who are not versed in other Pieces of Mr. Hobbs's Philosophy, especially His Book De Corpore and De Homine, The former whereof I am sure is Translated into English, and therefore not Impertinently refer'd to Here in a Discourse to English Readers. And this is the Reason that makes the Great Des-Cartes pass over many of these Objections so slightly, Who certainly would have Undermined the whole Fabrick of the Hobbian Philosophy had he but known upon What Foundations it was Built.

OBJECTIONS Made against the Foregoing MEDITATIONS, BY THE FAMOUS THOMAS HOBBS Of Malmesbury, WITH DES-CARTES'S ANSWERS.

OBJECT. I. Against the First Meditation: Of things Doubtful.

'Tis evident enough from What has been said in this Meditation, that there is no sign by Which we may Distinguish our Dreams from True Sense and Waking, and therefore that those Phantasmes which we have waking and from our Senses are not accidents inhering in Outward Objects, neither do they Prove that such outward Objects do Exist; and therefore if we trust our Senses without any other Ground, we may well doubt whether any Thing Be or Not. We therefore acknowledge the Truth of this Meditation. But Because Plato and other Antient Philosophers argued for the same incertainty in sensible Things, and because 'tis commonly Observed by the Vulgar that 'tis hard to Distinguish Sleep from Waking, I would not have the most excellent Author of such new Thoughts put forth so antique Notions.

ANSWER.

Those Reasons of Doubt which by this Philosopher are admitted as true, were proposed by Me only as Probable, and I made use of them not that I may vend them as new, but partly that I may prepare the Minds of my Readers for the Consideration of Intellectual Things, wherein they seem'd to me very necessary; And partly that thereby I may shew how firm those Truths are, which hereafter I lay down, seeing they cannot be Weaken'd by these Metaphysical Doubts: So, that I never designed to gain any Honor by repeating them, but I think I could no more omit them, then a Writer in Physick can pass over the Description of a Disease, Whose Cure he intends to Teach.

OBJECT. II. Against the Second Meditation: Of the Nature of Mans Mind.

I am a Thinking Thing. ’Tis True; for because I think or have a Phantasme (whether I am awake or asleep) it follows that I am Thinking, for I Think and I am Thinking signifie the same Thing. Because I Think, it follows That I am, for whatever Thinks cannot be Nothing. But when he Adds, That is, a Mind, a Soul, an Understanding, Reason, I question his Argumentation; for it does not seem a Right Consequence to say, I am a Thinking Thing, therefore I am a Thought, neither, I am an Understanding Thing, therefore I am the Understanding. For in the same manner I may Conclude, I am a Walking Thing, therefore I am the Walking it self.

Wherefore D.Cartes Concludes that an Understanding Thing and Intellection (which is the Act of an Understanding Thing) are the same; or at least that an Understanding Thing and the Intellect (which is the Power of an Understanding Thing) are the same; And yet all Philosophers distinguish the subject from its Faculties and Acts, that is, from its Properties and Essence, for the Thing it self is one thing, and its Essence is an other. It may be therefore that a Thinking Thing is the Subject of a Mind, Reason, or Understanding, and therefor it may be a Corporeal Thing, the Contrary Whereof is here Assumed and not Proved; and yet this Inference is the Foundation of that Conclusion which D.Cartes would Establish.

* Places noted with this Asterick are the Passages of the foregoing Meditations here Objected against.

In the same Meditation, on, * I know that I am, I ask, What I am Whom I Thus Know, Certainly the Knowledge of Me precisely so taken depends not on those Things of whose Existence I am yet Ignorant.

’Tis Certain the Knowledge of this Proposition I am, depends on this, I think as he hath rightly inform’d us; but from whence have we the knowledge of this Proposition, I think? certainly from hence only, that we cannot conceive any Act without its subject, as dancing without a Dancer, knowledge, without a Knower, thought without a thinker.

And from hence it seems to follow, that a thinking Thing is a Corporeal Thing; for the Subjects of all Acts are understood only in a Corporeal way, or after the manner of matter, as he himself shews hereafter by the example of a piece of Wax, which changing its colour, consistence, shape, and other Acts is yet known to continue the same thing, that is, the same matter subject to so many changes. But I cannot conclude from another thought that I now think; for tho a Man may think that he hath thought (which consists only in memory) yet ’tis altogether impossible for him to think that he now thinks, or to know, that he knows, for the question may be put infinitely, how do you know that you know, that you know, that you know? &c.

