

John Locke, *Essay concerning Human Understanding* (1690)

John Locke was the first great empiricist of the modern period. His philosophy in the *Essay*, written in four “books,” is a rejection of many of the key elements of rationalist thought. His aim there is to show what the human mind can understand and know, given the capacities it possesses.

For Locke, the term “idea” covers all the contents of the mind; that is, all that it can be occupied with, including sensations, emotions, desires, etc. Locke argues that there are no innate ideas at birth and that all the materials for knowledge must first originate in experience. Found within his meticulous classification of the elements of experience is his famous formulation of the distinction between primary and secondary qualities, mentioned in the general introduction to this volume. Recall: the primary qualities (shape, weight, motion, etc.) are those that are presumed to exist in objects no matter how they are perceived, while the secondary qualities (color, taste, smell, etc.) seem to be defined relative to perceivers. The distinction is a tricky one, however, since it appears to treat primary qualities as features or powers in objects to produce ideas in perceivers, and secondary qualities as ideas in perceivers’ minds. If Locke had treated both types of quality in the same way – i.e., both as powers or both as ideas – the distinction would not have been so easy to formulate.

Locke is concerned to explain how our ideas can represent a material world, given his unquestioned assumption that there is such a world and that it is made of imperceptibly tiny parts (atoms or corpuscles). How can the senses access the ultimate reality of such a world? He concludes that the real essences of objects are closed off to our limited senses. But even more devastating is his conclusion that whatever qualities we sense, they must be qualities of some substance that binds them together; and this means that we never can sense the underlying substance that possesses the qualities. Our experience is necessarily of the qualities only!

Even though Locke argues that all ideas or concepts must begin in experience, knowledge is more than simply having ideas. He defines knowledge as “the perception of the connexion and agreement or disagreement and repugnancy of any of our Ideas.” Some might see him as an inconsistent empiricist, however, since he allows that the perception of some of the connections that constitute knowledge can be gotten by intuition or

reason. In Book IV of his *Essay*, for example, he concludes that (1) knowledge of the self is intuited; (2) knowledge of God is demonstrated (proven by reason); and (3) knowledge of the existence of finite things is known by the senses. What we cannot know, alas, is what causes the objects in the world to have the qualities they appear to have.

Born in Britain, Locke (1632–1704) was a physician and medical researcher who became politically active during one of the most tumultuous times in British history. Under Charles II, he was involved in the writing of a constitution for the American Carolinas, but later became a rebel who supported the Glorious Revolution of 1688, when the balance of power passed from the king to the parliament.

Book I Of Innate Notions

Chapter II No Innate Principles in the Mind

§1. It is an established Opinion amongst some Men, That there are in the Understanding certain innate Principles; some primary Notions, *κοινὰ ἔννοιαι*, Characters, as it were stamped upon the Mind of Man, which the Soul receives in its very first Being; and brings into the World with it. It would be sufficient to convince unprejudiced Readers of the falseness of this Supposition, if I should only shew (as I hope I shall in the following Parts of this Discourse) how Men, barely by the Use of their natural Faculties, may attain to all the Knowledge they have, without the help of any innate Impressions; and may arrive at Certainty, without any such Original Notions or Principles. For I imagine any one will easily grant, That it would be impertinent to suppose, the Ideas of Colours innate in a Creature, to whom God hath given Sight, and a Power to receive them by the Eyes from external Objects: and no less unreasonable would it be to attribute several Truths, to the Impressions of Nature, and innate Characters, when we may observe in our selves Faculties, fit to attain as easie and certain Knowledge of them, as if they were Originally imprinted on the Mind.

But because a Man is not permitted without Censure to follow his own Thoughts in the search of Truth, when they lead him ever so little out of the common Road: I shall set down the Reasons, that made me doubt of the Truth of that Opinion, as an Excuse for my Mistake, if I be in one, which I leave to be consider'd by those, who, with me, dispose themselves to embrace Truth, where-ever they find it.

§2. There is nothing more commonly taken for granted, than that there are certain Principles both Speculative and Practical (for they speak of both) universally agreed upon by all Mankind: which therefore they argue, must needs be the constant Impressions, which the Souls of Men receive in their first Beings, and which they bring into the World with them, as necessarily and really as they do any of their inherent Faculties.

§3. This Argument, drawn from Universal Consent, has this Misfortune in it, That if it were true in matter of Fact, that there were certain Truths, wherein all Mankind agreed, it would not prove them innate, if there can be any other way shewn, how Men may come to that Universal Agreement, in the things they do consent in; which I presume may be done.

§4. But, which is worse, this Argument of Universal Consent, which is made use of, to prove innate Principles, seems to me a Demonstration that there are none such: Because there are none to which all Mankind give an Universal Assent. I shall begin with the

Speculative, and instance in those magnified Principles of Demonstration, Whatsoever is, is; and 'Tis impossible for the same thing to be, and not to be, which of all others I think have the most allow'd Title to innate. These have so settled a Reputation of Maxims universally received, that 'twill, no doubt, be thought strange, if any one should seem to question it. But yet I take liberty to say, That these Propositions are so far from having an universal Assent, that there are a great Part of Mankind, to whom they are not so much as known.

§5. For, first 'tis evident, that all Children, and Ideots, have not the least Apprehension or Thought of them: and the want of that is enough to destroy that universal Assent, which must needs be the necessary concomitant of all innate Truths: it seeming to me near a Contradiction, to say, that there are Truths imprinted on the Soul, which it perceives or understands not; imprinting, if it signify any thing, being nothing else, but the making certain Truths to be perceived. For to imprint any thing on the Mind without the Mind's perceiving it, seems to me hardly intelligible. If therefore Children and Ideots have Souls, have Minds, with those Impressions upon them, they must unavoidably perceive them, and necessarily know and assent to these Truths, which since they do not, it is evident that there are no such Impressions. For if they are not Notions naturally imprinted, How can they be innate? And if they are Notions imprinted, How can they be unknown? To say a Notion is imprinted on the Mind, and yet at the same time to say, that the mind is ignorant of it, and never yet took notice of it, is to make this Impression nothing. No Proposition can be said to be in the Mind, which it never yet knew, which it was never yet conscious of. For if any one may; then, by the same Reason, all Propositions that are true, and the Mind is capable ever of assenting to, may be said to be in the Mind, and to be imprinted: Since if any one can be said to be in the Mind, which it never yet knew, it must be only because it is capable of knowing it; and so the Mind is of all Truths it ever shall know. Nay, thus Truths may be imprinted on the Mind, which it never did, nor ever shall know: for a Man may live long, and die at last in Ignorance of many Truths, which his Mind was capable of knowing, and that with Certainty. So that if the Capacity of knowing be the natural Impression contended for, all the Truths a Man ever comes to know, will, by this Account, be, every one of them, innate; and this great Point will amount to no more, but only to a very improper way of speaking; which whilst it pretends to assert the contrary, says nothing different from those, who deny innate Principles. For no Body, I think, ever denied, that the Mind was capable of knowing several Truths. The Capacity, they say, is innate, the Knowledge acquired. But then to what end such contest for certain innate Maxims? If Truths can be imprinted on the Understanding without being perceived, I can see no difference there can be, between any Truths the Mind is capable of knowing in respect of their Original: They must all be innate, or all adventitious: In vain shall a Man go about to distinguish them. He therefore that talks of innate Notions in the Understanding, cannot (if he intend thereby any distinct sort of Truths) mean such Truths to be in the Understanding, as it never perceived, and is yet wholly ignorant of. For if these Words (to be in the Understanding) have any Propriety, they signify to be understood. So that, to be in the Understanding, and, not to be understood; to be in the Mind, and, never to be perceived, is all one, as to say, any thing is, and is not, in the Mind or Understanding. If therefore these two Propositions, Whatsoever is, is; and, It is impossible for the same thing to be, and not to be, are by Nature imprinted, Children cannot be ignorant of them: Infants, and all that have Souls must necessarily have them in their Understandings, know the Truth of them, and assent to it.