Wherefore seeing the Knowledge of this Proposition I am, depends on the knowledge of this I think, and the knowledge of this is from hence only, that we cannot separate thought from thinking matter, it seems rather to follow, that a thinking thing is material, than that ’tis immaterial.

ANSWER.

When I said, That is a Mind, a Soul, an Understanding, Reason, &c. I did not mean by these names the Faculties only, but the things indow’d with those Faculties; and so ’tis alwayes understood by the two first names (mind and soul) and very often so understood by the two last Names (understanding and Reason) and this I have explain’d so often, and in so many places of these Meditations, that there is not the least occasion of questioning my meaning.

Neither is there any parity between Walking and Thought, for walking is used only for the Act it self, but thought is sometimes used for the Act, sometimes for the Faculty, and sometimes for the thing it self, wherein the Faculty resides.

Neither do I say, that the understanding thing and intellection are the same, or that the understanding thing and the intellect are the same, if the intellect be taken for the Faculty, but only when ’tis taken for the thing it self that understands. Yet I willingly confess, that I have (as much as in me lay) made use of abstracted words to

signifie that thing or substance, which I would have devested of all those things that belong not to it. Whereas contrarily this Philosopher uses the most concrete Words to signifie this thinking thing, such as subject, matter, Body, &c. that he may not suffer it to be separated from Body.

Neither am I concern'd that His manner of joyning many things together may seem to some fitter for the discovery of Truth, than mine, wherein I separate as much as possibly each particular. But let us omit words and speak of things.

It may be (sayes he) that a Thinking thing is a corporeal thing, the contrary whereof is here assumed and not proved. But herein he is mistaken, for I never assumed the contrary, neither have I used it as a Foundation, for the rest of my Superstructure, but left it wholly undetermin'd till the sixth Meditation, and in that 'tis proved.

Then he tells us rightly, that we cannot conceive any Act without its subject, as thought without a thinking thing, for what thinks cannot be nothing; but then he subjoyns without any Reason, and against the usual manner of speaking, and contrary to all Logick, that hence it seem to follow, that a thinking thing is a corporeal Being. Truly the subjects of all Acts are understood under the notion of substance, or if you please under the notion of matter (that is to say of metaphysical matter) but not therefore under the notion of Bodies.

But Logicians and Commonly all Men are used to say, that there are some Spiritual, some Corporeal substances. And by the Instance of Wax I only proved that Colour, Consistence, Shape, &c. appertain not to the Ratio Formalis of the Wax; For in that Place I treated neither of the Ratio Formalis of the Mind, neither of Body.

Neither is it pertinent to the business, that the Philosopher asserts, That one Thought cannot be the subject of an other thought, for Who besides Himself ever Imagin'd This? But that I may explain the matter in a few words, 'Tis certain that Thought cannot be without a Thinking Thing, neither any Act or any Accident without a substance wherein it resides. But seeing that we know not a substance immediately

by it self, but by this alone, that ’tis the subject of several Acts, it is very consonant to the commands of Reason and Custome, that we should call by different names those substances, which we perceive are the subjects of very different Acts or Accidents, and that afterwards we should examine, whether those different names signifie different or one and the same thing. Now there are some Acts which we call corporeal, as magnitude, figure, motion, and what ever else cannot be thought on without local extension, and the substance wherein these reside we call Body; neither can it be imagin’d that ’tis one substance which is the subject of Figure, and another substance which is the subject of local motion, &c. Because all these Acts agree under one common notion of Extension. Besides there are other Acts, which we call cogitative or thinking, as understanding, will, imagination, sense, &c. All which agree under the common notion of thought, perception, or Conscience; And the substance wherein they are, we say, is a thinking thing, or mind, or call it by whatever other name we please, so we do not confound it with corporeal substance, because cogitative Acts have no affinity with corporeal Acts, and thought, which is the common Ratio of those is wholly different from Extension, which is the common Ratio of These. But after we have formed two distinct conceptions of these two substances, from what is said in the sixth Meditation, ’tis easie to know, whether they be one and the same or different.

OBJECT. III.

* Which of them is it, that is distinct from my thought? which of them is it that can be separated from me?

Some perhaps will answer this Question thus, I my self, who think am distinct from my thought, and my thought is different from me (tho’ not seperated) as dancing is distinguished from the Dancer (as before is noted.) But if Des-Cartes will prove, that he who understands is the same with his understanding, we shall fall into the Scholastick expressions, the understanding understands, the sight sees, the Will

wills, and then by an exact analogy, the Walking (or at least the Faculty of walking) shall walk. All which are obscure, improper, and unworthy that perspicuity which is usual with the noble Des-Cartes.

ANSWER.

I do not deny, that I who think am distinct from my thought, as a thing is distinguish'd from its modus or manner; But when I ask, which of them is it that is distinct from my thought? this I understand of those various modes of thought there mention'd, and not of substance; and when I subjoyn, which of them is it that can be separated from me? I only signifie that all those modes or manners of thinking reside in me, neither do I herein perceive what occasion of doubt or obscurity can be imagined.

OBJECT. IV.

* It remains therefore for me to Confess that I cannot Imagine what this Wax is, but that I conceive in my mind What it is.

There is a great Difference between Imagination (that is) having an Idea of a Thing, and the Conception of the Mind (that is) a Concluding from Reasoning that a thing Is or Exists. But Des-Cartes has not Declared to us in what they Differ. Besides, the Ancient Aristotelians have clearly deliver'd as a Doctrine, that substance is not perceived by sense but is Collected by Ratiocination.

But what shall we now say, if perhaps Ratiocination be nothing Else but a Copulation or Concatenation of Names or Appellations by this Word Is? From whence 'twill follow that we Collect by Reasoning nothing of or concerning the Nature of Things, but of the names of Things, that is to say, we only discover whether or no we joyn the Names of Things according to the Agreements which at Pleasure we have made concerning their significations; if it be so (as so it may be) Ratiocination will depend on Words, Words on Imagination, and perhaps

Imagination as also Sense on the Motion of Corporeal Parts; and so the Mind shall be nothing but Motions in some Parts of an Organical Body.

ANSWER.

I have here Explain'd the Difference between Imagination, and the Meer Conception of the Mind, by reckoning up in my Example of the Wax, what it is therein which we Imagine, and what it is that we conceive in our Mind only: but besides this, I have explained in an other Place How we understand one way, and Imagine an other way One and the same Thing, suppose a Pentagone or Five sided Figure.

There is in Ratiocination a Conjunction not of Words, but of Things signified by Words; And I much admire that the Contrary could Possibly enter any Mans Thoughts; For Who ever doubted but that a Frenchman and a German may argue about the same Things, tho they use very Differing Words? and does not the Philosopher Disprove himself when he speaks of the Agreements which at pleasure we have made about the significations of Words? for if he grants that something is Signified by Words, Why will he not admit that our Ratiocinations are rather about this something, then about Words only? and by the same Right that he concludes the Mind to be a Motion, he may Conclude Also that the Earth is Heaven, or What else he Pleases.

OBJECT. V. Against the Third Meditation of God.

* Some of These (viz. Humane Thoughts) are as it were the Images of Things, and to these alone belongs properly the Name of an Idea, as when I Think on a Man, a Chimera, Heaven, an Angel, or God.

When I Think on a Man I perceive an Idea made up of Figure and Colour, whereof I may doubt whether it be the Likeness of a Man or not; and so when I think on Heaven. But when I think on a Chimera, I perceive an Image or Idea, of which I may doubt whether it be the Likeness of any Animal not only at present Existing, but

possible to Exist, or that ever will Exist hereafter or not.

But thinking on an Angel, there is offer'd to my Mind sometimes the Image of a Flame, sometimes the Image of a Pretty Little Boy with Wings, which I am certain has no Likeness to an Angel, and therefore that it is not the Idea of an Angel; But beleiving that there are some Creatures, Who do (as it were) wait upon God, and are Invisible, and Immaterial, upon the Thing Believed or supposed we Impose the Name of Angel; Whereas the Idea, under which I Imagine an Angel, is compounded of the Ideas of sensible Things.