§6. To avoid this, 'tis usually answered, that all Men know and *assent* to them, when they come to the use of Reason, and this is enough to prove them innate. I answer,

§7. Doubtful Expressions, that have scarce any signification, go for clear Reasons to those, who being prepossessed, take not the pains to examine even what they themselves say. For to apply this Answer with any tolerable Sence to our present Purpose, it must signify one of these two things; either, That as soon as Men come to the use of Reason, these supposed native Inscriptions come to be known, and observed by them: Or else, that the Use and Exercise of Men's Reasons assists them in the Discovery of these Principles, and certainly makes them known to them.

§8. If they mean that by the Use of Reason Men may discover these Principles; and that this is sufficient to prove them innate; their way of arguing will stand thus, (*viz.*) That whatever Truths Reason can certainly discover to us, and make us firmly assent to, those are all naturally imprinted on the Mind; since that universal Assent, which is made the Mark of them, amounts to no more but this; That by the use of Reason, we are capable to come to a certain Knowledge of, and assent to them; and by this Means there will be no difference between the Maxims of the Mathematicians, and Theorems they deduce from them: All must be equally allow'd innate, they being all Discoveries made by the use of Reason, and Truths that a rational Creature may certainly come to know, if he apply his Thoughts rightly that Way.

§9. But how can these Men think the Use of Reason necessary to discover Principles that are supposed innate, when Reason (if we may believe them) is nothing else, but the Faculty of deducing unknown Truths from Principles or Propositions, that are already known? That certainly can never be thought innate, which we have need of Reason to discover, unless as I have said, we will have all the certain Truths, that Reason ever teaches us, to be innate. We may as well think the use of Reason necessary to make our Eyes discover visible Objects, as that there should be need of Reason, or the Exercise thereof, to make the Understanding see, what is Originally engraven in it, and cannot be in the Understanding, before it be perceived by it. So that to make Reason discover those Truths thus imprinted, is to say, that the use of Reason discovers to a Man, what he knew before; and if Men have these innate, impressed Truths Originally, and before the use of Reason, and yet are always ignorant of them, till they come to the use of Reason, 'tis in effect to say, that Men know, and know them not at the same time.

[. . .]

Book II Of Ideas

Chapter I Of Ideas in General, and their Original

§1. Every Man being conscious to himself, That he thinks, and that which his Mind is employ'd about whilst thinking, being the *Ideas*, that are there, 'tis past doubt, that Men have in their Minds several *Ideas*, such as are those expressed by the words, *Whiteness*, *Hardness*, *Sweetness*, *Thinking*, *Motion*, *Man*, *Elephant*, *Army*, *Drunkenness*, and others: It is in the first place then to be enquired, How he comes by them? I know it is a received Doctrine, That Men have native *Ideas*, and original Characters stamped upon their Minds, in their very first Being. This Opinion I have at large examined already; and, I suppose, what I have said in the fore-going Book,

will be much more easily admitted, when I have shewn, whence the Understanding may get all the *Ideas* it has, and by what ways and degrees they may come into the Mind; for which I shall appeal to every one's own Observation and Experience.

§2. Let us then suppose the Mind to be, as we say, white Paper, void of all Characters, without any *Ideas*; How comes it to be furnished? Whence comes it by that vast store, which the busy and boundless Fancy of Man has painted on it, with an almost endless variety? Whence has it all the materials of Reason and Knowledge? To this I answer, in one word, From *Experience*: In that, all our Knowledge is founded; and from that it ultimately derives it self. Our Observation employ'd either about *external, sensible Objects*; or about the *internal operations of our Minds, perceived and reflected on by our selves, is that, which supplies our Understandings with all the materials of thinking*. These two are the Fountains of Knowledge, from whence all the *Ideas* we have, or can naturally have, do spring.

§3. First, *Our Senses*, conversant about particular sensible Objects, do convey into the Mind, several distinct *Perceptions* of things, according to those various ways, wherein those Objects do affect them: And thus we come by those *Ideas*, we have of *Yellow, White, Heat, Cold, Soft, Hard, Bitter, Sweet*, and all those which we call sensible qualities, which when I say the senses convey into the mind, I mean, they from external Objects convey into the mind what produces there those *Perceptions*. This great Source, of most of the *Ideas* we have, depending wholly upon our Senses, and derived by them to the Understanding, I call *SENSATION*.

§4. Secondly, The other Fountain, from which Experience furnisheth the Understanding with *Ideas*, is the *Perception of the Operations of our own Minds* within us, as it is employ'd about the *Ideas* it has got; which Operations, when the Soul comes to reflect on, and consider, do furnish the Understanding with another set of *Ideas*, which could not be had from things without: and such are, *Perception, Thinking, Doubting, Believing, Reasoning, Knowing, Willing*, and all the different actings of our own Minds; which we being conscious of, and observing in our selves, do from these receive into our Understandings, as distinct *Ideas*, as we do from Bodies affecting our Senses. This Source of *Ideas*, every Man has wholly in himself: And though it be not Sense, as having nothing to do with external Objects; yet it is very like it, and might properly enough be call'd internal Sense. But as I call the other *Sensation*, so I call this *REFLECTION*, the *Ideas* it affords being such only, as the Mind gets by reflecting on its own Operations within it self. By *REFLECTION* then, in the following part of this Discourse, I would be understood to mean, that notice which the Mind takes of its own Operations, and the manner of them, by reason whereof, there come to be *Ideas* of these Operations in the Understanding. These two, I say, viz. External, Material things, as the Objects of *SENSATION*; and the Operations of our own Minds within, as the Objects of *REFLECTION*, are, to me, the only Originals, from whence all our *Ideas* take their beginnings. The term *Operations* here, I use in a large sence, as comprehending not barely the Actions of the Mind about its *Ideas*, but some sort of Passions arising sometimes from them, such as is the satisfaction or uneasiness arising from any thought.

§5. The Understanding seems to me, not to have the least glimmering of any *Ideas*, which it doth not receive from one of these two. *External Objects furnish the Mind with the Ideas of sensible qualities*, which are all those different perceptions they produce in us: And the *Mind furnishes the Understanding with Ideas of its own Operations*.

These, when we have taken a full survey of them, and their several Modes, Combinations, and Relations, we shall find to contain all our whole stock of *Ideas*; and that we have nothing in our Minds, which did not come in, one of these two ways. Let any one examine his own Thoughts, and thoroughly search into his Understanding, and then let him

tell me, Whether all the original *Ideas* he has there, are any other than of the Objects of his *Senses*; or of the Operations of his Mind, considered as Objects of his *Reflection*: and how great a mass of Knowledge soever he imagines to be lodged there, he will, upon taking a strict view, see, that he has *not any Idea in his Mind, but what one of these two have imprinted*; though, perhaps, with infinite variety compounded and enlarged by the Understanding, as we shall see hereafter.

[. . .]

Chapter II Of Simple Ideas

§1. The better to understand the Nature, Manner, and Extent of our Knowledge, one thing is carefully to be observed, concerning the *Ideas* we have; and that is, That *some* of them are *simple*, and *some complex*.

Though the Qualities that affect our Senses, are, in the things themselves, so united and blended, that there is no separation, no distance between them; yet 'tis plain, the *Ideas* they produce in the Mind, enter by the Senses simple and unmixed. For though the Sight and Touch often take in from the same Object, at the same time, different *Ideas*; as a Man sees at once Motion and Colour; the Hand feels Softness and Warmth in the same piece of Wax: Yet the simple *Ideas* thus united in the same Subject, are as perfectly distinct, as those that come in by different Senses. The coldness and hardness, which a Man feels in a piece of *Ice*, being as distinct *Ideas* in the Mind, as the Smell and Whiteness of a Lily; or as the taste of Sugar, and smell of a Rose: And there is nothing can be plainer to a Man, than the clear and distinct Perception he has of those simple *Ideas*; which being each in it self uncompounded, contains in it nothing but *one uniform Appearance*, or Conception in the mind, and is not distinguishable into different *Ideas*.

§2. These simple *Ideas*, the Materials of all our Knowledge, are suggested and furnished to the Mind, only by those two ways above mentioned, *viz. Sensation* and *Reflection*. When the Understanding is once stored with these simple *Ideas*, it has the Power to repeat, compare, and unite them even to an almost infinite Variety, and so can make at Pleasure new complex *Ideas*. But it is not in the Power of the most exalted Wit, or enlarged Understanding, by any quickness or variety of Thought, to *invent or frame one new simple Idea* in the mind, not taken in by the ways before mentioned: nor can any force of the Understanding, *destroy* those that are there. The Dominion of Man, in this little World of his own Understanding, being muchwhat the same, as it is in the great World of visible things; wherein his Power, however managed by Art and Skill, reaches no farther, than to compound and divide the Materials, that are made to his Hand; but can do nothing towards the making the least Particle of new Matter, or destroying one Atome of what is already in Being. The same inability, will every one find in himself, who shall go about to fashion in his Understanding any simple *Idea*, not received in by his Senses, from external Objects; or by reflection from the Operations of his own mind about them. I would have any one try to fancy any Taste, which had never affected his Palate; or frame the *Idea* of a Scent, he had never smelt: And when he can do this, I will also conclude, that a blind Man hath *Ideas* of Colours, and a deaf Man true distinct Notions of Sounds.

§3. This is the Reason why, though we cannot believe it impossible to God, to make a Creature with other Organs, and more ways to convey into the Understanding the notice

of Corporeal things, than those five, as they are usually counted, which he has given to Man: Yet I think, it is *not possible*, for any one to *imagine* any other *Qualities* in Bodies, howsoever constituted, whereby they can be taken notice of, besides Sounds, Tastes, Smells, visible and tangible Qualities. And had Mankind been made with but four Senses, the Qualities then, which are the object of the Fifth Sense, had been as far from our Notice, Imagination, and Conception, as now any *belonging to a Sixth, Seventh, or Eighth Sense*, can possibly be: which, whether yet some other Creatures, in some other Parts of this vast, and stupendous Universe, may not have, will be a great Presumption to deny. He that will not set himself proudly at the top of all things; but will consider the Immensity of this Fabrick, and the great variety, that is to be found in this little and inconsiderable part of it, which he has to do with, may be apt to think, that in other Mansions of it, there may be other, and different intelligent Beings, of whose Faculties, he has as little Knowledge or Apprehension, as a Worm shut up in one drawer of a Cabinet, hath of the Senses or Understanding of a Man; Such Variety and Excellency, being suitable to the Wisdom and Power of the Maker. I have here followed the common Opinion of Man's having but five Senses; though, perhaps, there may be justly counted more; but either Supposition serves equally to my present purpose.

Chapter III Of Ideas of One Sense

§1. The better to conceive the *Ideas*, we receive from Sensation, it may not be amiss for us to consider them, in reference to the different ways, whereby they make their Approaches to our minds, and make themselves perceivable by us.

First then, There are some, which come into our minds by *one Sense* only.

Secondly, There are others, that convey themselves into the mind by *more Senses than one*.

Thirdly, Others that are had from *Reflection* only.

Fourthly, There are some that make themselves way, and are suggested to the mind by *all the ways of Sensation and Reflection*.

We shall consider them apart under these several Heads.

First, There are *some Ideas, which have admittance only through one Sense*, which is peculiarly adapted to receive them. Thus Light and Colours, as white, red, yellow, blue; with their several Degrees or Shades, and Mixtures, as Green, Scarlet, Purple, Sea-green, and the rest, come in only by the Eyes: All kinds of Noises, Sounds, and Tones only by the Ears: The several Tastes and Smells, by the Nose and Palate. And if these Organs, or the Nerves which are the Conduits, to convey them from without to their Audience in the Brain, the mind's Presence-room (as I may so call it) are any of them so disordered, as not to perform their Functions, they have no Postern to be admitted by; no other way to bring themselves into view, and be perceived by the Understanding.

The most considerable of those, belonging to the Touch, are Heat and Cold, and Solidity; all the rest, consisting almost wholly in the sensible Configuration, as smooth and rough; or else more, or less firm adhesion of the Parts, as hard and soft, tough and brittle, are obvious enough.

Chapter V Of Simple Ideas of Divers Senses

The *Ideas* we get by more than one Sense, are of *Space*, or *Extension*, *Figure*, *Rest*, and *Motion*: For these make perceivable impressions, both on the Eyes and Touch; and we can receive and convey into our Minds the *Ideas* of the Extension, Figure, Motion, and Rest of Bodies, both by seeing and feeling. But having occasion to speak more at large of these in another place, I here only enumerate them.

Chapter VI Of Simple Ideas of Reflection

§1. The Mind receiving the *Ideas*, mentioned in the foregoing Chapters, from without, when it turns its view inward upon it self, and observes its own Actions about those *Ideas* it has, takes from thence other *Ideas*, which are as capable to be the Objects of its Contemplation, as any of those it received from foreign things.

§2. The two great and principal Actions of the Mind, which are most frequently considered, and which are so frequent, that everyone that pleases, may take notice of 'em in himself, are these two:

*Perception, or Thinking, and
Volition, or Willing.*

The Power of Thinking is called the *Understanding*, and the Power of Volition is called the *Will*, and these two Powers or Abilities in the Mind are denominated *Faculties*. Of some of the Modes of these simple *Ideas* of Reflection, such as are *Remembrance*, *Discerning*, *Reasoning*, *Judging*, *Knowledge*, *Faith*, etc. I shall have occasion to speak hereafter.

Chapter VII Of Simple Ideas of Both Sensation and Reflection

§1. There be other simple *Ideas*, which convey themselves into the Mind, by all the ways of Sensation and Reflection, viz.

*Pleasure, or Delight, and its opposite.
Pain, or Uneasiness.
Power.
Existence.
Unity.*

§2. *Delight*, or *Uneasiness*, one or other of them join themselves to almost all our *Ideas*, both of Sensation and Reflection: And there is scarce any affection of our Senses from without, any retired thought of our Mind within, which is not able to produce in us *pleasure* or *pain*. By *Pleasure* and *Pain*, I would be understood to signifie, whatsoever delights or molests us; whether it arises from the thoughts of our Minds, or any thing operating on our Bodies. For whether we call it Satisfaction, Delight, Pleasure, Happiness, etc. on the one side; or Uneasiness, Trouble, Pain, Torment, Anguish, Misery, etc. on the other, they are still

but different degrees of the same thing, and belong to the *Ideas* of *Pleasure* and *Pain*, *Delight* or *Uneasiness*; which are the Names I shall most commonly use for those two sorts of *Ideas*.