In the like manner at the Venerable Name of God, we have no Image or Idea of God, and therefore we are forbidden to Worship God under any Image, least we should seem to Conceive Him that is inconceivable.

Whereby it appears that we have no Idea of God; but like one born blind, who being brought to the Fire, and perceiving himself to be Warmed, knows there is something by which he is warmed and Hearing it called Fire, he Concludes that Fire Exists, but yet knows not of what shape or Colour the Fire is, neither has he any Image or Idea thereof in his Mind.

So Man knowing that there must be some Cause of his Imaginations or Ideas, as also an other cause before That, and so onwards, he is brought at last to an End, or to a supposal of some Eternal Cause, Which because it never began to Be cannot have any other Cause before it, and thence he Concludes that 'tis necessary that some Eternal Thing Exist: and yet he has no Idea which He can call the Idea of this Eternal Thing, but he names this Thing, which he believes and acknowledges by the Name God.

But now Des-Cartes proceeds from this Position, That we have an Idea of God in our Mind, to prove this Theoreme, That God (that if an Almighty, Wise, Creatour of the World) Exists, whereas he ought to have explain'd this Idea of God better, and he should have thence deduced not only his Existence, but also the Creation of the

World.

ANSWER.

Here the Philosopher will have the Word Idea be only Understood for the Images of Material Things represented in a Corporeal Phantasie, by which Position he may Easily Prove, that there can be no Proper Idea of an Angel or God. Whereas as I declare every Where, but especially in this Place, that I take the Name Idea for whatever is immediately perceived by the Mind, so that when I Will, or Fear, because at the same time I perceive that I Will or Fear, this very Will or Fear are reckon'd by me among the number of Ideas; And I have purposely made use of that Word, because It was usual with the Antient Philosophers to signifie the Manner of Perceptions in the Divine Mind, altho neither we nor they acknowledge a Phantasie in God: and besides I had no fitter Word to express it by.

And I think I have sufficiently explain'd the Idea of God for those that will attend my meaning, but I can never do it fully enough for those that will Understand my Words otherwise then I intend them.

Lastly, what is here added concerning the Creation of the World is wholly beside the Question in hand.

OBJECT. VI.

* But there are Other (Thoughts) That have Superadded Forms to them, as when I Will, when I Fear, when I Affirm, when I Deny; I know I have alwayes (whenever I think) some certain thing as the Subject or Object of my Thought, but in this last sort of Thoughts there is something More which I think upon then Barely the Likeness of the Thing; and of these Thoughts some are called Wills and Affections, and others of them Judgements.

When any one Fears or Wills, he has certainly the Image of the Thing Fear'd, or Action Will'd, but what more a Willing or Fearing Man has in his Thoughts is not

explain'd; and tho Fear be a Thought, yet I see not how it can be any other then the Thought of the Thing Fear'd; For what is the Fear of a Lion rushing on me, but the Idea of a Lion Rushing on me, and the Effect (which that Idea produces in the Heart) whereby the Man Fearing is excited to that Animal Motion which is called Flight? but now this Motion of Flying is not Thought, it remains therefore that in Fear there is no other Thought, but that which consists in the likeness of the thing. And the same may be said of Will.

Moreover Affirmation and Negation are not without a voice and words, and hence 'tis that Brutes can neither affirme or deny not so much as in their Thought, and consequently neither can they judge. But yet the same thought may be in a beast as in a Man; for when we affirme that a Man runs, we have not a thought different from what a Dog has when he sees his Master running; Affirmation therefore or Negation superadds nothing to meer thoughts, unless perhaps it adds this thought, that the names of which an Affirmation consists are (to the Person affirming) the Names of the same thing; and this is not to comprehend in the thought more then the likeness of the thing, but it is only comprehending the same likeness twice.

ANSWER.

'Tis self evident, That 'tis one thing to see a Lion and at the same time to fear him, and an other thing only to see him. So 'tis one thing to see a Man Running, and an other thing to Affirme within my self (which may be done without a voice) That I see him.

But in all this objection I find nothing that requires an Answer.

OBJECT. VII.

* Now it remains for me to examine, how I have received this Idea of God, for I have neither received it by means of my senses, neither comes it to me without my forethought, as the Ideas of sensible things use to do, when those things work on the

Organs of my sense, or at least seem so to work; Neither is this Idea framed by my self, for I can neither add to, nor detract from it. Wherefore I have only to conclude, that it is innate, even as the Idea of me my self is Natural to my self.

If there be no Idea of God, as it seems there is not (and here ’tis not proved that there is) this whole discourse falls to the ground. And as to the Idea of my self (if I respect the Body) it proceeds from Sight, but (if the Soul) there is no Idea of a Soul, but we collect by Ratiocination, that there is some inward thing in a Mans Body, that imparts to it Animal Motion, by which it perceives and moves, and this (whatever it be) without any Idea we call a Soul.

ANSWER.

If there be an Idea of God (as ’tis manifest that there is) this whole Objection falls to the ground; and then he subjoyns, That we have no Idea of the Soul, but collect it by Ratiocination, ’Tis the same as if he should say, that there is no Image thereof represented in the Phantasie, but yet, that there is such a Thing, as I call an Idea.

OBJECT. VIII.

* An other Idea of the Sun as taken from the Arguments of Astronomers, that is consequentially collected by me from certain natural notions.

At the same time we can certainly have but one Idea of the Sun, whether it be look’d at by our eyes, or collected by Ratiocination to be much bigger than it seems; for this last is not an Idea of the Sun, but a proof by Arguments, that the Idea of the Sun would be much larger, if it were look’d at nigher. But at different or several times the Ideas of the Sun may be diverse, as if at one time we look at it with our bare eye, at an other time through a Teloscope; but Astronomical arguments do not make the Idea of the Sun greater or less, but they rather tell us that the sensible Idea thereof is false.

ANSWER.

Here also (as before) what he says is not the Idea of the Sun, and yet is described, is that very thing which I call the Idea.

OBJECT. IX.

* For without doubt those Ideas which Represent substances are something more, or (as I may say) have more of objective Reality in them, then those that represent only accidents or modes; and again, that by which I understand a mighty God, Eternal, Infinite, Omniscient, Omnipotent, Creatour of all things besides himself, has certainly in it more objective reality, then those by which Finite substances are exhibited.

I have before often noted that there can be no Idea of God or the Mind: I will now superadd, That neither can there be an Idea of Substance. For Substance (Which is only Matter Subject to Accidents and Changes) is Collected only by Reasoning, but it is not at all Conceived, neither does it represent to us any Idea. And if this be true, How can it be said, That those Ideas which represent to us Substances have in them something More, or More Objective Reality, then those which represent to us Accidents? Besides, Let Des-Cartes again Consider what he means by More Reality? Can Reality be increas'd or diminish'd? Or does he think that One Thing can be More A Thing then an other Thing? let him Consider how this can be Explain'd to our Understandings with that Perspicuity or Clearness which is requisite in all Demonstrations, and Which He Himself is used to present us with upon other Occasions.

ANSWER.

I have often noted before, That that very Thing which is evidenc'd by Reason, as also whatever else is perceived by any other Means, is Called by Me an Idea. And I have sufficiently explain'd How Reality may be Encreas'd or Diminish'd, in the same manner (to wit) as Substance is More a Thing, then A Mode; and if there be any such things as Real Qualities, or Incomplete Substances, these are More Things

then Modes, and Less Things then Complete Substances: and Lastly if there be an Infinite Independent Substance this is More a Thing, then a Finite, Dependent Substance. And all this is self-evident.

OBJECT. X.

* Wherefore There only Remains the Idea of God; Wherein I must consider whether there be not something Included, which cannot Possibly have its Original from me. By the Word, God, I mean a certain Infinite Substance, Independent, Omniscient, Almighty, by whom both I my self and every thing Else That Is (if any thing do actually exist) was Created; All which attributes are of such an High Nature That the more attentively I consider them, the Less I Conceive my self alone possible to be the Author of these notions; from what therefore has been said I must Conclude there is a God.