§3. The infinite Wise Author of our being, having given us the power over several parts of our Bodies, to move or keep them at rest, as we think fit; and also by the motion of them, to move our selves, and other contiguous Bodies, in which consists all the Actions of our Body: Having also given a power to our Minds, in several Instances, to chuse, amongst its *Ideas*, which it will think on, and to pursue the enquiry of this or that Subject with consideration and attention, to excite us to these Actions of thinking and motion, that we are capable of, has been pleased to join to several Thoughts, and several Sensations, a *perception* of *Delight*. If this were wholly separated from all our outward Sensations, and inward Thoughts, we should have no reason to prefer one Thought or Action, to another; Negligence, to Attention; or Motion, to Rest. And so we should neither stir our Bodies, nor employ our Minds; but let our Thoughts (if I may so call it) run a drift, without any direction or design; and suffer the *Ideas* of our Minds, like unregarded shadows, to make their appearances there, as it happen'd, without attending to them. In which state Man, however furnished with the Faculties of Understanding and Will, would be a very idle unactive Creature, and pass his time only in a lazy lethargick Dream. It has therefore pleased our Wise Creator, to annex to several Objects, and to the *Ideas* which we receive from them, as also to several of our Thoughts, a concomitant pleasure, and that in several Objects, to several degrees, that those Faculties which he had endowed us with, might not remain wholly idle, and unemploy'd by us.

§4. *Pain* has the same efficacy and use to set us on work, that *Pleasure* has, we being as ready to employ our Faculties to avoid that, as to pursue this: Only this is worth our consideration, That *Pain is often produced by the same Objects and Ideas, that produce Pleasure* in us. This their near Conjunction, which makes us often feel pain in the sensations where we expected pleasure, gives us new occasion of admiring the Wisdom and Goodness of our Maker, who designing the preservation of our Being, has annexed Pain to the application of many things to our Bodies, to warn us of the harm that they will do; and as advices to withdraw from them. But he, not designing our preservation barely, but the preservation of every part and organ in its perfection, hath, in many cases, annexed pain to those very *Ideas*, which delight us. Thus Heat, that is very agreeable to us in one degree, by a little greater increase of it, proves no ordinary torment: and the most pleasant of all sensible Objects, Light it self, if there be too much of it, if increased beyond a due proportion to our Eyes, causes a very painful sensation. Which is wisely and favourably so ordered by Nature, that when any Object does, by the vehemency of its operation, disorder the instruments of Sensation, whose Structures cannot but be very nice and delicate, we might by the pain, be warned to withdraw, before the Organ be quite put out of order, and so be unfitted for its proper Functions for the future. The consideration of those Objects that produce it, may well persuade us, That this is the end or use of pain. For though great light be insufferable to our Eyes, yet the highest degree of darkness does not at all disease them: because that causing no disorderly motion in it, leaves that curious Organ unharm'd, in its natural state. But yet excess of Cold, as well as Heat, pains us: because it is equally destructive to that temper, which is necessary to the preservation of life, and the exercise of the several functions of the Body, and which consists in a moderate degree of warmth; or, if you please, a motion of the insensible parts of our Bodies, confin'd within certain bounds.

Chapter VIII

Some Farther Considerations Concerning our Simple Ideas

[. . .]

§7. To discover the nature of our *Ideas* the better, and to discourse of them intelligibly, it will be convenient to distinguish them, as they are *Ideas* or Perceptions in our Minds; and as they are modifications of matter in the Bodies that cause such Perceptions in us: that so we *may not* think (as perhaps usually is done) that they are exactly the Images and *Resemblances* of something inherent in the subject; most of those of Sensation being in the Mind no more the likeness of something existing without us, than the Names, that stand for them are the likeness of our *Ideas*, which yet upon hearing, they are apt to excite in us.

§8. Whatsoever the Mind perceives in it self, or is the immediate object of Perception, Thought, or Understanding, that I call *Idea*; and the Power to produce any *Idea* in our mind, I call *Quality* of the Subject wherein that power is. Thus a Snow-ball having the power to produce in us the *Ideas* of *White*, *Cold*, and *Round*, the Powers to produce those *Ideas* in us, as they are in the Snow-ball, I call *Qualities*; and as they are Sensations, or Perceptions, in our Understandings, I call them *Ideas*: which *Ideas*, if I speak of sometimes, as in the things themselves, I would be understood to mean those *Qualities* in the Objects which produce them in us.

§9. Qualities thus considered in Bodies are, First such as are utterly inseparable from the Body, in what estate soever it be; such as in all the alterations and changes it suffers, all the force can be used upon it, it constantly keeps; and such as Sense constantly finds in every particle of Matter, which has bulk enough to be perceived, and the Mind finds inseparable from every particle of Matter, though less than to make it self singly be perceived by our Senses. v.g. Take a grain of Wheat, divide it into two parts, each part has still *Solidity*, *Extension*, *Figure*, and *Mobility*; divide it again, and it retains still the same qualities; and so divide it on, till the parts become insensible, they must retain still each of them all those qualities. For division (which is all that a Mill, or Pestel, or any other Body, does upon another, in reducing it to insensible parts) can never take away either *Solidity*, *Extension*, *Figure*, or *Mobility* from any Body, but only makes two, or more distinct separate masses of Matter, of that which was but one before, all which distinct masses, reckon'd as so many distinct Bodies, after division make a certain Number. These I call *original* or *primary Qualities* of Body, which I think we may observe to produce simple *Ideas* in us, viz. *Solidity*, *Extension*, *Figure*, *Motion*, or *Rest*, and is *Number*.

§10. 2dly, Such *Qualities*, which in truth are nothing in the Objects themselves, but Powers to produce various Sensations in us by their *primary Qualities*, i.e. by the Bulk, Figure, Texture, and Motion of their insensible parts, as Colours, Sounds, Tastes, etc. These I call *secondary Qualities*. To these might be added a third sort which are allowed to be barely Powers though they are as much real *Qualities* in the Subject, as those which I to comply with the common way of speaking call *Qualities*, but for distinction *secondary Qualities*. For the power in Fire to produce a new Colour, or consistency in Wax or Clay by its primary *Qualities*, is as much a quality in Fire, as the power it has to produce in me a new *Idea* or Sensation of warmth or burning, which I felt not before, by the same primary *Qualities*, viz. The Bulk, Texture, and Motion of its insensible parts.

§11. The next thing to be consider'd, is how *Bodies* produce *Ideas* in us, and that is manifestly by *impulse*, the only way which we can conceive Bodies operate in.

§12. If then external Objects be not united to our Minds, when they produce *Ideas* in it; and yet we perceive *these original Qualities* in such of them as singly fall under our Senses, 'tis evident, that some motion must be thence continued by our Nerves, or animal Spirits, by some parts of our Bodies, to the Brains or the seat of Sensation, there to *produce in our Minds the particular Ideas we have of them*. And since the Extension, Figure, Number, and Motion of Bodies of an observable bigness, may be perceived at a distance by the sight, 'tis evident some singly imperceptible Bodies must come from them to the Eyes, and thereby convey to the Brain some *Motion*, which produces these *Ideas*, which we have of them in us.

§13. After the same manner, that the *Ideas* of these original Qualities are produced in us, we may conceive, that the *Ideas of secondary Qualities* are also *produced, viz. by the operation of insensible particles on our Senses*. For it being manifest, that there are Bodies, and good store of Bodies, each whereof is so small, that we cannot, by any of our Senses, discover either their bulk, figure, or motion, as is evident in the Particles of the Air and Water, and other extremely smaller than those, perhaps, as much smaller than the Particles of Air, or Water, as the Particles of Air or Water, are smaller than Pease or Hail-stones. Let us suppose at present, that the different Motions and Figures, Bulk, and Number of such Particles, affecting the several Organs of our Senses, produce in us those different Sensations, which we have from the Colours and Smells of Bodies, v.g. that a Violet, by the impulse of such insensible particles of matter of peculiar figures, and bulks, and in different degrees and modifications of their Motions, causes the *Ideas* of the blue Colour, and sweet Scent of that Flower to be produced in our Minds. It being no more impossible, to conceive, that God should annex such *Ideas* to such Motions, with which they have no similitude; than that he should annex the *Idea* of Pain to the motion of a piece of Steel dividing our Flesh, with which that *Idea* hath no resemblance.

§14. What I have said concerning Colours and Smells, may be understood also of Tastes and Sounds, and other the like sensible Qualities; which, whatever reality we, by mistake, attribute to them, are in truth nothing in the Objects themselves, but Powers to produce various Sensations in us, and *depend on those primary Qualities, viz. Bulk, Figure, Texture, and Motion of parts*; as I have said.

§15. From whence I think it is easie to draw this Observation, That the *Ideas of primary Qualities* of Bodies, are *Resemblances* of them, and their Patterns do really exist in the Bodies themselves; but the *Ideas, produced in us by these Secondary Qualities, have no resemblance of them at all*. There is nothing like our *Ideas*, existing in the Bodies themselves. They are in the Bodies, we denominate from them, only a Power to produce those Sensations in us: And what is Sweet, Blue, or Warm in *Idea*, is but the certain Bulk, Figure, and Motion of the insensible Parts in the Bodies themselves, which we call so.

§16. Flame is denominated Hot and Light; Snow White and Cold; and Manna White and Sweet, from the *Ideas* they produce in us. Which Qualities are commonly thought to be the same in those Bodies, that those *Ideas* are in us, the one the perfect resemblance of the other, as they are in a Mirror; and it would by most Men be judged very extravagant, if one should say otherwise. And yet he, that will consider, that *the same Fire*, that at one distance produces in us the Sensation of Warmth, does at a nearer approach, produce in us the far different Sensation of Pain, ought to bethink himself, what Reason he has to say, That his *Idea* of Warmth, which was produced in him by the Fire, is actually *in the Fire*; and his *Idea* of Pain, which the same Fire produced in him the same way, is *not in the Fire*. Why is Whiteness and Coldness in Snow, and Pain not, when it produces the one and the other *Idea* in us; and can do neither, but by the Bulk, Figure, Number, and Motion of its solid Parts?

§17. The particular *Bulk, Number, Figure, and Motion of the parts of Fire, or Snow, are really in them*, whether any ones Senses perceive them or no: and therefore they may be called *real Qualities*, because they really exist in those Bodies. But *Light, Heat, Whiteness, or Coldness, are no more really in them, than Sickness or Pain is in Manna*. Take away the Sensation of them; let not the Eyes see Light, or Colours, nor the Ears hear Sounds; let the Palate not Taste, nor the Nose Smell, and all Colours, Tastes, Odors, and Sounds, as they are such particular *Ideas*, vanish and cease, and are reduced to their Causes, *i.e.* Bulk, Figure, and Motion of Parts.

[. . .]

§21. *Ideas* being thus distinguished and understood, we may be able to give an Account, how the same Water, at the same time, may produce the *Idea* of Cold by one Hand, and of Heat by the other: Whereas it is impossible, that the same Water, if those *Ideas* were really in it, should at the same time be both Hot and Cold. For if we imagine *Warmth*, as it is in our Hands, to be *nothing but a certain sort and degree of Motion in the minute Particles of our Nerves, or animal Spirits*, we may understand, how it is possible, that the same Water may at the same time produce the Sensation of Heat in one Hand, and Cold in the other; which yet Figure never does, that never producing the *Idea* of a square by one Hand, which has produced the *Idea* of a Globe by another. But if the Sensation of Heat and Cold, be nothing but the increase or diminution of the motion of the minute Parts of our Bodies, caused by the Corpuscles of any other Body, it is easie to be understood, That if that motion be greater in one Hand, than in the other; if a Body be applied to the two Hands, which has in its minute Particles a greater motion, than in those of one of the Hands, and a less, than in those of the other, it will increase the motion of the one Hand, and lessen it in the other, and so cause the different Sensations of Heat and Cold, that depend thereon.

§22. I have in what just goes before, been engaged in Physical Enquiries a little farther than, perhaps, I intended. But it being necessary, to make the Nature of Sensation a little understood, and to make the *difference between the Qualities in Bodies, and the Ideas produced by them in the Mind*, to be distinctly conceived, without which it were impossible to discourse intelligibly of them; I hope, I shall be pardoned this little Excursion into Natural Philosophy, it being necessary in our present Enquiry, to distinguish the *primary, and real Qualities* of Bodies, which are always in them, (*viz.* Solidity, Extension, Figure, Number, and Motion, or Rest; and are sometimes perceived by us, *viz.* when the Bodies they are in, are big enough singly to be discerned) from those *secondary and imputed Qualities*, which are but the Powers of several Combinations of those primary ones, when they operate, without being distinctly discerned; whereby we also may come to know what *Ideas* are, and what are not Resemblances of something really existing in the Bodies, we denominate from them.

§23. The *Qualities* then that are in *Bodies* rightly considered, are of *Three sorts*.

First, The *Bulk, Figure, Number, Situation, and Motion, or Rest* of their solid Parts; those are in them, whether we perceive them or no; and when they are of that size, that we can discover them, we have by these an *Idea* of the thing, as it is in it self, as is plain in artificial things. These I call *primary Qualities*.

Secondly, The *Power* that is in any Body, by Reason of its insensible *primary Qualities*, to operate after a peculiar manner on any of our Senses, and thereby *produce in us the different Ideas* of several Colours, Sounds, Smells, Tastes, *etc.* These are usually called sensible Qualities.

Thirdly, The *Power* that is in any Body, by Reason of the particular Constitution of its *primary Qualities*, to make such a *change* in the *Bulk, Figure, Texture, and Motion of another Body*, as to make it operate on our Senses, differently from what it did before. Thus the Sun has a Power to make Wax white, and Fire to make Lead fluid. These are usually called Powers.

The First of these, as has been said, I think, may be properly called *real Original*, or *primary Qualities*, because they are in the things themselves, whether they are perceived or no: and upon their different Modifications it is, that the secondary Qualities depend.

The other two, are only Powers to act differently upon other things, which Powers result from the different Modifications of those primary Qualities.

[. . .]

Chapter XII Of Complex Ideas

§1. We have hitherto considered those *Ideas*, in the reception whereof, the Mind is only passive, which are those simple ones received from *Sensation* and *Reflection* before-mentioned, whereof the Mind cannot make any one to it self, nor have any *Idea* which does not wholly consist of them. But as the Mind is wholly Passive in the reception of all its simple *Ideas*, so it exerts several acts of its own, whereby out of its simple *Ideas*, as the Materials and Foundations of the rest, the other are framed. The Acts of the Mind wherein it exerts its Power over its simple *Ideas* are chiefly these three, 1. Combining several simple *Ideas* into one compound one, and thus all Complex *Ideas* are made. 2. The 2d. is bringing two *Ideas*, whether simple or complex, together; and setting them by one another, so as to take a view of them at once, without uniting them into one; by which way it gets all its *Ideas* of Relations. 3. The 3d. is separating them from all other *Ideas* that accompany them in their real existence; this is called *Abstraction*: And thus all its General *Ideas* are made. This shews Man's Power and its way of Operation to be much what the same in the Material and Intellectual World. For the Materials in both being such as he has no power over, either to make or destroy, all that Man can do is either to unite them together, or to set them by one another, or wholly separate them. I shall here begin with the first of these in the consideration of Complex *Ideas*, and come to the other two in their due places. As simple *Ideas* are observed to exist in several Combinations united together; so the Mind has a power to consider several of them united together, as one *Idea*; and that not only as they are united in external Objects, but as it self has join'd them. *Ideas* thus made up of several simple ones put together, I call *Complex*; such as are *Beauty, Gratitude, a Man, an Army, the Universe*; which though complicated of various simple *Ideas*, or *complex Ideas* made up of simple ones, yet are, when the Mind pleases, considered each by it self, as one entire thing, and signified by one name.