Considering the Attributes of God, that from thence we may gather an Idea of God, and that we may enquire whether there be not something in that Idea which cannot Possibly Proceed from our selves, I discover (if I am not Deceived) that what we think off at the Venerable name of God proceeds neither from our selves, neither is it Necessary that they should have any other Original then from Outward Objects. For by the Name of God I understand a Substance, that is, I understand that God Exists (not by an Idea, but by Reasoning) Infinite (that is, I cannot conceive or Imagine Terms or Parts in him so Extream, but I can Imagine others Farther) from whence it follows, that not an Idea of Gods Infinity but of my Own bounds and Limits presents it self at the Word Infinite. Independent, That is, I do not conceive any Cause from which God may proceed; from whence ’tis evident that I have no other Idea at the word Independent, but the memory of my own Ideas which at Different Times have Different Beginnings, and Consequently they must be Dependent.

Wherefore, to say that God is Independent, is only to say That God is in the Number

of those things, the Original whereof I do not Imagine: and so to say that God is Infinite, is the same as if we say That He is in the Number of Those Things whose Bounds we do not Conceive: And thus any Idea of God is Exploded, for What Idea can we have without Beginning or Ending?

Omniscient or Understanding all things, Here I desire to know, by what Idea, Des-Cartes understands Gods Understanding? Almighty, I desire also to know by What Idea Gods Power is understood? For Power is in Respect of Future Things, that is, Things not Existing. For my Part, I understand Power from the Image or Memory of past Actions, arguing with my self thus, He did so, therefore he was able (or had Power) to do so, therefore (continuing the same) he will again have Power to do so. But now all these are Ideas that may arise from external Objects.

Creatour of all things, I can frame an Image of Creation from what I see every day, as a Man Born, or growing from a Punctum to that shape and size he now bears; an other Idea then this no man can have at the word Creatour; But the Possibility of Imagining a Creation is not sufficient to prove that the world was created. And therefore tho it were Demonstrated that some Infinite Independent Almighty Being did exist, yet it will not from thence follow that a Creatour exists; unless one can think this to be a right inference, we believe that there exists something that has created all other things, therefore the world was Created thereby.

Moreover when he says, that the Idea of God, and of our Soul is Innate or born in us, I would fain know, whether the Souls of those that sleep soundly do think unless they dream; If not, then at that time they have no Ideas, and consequently no Idea is Innate, for what is Innate to us is never Absent from us.

ANSWER.

None of Gods Attributes can proceed from outward objects as from a Pattern, because there is nothing found in God like what is found in External, that is, Corporeal things; Now ’tis manifest that whatever we think of in him differing or

unlike what we find in them proceeds not from them, but from a cause of that very diversity in our Thought.

And here I desire to know, how this Philosopher deduces Gods Understanding from outward Things, and yet I can easily explain what Idea I have thereof, by saying, that by the Idea of Gods Understanding I conceive whatever is the Form of any Perception; For who is there that does not perceive that he understands something or other, and consequently he must thereby have an Idea of understanding, and by enlarging it Indefinitely he forms the Idea of Gods Understanding. And so of his other Attributes.

And seeing we have made use of that Idea of God which is in us to demonstrate his existence, and seeing there is contain'd in this Idea such an Immense Power, that we conceive it a contradiction for God to Exist, and yet that any thing should Be besides Him, which was not Created by Him, it plainly follows that demonstrating His existence we demonstrate also that the whole world, or all things different from God, were Created by God.

Lastly when we assert, that some Ideas are Innate or natural to us, we do not mean that they are always present with us (for so no Idea would be Innate) but only that we have in our selves a Faculty of producing them.

OBJECT. XI.

* The whole stress of which Argument lyes thus; because I know it impossible for me to be of the same nature I am, viz, having the Idea of a God in me, unless really there were a God, A God (I say) that very same God, whose Idea I have in my mind.

Wherefore seeing 'tis not demonstrated that we have an Idea of God, and the Christian Religion commands us to believe that God is Inconceivable, that is, as I suppose, that we cannot have an Idea of Him, it follows, that the Existence of God is not demonstrated, much less the Creation.

ANSWER.

When God is said to be Inconceiveable ’tis understood of an Adequate full conception. But I am ’een tired with often repeating, how notwithstanding we may have an Idea of God. So that here is nothing brought that makes any thing against my demonstration.

OBJECT. XII. Against the Fourth Meditation, Of Truth and Falshood.

* By Which I understand that Error (as it is Error) is not a Real Being, Dependent on God, but is only a Defect; and that therefore to make me Err there is not requisite a Faculty of Erring Given me by God.

’Tis Certain that Ignorance is only a Defect, and that there is no Occasion of any Positive Faculty to make us Ignorant. But this position is not so clear in Relation to Error, for Stones and Inanimate Creatures cannot Err, for this Reason only, because they have not the Faculties of Reasoning or Imagination; from whence ’tis Natural for us to Conclude, That to Err there is requisite a Faculty of Judging, or at least of Imagining, both which Faculties are Positive, and given to all Creatures subject to Error, and to Them only.

Moreover Des-Cartes says thus, I find (my Errors) to Depend on two concurring Causes, viz. on my Faculty of Knowing, and on my Faculty of Choosing, or Freedom of my Will. Which seems Contradictious to what he said before; And here also we may note, that Freedom of Will is assumed without any Proof contrary to the Opinion of the Calvinists.

ANSWER.

Tho to make us Err there is requisite a Faculty of Reasoning (or rather of Judging, that is, of Affirming and Denying) because Error is the Defect thereof, yet it does not follow from thence that this Defect is any thing Real, for neither is Blindness a Real Thing, tho stones cannot be said to be Blind, for this Reason only, That they

are incapable of sight. And I much wonder that in all these Objections I have not found one Right Inference.

I have not here assumed any thing concerning the Freedom of Mans Will, unless what all Men do Experience in themselves, and is most evident by the Light of Nature. Neither see I any Reason, Why he should say that this is Contradictious to any former Position.

Perhaps there may be Many, who respecting Gods predisposal of Things cannot Comprehend, How their Freedom of Will Consists there-with, but yet there is no Man who, respecting himself only, does not find by Experience, That ’tis one and the same Thing to be Willing, and to be Free. But ’tis no Place to Enquire what the Opinion of others may be in this Matter.

OBJECT. XIII.

* As for Example, When lately I set my self to examine Whether any Thing Do Exist, and found, that from my setting my self to examine such a Thing, it evidently follows, That I my self Exist, I could not but Judge, what I so clearly understood, to be true, not that I was forced thereto by any outward Impulse, but because a strong Propension in my Will did follow this Great Light in my Understanding, so that I believed it so much the more Freely and Willingly, by how much the Less indifferent I was thereunto.

This expression, Great Light in the Understanding, is Metaphorical, and therefore not to be used in Argumentation; And every one, that Doubts not of his Opinion, Pretends such a Light, and has no less a Propension in his Will to Affirm what he doubts not, than He that really and truely knows a Thing. Wherefore this Light may be the cause of Defending and Holding an Opinion Obstinately, but never of knowing an Opinion Truly.

Moreover not only the Knowledge of Truth, but Belief or Giving Assent, are not the

Acts of the Will; for Whatever is proved by strong Arguments, or Credibly told, we Believe whether we will or no.

'Tis true, To Affirm or Deny Propositions, to Defend or Oppose Propositions, are the Acts of the Will; but it does not from thence Follow that the Internal Assent depends on the Will. Wherefore the following Conclusion (so that in the abuse of our Freedom of Will that Privation consists which Constitutes Error) is not fully Demonstrated.

ANSWER.

'Tis not much matter, Whether this expression, Great Light, be Argumentative or not, so it be explicative, as really it is, For all men know, that by light in the understanding is meant clearness of knowledge, which every one has not, that thinks he has; and this hinders not but this light in the Understanding may be very different from an obstinate Opinion taken up without clear perception.

But when 'tis here said, That we assent to things clearly perceived whether we will or no, 'tis the same, as if it were said, that willing or nilling, we desire Good clearly known; whereas the word Nilling, finds no room in such Expressions, for it implies, that we will and nill the same thing.

OBJECT XIV. Against the Fifth Meditation. Of the Essence of material things.