[. . .]

Chapter XXI Of Power

§1. The Mind, being every day informed, by the Senses, of the alteration of those simple *Ideas*, it observes in things without; and taking notice how one comes to an end, and ceases

to be, and another begins to exist, which was not before; reflecting also on what passes within it self, and observing a constant change of its *Ideas*, sometimes by the impression of outward Objects on the Senses, and sometimes by the Determination of its own choice; and concluding from what it has so constantly observed to have been, that the like Changes will for the future be made, in the same things, by like Agents, and by the like ways, considers in one thing the possibility of having any of its simple *Ideas* changed, and in another the possibility of making that change; and so comes by that *Idea* which we call *Power*. Thus we say, Fire has a *power* to melt Gold, *i.e.* to destroy the consistency of its insensible parts, and consequently its hardness, and make it fluid; and Gold has a *power* to be melted; That the Sun has a *power* to blanch Wax, and Wax a *power* to be blanched by the Sun, whereby the Yellowness is destroy'd, and Whiteness made to exist in its room. In which, and the like Cases, the *Power* we consider is in reference to the change of perceivable *Ideas*. For we cannot observe any alteration to be made in, or operation upon any thing, but by the observable change of its sensible *Ideas*; nor conceive any alteration to be made, but by conceiving a Change of some of its *Ideas*.

§2. *Power* thus considered is twofold, *viz.* as able to make, or able to receive any change: The one may be called *Active*, and the other *Passive Power*. Whether Matter be not wholly destitute of *active Power*, as its Author GOD is truly above all *passive Power*; and whether the intermediate state of created Spirits be not that alone, which is capable of both *active* and *passive Power*, may be worth consideration. I shall not now enter into that Enquiry, my present Business being not to search into the original of *Power*, but how we come by the *Idea* of it. But since *active Powers* make so great a part of our complex *Ideas* of natural Substances, (as we shall see hereafter,) and I mention them as such, according to common apprehension; yet they being not, perhaps, so truly *active Powers*, as our hasty Thoughts are apt to represent them, I judge it not amiss, by this intimation, to direct our Minds to the consideration of GOD and Spirits, for the clearest *Idea* of *active Power*.

§3. I confess *Power* includes in it some kind of relation, (a relation to Action or Change,) as indeed which of our *Ideas*, of what kind soever, when attentively considered, does not? For our *Ideas* of Extension, Duration, and Number, do they not all contain in them a secret relation of the Parts? Figure and Motion have something relative in them much more visibly: And sensible Qualities, as Colours and Smells, *etc.* what are they but the *Powers* of different Bodies, in relation to our Perception, *etc.* And if considered in the things themselves, do they not depend on the Bulk, Figure, Texture, and Motion of the Parts? All which include some kind of relation in them. Our *Idea* therefore of *Power*, I think, may well have a place amongst other simple *Ideas*, and be considered as one of them, being one of those, that make a principal Ingredient in our complex *Ideas* of Substances, as we shall hereafter have occasion to observe.

§4. We are abundantly furnished with the *Idea* of *passive Power*, by almost all sorts of sensible things. In most of them we cannot avoid observing their sensible Qualities, nay their very Substances to be in a continual flux: And therefore with reason we look on them as liable still to the same Change. Nor have we of *active Power* (which is the more proper signification of the word *Power*) fewer instances. Since whatever Change is observed, the Mind must collect a *Power* somewhere, able to make that Change, as well as a possibility in the thing it self to receive it. But yet, if we will consider it attentively, Bodies, by our Senses, do not afford us so clear and distinct an *Idea* of *active Power*, as we have from reflection on the Operations of our Minds. For all *Power* relating to Action, and there being but two sorts of Action, whereof we have any *Idea*, *viz.* Thinking and Motion, let us consider whence we

have the clearest *Ideas* of the *Powers*, which produce these Actions. 1. Of Thinking, Body affords us no *Idea* at all, it is only from Reflection that we have that: 2. Neither have we from Body any *Idea* of the beginning of Motion. A Body at rest affords us no *Idea* of any *active Power* to move; and when it is set in motion it self, that Motion is rather a Passion, than an Action in it. For when the Ball obeys the stroke of a Billiard-stick, it is not any action of the Ball, but bare passion: Also when by impulse it sets another Ball in motion, that lay in its way, it only communicates the motion it had received from another, and loses in it self so much, as the other received; which gives us but a very obscure *Idea* of an *active Power* of moving in Body, whilst we observe it only to transfer, but not produce any motion. For it is but a very obscure *Idea* of *Power*, which reaches not the Production of the Action, but the Continuation of the Passion. For so is motion in a Body impelled by another: The continuation of the Alteration made in it from rest to motion being little more an Action, than the continuation of the Alteration of its Figure by the same blow is an Action. The *Idea* of the beginning of motion, we have only from reflection on what passes in our selves, where we find by Experience, that barely by willing it, barely by a thought of the Mind, we can move the parts of our Bodies, which were before at rest. So that it seems to me, we have from the observation of the operation of Bodies by our Senses, but a very imperfect obscure *Idea* of *active Power*, since they afford us not any *Idea* in themselves of the *Power* to begin any Action, either motion or thought. But if, from the Impulse Bodies are observed to make one upon another, any one thinks he has a clear *Idea* of *Power*, it serves as well to my purpose, *Sensation* being one of those ways, whereby the mind comes by its *Ideas*: Only I thought it worth while to consider here by the way, whether the mind doth not receive its *Idea* of *active Power* clearer from reflection on its own Operations, than it doth from any external Sensation.

§5. This at least I think evident, That we find in our selves a *Power* to begin or forbear, continue or end several actions of our minds, and motions of our Bodies, barely by a thought or preference of the mind ordering, or as it were commanding the doing or not doing such or such a particular action. This *Power* which the mind has, thus to order the consideration of any *Idea*, or the forbearing to consider it; or to prefer the motion of any part of the body to its rest, and *vice versâ* in any particular instance is that which we call the *Will*. The actual exercise of that power, by directing any particular action, or its forbearance is that which we call *Volition* or *Willing*. The forbearance or performance of that action, consequent to such order or command of the mind is called *Voluntary*. And whatsoever action is performed without such a thought of the mind is called *Involuntary*. The power of Perception is that which we call the *Understanding*. Perception, which we make the act of the Understanding, is of three sorts: 1. The Perception of *Ideas* in our Minds. 2. The Perception of the signification of Signs. 3. The Perception of the Connexion or Repugnancy, Agreement or Disagreement, that there is between any of our *Ideas*. All these are attributed to the *Understanding*, or perceptive Power, though it be the two latter only that use allows us to say we understand.

§6. These Powers of the Mind, viz. of *Perceiving*, and of *Preferring*, are usually call'd by another Name: And the ordinary way of Speaking is, That the *Understanding* and *Will* are two *Faculties* of the mind; a word proper enough, if it be used as all Words should be, so as not to breed any confusion in Mens Thoughts, by being supposed (as I suspect it has been) to stand for some real Beings in the Soul, that performed those Actions of Understanding and Volition. For when we say the *Will* is the commanding and superior Faculty of the Soul; that it is, or is not free; that it determines the inferior Faculties; that it follows the Dictates of the *Understanding*, etc. though these, and the like Expressions, by those that carefully attend

to their own *Ideas*, and conduct their Thoughts more by the evidence of Things, than the sound of Words, may be understood in a clear and distinct sense: Yet I suspect, I say, that this way of Speaking of *Faculties*, has misled many into a confused Notion of so many distinct Agents in us, which had their several Provinces and Authorities, and did command, obey, and perform several Actions, as so many distinct Beings; which has been no small occasion of wrangling, obscurity, and uncertainty in Questions relating to them.