* As when for Example, I imagine a Triangle, tho perhaps such a Figure exists no where out of my thoughts, nor ever will exist, yet the Nature thereof is determinate, and its Essence or Form is immutable and eternal, which is neither made by me nor depends on my mind, as appears from this, that many propositions may be demonstrated of this Triangle.

If a Triangle be no where, I understand not how it can have any Nature, for what is no where, is not, and therefore has not a Being, or any Nature.

A Triangle in the Mind arises from a Triangle seen, or from one made up of what has been seen, but when once we have given the name of a Triangle to a thing (from which we think the Idea of a Triangle arises) tho the Triangle it self perish, yet the name continues; In the like manner, when we have once conceived in our thought, That all the Angles of a Triangle are equal to two right ones, and when we have given this other name (viz. Having its three Angles equal to two right ones) to a Triangle, tho afterwards there were no such thing in the World, yet the Name would still continue, and this Proposition, A Triangle is a Figure having three Angles equal to two right Ones, would be eternally true. But the Nature of a Triangle will not be eternal if all Triangles were destroy'd.

This Proposition likewise, A Man is an Animal, will be true to Eternity, because the Word Animal will eternally signifie what the Word Man signifies; but certainly if Mankind perish, Humane Nature will be no longer.

From whence 'tis Manifest, That Essence as 'tis distinguish'd from Existence is nothing more than the Copulation of Names by this word Is, and therefore Essence without Existence is meerly a Fiction of our own; and as the Image of a Man in the Mind is to a Man, so it seems Essence is to Existence. Or as this Proposition Socrates is a Man, is to this, Socrates Is or Exists, so is the Essence of Socrates to his Existence. Now this Proposition, Socrates is a Man, when Socrates does not exist, signifies only the Connection of the Names, and the word Is carries under it the Image of the unity of the thing, which is called by these Two Names.

ANSWER.

The Difference between Essence and Existence is known to all Men. And what is here said of Eternal Names instead of Eternal Truth, has been long ago sufficiently rejected.

OBJECT. XV. Against the Sixth Meditation. Of the Existence of Material

Beings.

* And seeing God has given me no Faculty to know whether these Ideas proceed from Bodies or not, but rather a strong inclination to believe, that these Ideas are sent from Bodies, I see no reason, why God should not be counted a Deceiver, if these Ideas came from any where, but from Corporeal Beings, and therefore we must conclude that Corporeal Beings exist.

'Tis a received opinion, that Physicians who deceive their Patients for their Healths sake, and Fathers, who deceive their Children for their Good, are guilty thereby of no Crimes, for the fault of Deceit does not consist in the falsity of Words; but in the Injury done to the Person deceived.

Let D. Cartes therefore consider whether this Proposition, God can upon no account deceive us, Universally taken be true; For if it be not true so universally taken, that Conclusion, Therefore Corporeal Beings exist, will not follow.

ANSWER.

'Tis not requisite for the establishment of my Conclusion, That we cannot be deceived on any account (for I willingly granted, that we may be often deceived) but that we cannot be deceived, when that our Error argues that in God there is such a Will to Cheat us as would be contradictious to his Nature. And here again we have a wrong inference in this Objection.

The Last Objection.

* For now I plainly discover a great difference between them (that is sleep and waking) for my Dreams are never conjoyn'd by my Memory, with the other Actions of my Life.

I desire to Know, whether it be certain, that a Man dreaming, that the doubts whether he dream or not, may not Dream, that he joyns his Dream to the Ideas of things past long since; if he may, than those Actions of his past life, may be thought

as true if he were awake.

Moreover because (as D. Cartes affirms) the Certainty and truth of all knowledge depends only on the knowledge of the True God, either an Atheist cannot from the Memory of his past life conclude that he is awake, or else ’tis possible for a man to know that he is awake without the Knowledge of the True God.

ANSWER.

A Man that dreams cannot really connect his dreams with the Ideas of past things, tho, I confess, he may dream that he so connects them; for whoever deny’d That a man when he is a sleep may be Deceived? But when he awakens he may easily discover his Error.

An Atheist from the memory of his past life may collect that he is awake, but he cannot know, that this Sign is sufficient to make him certain, that he is not deceived, unless he know that he is created by a God that will not deceive him.

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