§7. Every one, I think, finds in himself a *Power* to begin or forbear, continue or put an end to several Actions in himself. From the consideration of the extent of the power of the mind over the actions of the Man, which every one finds in himself, arise the *Ideas* of *Liberty* and *Necessity*.

§8. All the Actions, that we have any *Idea* of, reducing themselves, as has been said, to these two, *viz.* Thinking and Motion, so far as a Man has a power to think, or not to think; to move, or not to move, according to the preference or direction of his own mind, so far is a Man *Free*. Where-ever any performance or forbearance are not equally in a Man's power; where-ever doing or not doing, will not equally follow upon the preference of his mind directing it, there he is not *Free*, though perhaps the Action may be voluntary. So that the *Idea* of *Liberty*, is the *Idea* of a Power in any Agent to do or forbear any particular Action, according to the determination or thought of the mind, whereby either of them is preferr'd to the other; where either of them is not in the Power of the Agent to be produced by him according to his *Volition*, there he is not at *Liberty*, that Agent is under *Necessity*. So that *Liberty* cannot be, where there is no Thought, no Volition, no Will; but there may be Thought, there may be Will, there may be Volition, where there is no *Liberty*. A little Consideration of an obvious instance or two may make this clear.

§9. A Tennis-ball, whether in motion by the stroke of a Racket, or lying still at rest, is not by any one taken to be a *free Agent*. If we enquire into the Reason, we shall find it is, because we conceive not a Tennis-ball to think, and consequently not to have any Volition, or preference of Motion to rest, or *vice versâ*; and therefore has not *Liberty*, is not a free Agent; but all its both Motion and Rest, come under our *Idea* of *Necessary*, and are so call'd. Likewise a Man falling into the Water, (a Bridge breaking under him,) has not herein liberty, is not a free Agent. For though he has Volition, though he prefers his not falling to falling; yet the forbearance of that Motion not being in his Power, the Stop or Cessation of that Motion follows not upon his Volition; and therefore therein he is not *free*. So a Man striking himself, or his Friend, by a Convulsive motion of his Arm, which it is not in his Power, by Volition or the direction of his Mind to stop, or forbear; no Body thinks he has in this *Liberty*; every one pities him, as acting by Necessity and Constraint.

§10. Again, suppose a Man be carried, whilst fast asleep, into a Room, where is a Person he longs to see and speak with; and be there locked fast in, beyond his Power to get out: he awakes, and is glad to find himself in so desirable Company, which he stays willingly in, *i.e.* prefers his stay to going away. I ask, Is not this stay voluntary? I think, no Body will doubt it: and yet being locked fast in, 'tis evident he is not at liberty not to stay, he has not freedom to be gone. So that *Liberty* is not an *Idea* belonging to Volition, or preferring; but to the Person having the Power of doing, or forbearing to do, according as the Mind shall chuse or direct. Our *Idea* of Liberty reaches as far as that Power, and no farther. For where-ever restraint comes to check that Power, or compulsion takes away that Indifferency of Ability on either side to act, or to forbear acting, there *liberty*, and our Notion of it, presently ceases.

§14. If this be so, (as I imagine it is,) I leave it to be considered, whether it may not help to put an end to that long agitated, and, I think, unreasonable, because unintelligible, Question, *viz. Whether Man's Will be free, or no.* For if I mistake not, it follows, from what I have said, that the Question it self is altogether improper; and it is as insignificant to ask, whether Man's Will be free, as to ask, whether his Sleep be Swift, or his Vertue square: *Liberty* being as little applicable to the Will, as swiftness of Motion is to Sleep, or squareness to Vertue. Every one would laugh at the absurdity of such a Question, as either of these: because it is obvious, that the modifications of motion belong not to sleep, nor the difference of Figure to Vertue: and when any one well considers it, I think he will as plainly perceive, that *Liberty*, which is but a power, belongs only to Agents, and cannot be an attribute or modification of the Will, which is also but a Power.

[. . .]

§16. 'Tis plain then, That the Will is nothing but one Power or Ability, and *Freedom* another Power or Ability: So that to ask, whether the Will has *Freedom*, is to ask, whether one Power has another Power, one Ability another Ability; a Question at first sight too grosly absurd to make a Dispute, or need an Answer. For who is it that sees not, that Powers belong only to Agents, and are Attributes only of Substances, and not of Powers themselves? So that this way of putting the Question, *viz. whether the Will be free*, is in effect to ask, whether the Will be a Substance, an Agent, or at least to suppose it, since Freedom can properly be attributed to nothing else. If Freedom can with any propriety of Speech be applied to Power, it may be attributed to the Power, that is in a Man, to produce, or forbear producing Motion in parts of his Body, by choice or preference; which is that which denominates him free, and is Freedom it self. But if any one should ask, whether Freedom were free, he would be suspected, not to understand well what he said; and he would be thought to deserve *Midas's Ears*, who knowing that Rich was a denomination from the possession of Riches, should demand whether Riches themselves were rich.

[. . .]

§21. To return then to the Enquiry about Liberty, I think the Question is not proper, whether the Will be free, but whether a Man be free. Thus, I think,

1. That so far as any one can, by the direction or choice of his Mind, preferring the existence of any Action, to the non-existence of that Action, and, *vice versâ*, make it to exist, or not exist, so far he is free. For if I can, by a thought, directing the motion of my Finger, make it move, when it was at rest, or *vice versâ*, 'tis evident, that in respect of that, I am free: and if I can, by a like thought of my Mind, preferring one to the other, produce either words, or silence, I am at liberty to speak, or hold my peace: and as far as this Power reaches, of acting, or not acting, by the determination of his own Thought preferring either, so far is a Man free. For how can we think any one freer than to have the power to do what he will? And so far as any one can, by preferring any Action to its not being, or Rest to any Action, produce that Action or Rest, so far can he do what he will. For such a preferring of Action to its absence, is the willing of it: and we can scarce tell how to imagine any Being freer, than to be able to do what he wills. So that in respect of Actions, within the reach of such a power in him, a Man seems as free, as 'tis possible for Freedom to make him.

§22. But the inquisitive Mind of Man, willing to shift off from himself, as far as he can, all thoughts of guilt, though it be by putting himself into a worse state, than that of fatal Necessity, is not content with this: Freedom, unless it reaches farther than this, will not serve the turn: And it passes for a good Plea, that a Man is not free at all, if he be not as free to will, as he is to act, what he wills. Concerning a Man's Liberty there yet therefore is raised this farther Question, *Whether a Man be free to will*; which, I think, is what is meant, when it is disputed, *Whether the will be free*. And as to that I imagine,

§23. 2. That *Willing*, or *Volition* being an Action, and Freedom consisting in a power of acting, or not acting, *a Man in respect of willing, or the Act of Volition, when any Action in his power is once proposed to his Thoughts, as presently to be done, cannot be free*. The reason whereof is very manifest: For it being unavoidable that the Action depending on his Will, should exist, or not exist; and its existence, or not existence, following perfectly the determination, and preference of his Will, he cannot avoid willing the existence, or not existence, of that Action; it is absolutely necessary that he will the one, or the other, *i.e. prefer* the one to the other: since one of them must necessarily follow; and that which does follow, follows by the choice and determination of his Mind, that is, by his *willing it*: for if he did not will it, it would not be. So that in respect of the act of *willing*, a Man in such a case is not free: Liberty consisting in a power to act, or not to act, which, in regard of Volition, a Man, upon such a proposal, has not. For it is unavoidably necessary to prefer the doing, or forbearance, of an Action in a Man's power, which is once so proposed to his thoughts; a Man must necessarily will the one, or the other of them, upon which preference, or volition, the action, or its forbearance, certainly follows, and is truly voluntary: But the act of volition, or preferring one of the two, being that which he cannot avoid, a Man in respect of that act of *willing*, is under a necessity, and so cannot be free; unless Necessity and Freedom can consist together, and a Man can be Free and Bound at once.

§24. This then is evident, That in all proposals of present Action, *a Man is not at liberty to will, or not to will, because he cannot forbear willing*: Liberty consisting in a power to act, or to forbear acting, and in that only. For a Man that sits still, is said yet to be at liberty, because he can walk if he wills it. A Man that walks is at liberty also, not because he walks, or moves; but because he can stand still if he wills it. But if a Man sitting still has not a power to remove himself, he is not at liberty; so likewise a Man falling down a precipice, though in motion, is not at liberty, because he cannot stop that motion, if he would. This being so, 'tis plain that a Man that is walking, to whom it is proposed to give off walking, is not at liberty, whether he will determine himself to walk, or give off walking, or no: He must necessarily prefer one, or t'other of them; walking or not walking: and so it is in regard of all other Actions in our power so proposed, which are the far greater number. For considering the vast number of voluntary Actions, that succeed one another every moment that we are awake, in the course of our Lives, there are but few of them that are thought on or proposed to the Will, 'till the time they are to be done: And in all such Actions, as I have shewn, the Mind in respect of *willing* has not a power to act, or not to act, wherein consists Liberty: The Mind in that case has not a power to forbear *willing*; it cannot avoid some determination concerning them, let the Consideration be as short, the Thought as quick, as it will, it either leaves the Man in the state he was before thinking, or changes it; continues the Action, or puts an end to it. Whereby it is manifest, that it orders and directs one in preference to, or with neglect of the other, and thereby either the continuation, or change becomes unavoidably voluntary.

§25. Since then it is plain, that in most cases a Man is not at liberty, whether he will Will, or no; the next thing demanded is, *Whether a Man be at liberty to will which of the two he pleases*,

Motion or Rest. This Question carries the absurdity of it so manifestly in it self, that one might thereby sufficiently be convinced, that Liberty concerns not the Will. For to ask, whether a Man be at liberty to will either Motion, or Rest; Speaking, or Silence; which he pleases, is to ask, whether a Man can *will*, what he *wills*; or be pleased with what he is pleased with. A Question, which, I think, needs no answer: and they, who can make a Question of it, must suppose one Will to determine the Acts of another, and another to determinate that; and so on *in infinitum*.

[. . .]

Chapter XXIII

Of our Complex Ideas of Substances

§1. The Mind being, as I have declared, furnished with a great number of the simple *Ideas*, conveyed in by the *Senses*, as they are found in exterior things, or by *Reflection* on its own Operations, takes notice also, that a certain number of these simple *Ideas* go constantly together; which being presumed to belong to one thing, and Words being suited to common apprehensions, and made use of for quick dispatch, are called so united in one subject, by one name; which by inadvertency we are apt afterward to talk of and consider as one simple *Idea*, which indeed is a complication of many *Ideas* together; Because, as I have said, not imagining how these simple *Ideas* can subsist by themselves, we accustom our selves, to suppose some *Substratum*, wherein they do subsist, and from which they do result, which therefore we call *Substance*.

§2. So that if any one will examine himself concerning his *Notion of pure Substance in general*, he will find he has no other *Idea* of it at all, but only a Supposition of he knows not what support of such Qualities, which are capable of producing simple *Ideas* in us; which Qualities are commonly called Accidents. If any one should be asked, what is the subject wherein Colour or Weight inheres, he would have nothing to say, but the solid extended parts: And if he were demanded, what is it, that that Solidity and Extension inhere in, he would not be in a much better case, than the *Indian* before mentioned; who, saying that the World was supported by a great Elephant, was asked, what the Elephant rested on; to which his answer was, a great Tortoise: But being again pressed to know what gave support to the broad-back'd Tortoise, replied, something, he knew not what. And thus here, as in all other cases, where we use Words without having clear and distinct *Ideas*, we talk like Children; who, being questioned, what such a thing is, which they know not, readily give this satisfactory answer, That it is *something*; which in truth signifies no more, when so used, either by Children or Men, but that they know not what; and that the thing they pretend to know, and talk of, is what they have no distinct *Idea* of at all, and so are perfectly ignorant of it, and in the dark. The *Idea* then we have, to which we give the general name Substance, being nothing, but the supposed, but unknown support of those Qualities, we find existing, which we imagine cannot subsist, *sine re substante*, without something to support them, we call that Support *Substantia*; which, according to the true import of the Word, is in plain *English*, *standing under*, or *upholding*.

§3. An obscure and relative *Idea* of Substance in general being thus made, we come to have the *Ideas of particular sorts of Substances*, by collecting such Combinations of simple *Ideas*, as are by Experience and Observation of Men's Senses taken notice of to exist together, and are therefore supposed to flow from the particular internal Constitution, or unknown

Essence of that Substance. Thus we come to have the *Ideas* of a Man, Horse, Gold, Water, *etc.* of which Substances, whether any one has any other clear *Idea*, farther than of certain simple *Ideas* coexisting together, I appeal to every one's own Experience. 'Tis the ordinary Qualities, observable in Iron, or a Diamond, put together, that make the true complex *Idea* of those Substances, which a Smith, or a Jeweller, commonly knows better than a Philosopher; who, whatever substantial forms he may talk of, has no other *Idea* of those Substances, than what is framed by a collection of those simple *Ideas* which are to be found in them; only we must take notice, that our complex *Ideas* of Substances, besides all these simple *Ideas* they are made up of, have always the confused *Idea* of *something* to which they belong, and in which they subsist: and therefore when we speak of any sort of Substance, we say it is a *thing* having such or such Qualities, as Body is a *thing* that is extended, figured, and capable of Motion; a Spirit a *thing* capable of thinking; and so Hardness, Friability, and Power to draw Iron, we say, are Qualities to be found in a Loadstone. These, and the like fashions of speaking intimate, that the Substance is supposed always *something* besides the Extension, Figure, Solidity, Motion, Thinking, or other observable *Ideas*, though we know not what it is.

§4. Hence when we talk or think of any particular sort of corporeal Substances, as *Horse*, *Stone*, *etc.* though the *Idea*, we have of either of them, be but the Complication, or Collection of those several simple *Ideas* of sensible Qualities, which we use to find united in the thing called *Horse* or *Stone*, yet because we cannot conceive, how they should subsist alone, nor one in another, we suppose them existing in, and supported by some common subject; *which Support we denote by the name Substance*, though it be certain, we have no clear, or distinct *Idea* of that *thing* we suppose a Support.

§5. The same happens concerning the Operations of the Mind, *viz.* Thinking, Reasoning, Fearing, *etc.* which we concluding not to subsist of themselves, nor apprehending how they can belong to Body, or be produced by it, we are apt to think these the Actions of some other *Substance*, which we call *Spirit*; whereby yet it is evident, that having no other *Idea* or Notion, of Matter, but *something* wherein those many sensible Qualities, which affect our Senses, do subsist; by supposing a Substance, wherein *Thinking*, *Knowing*, *Doubting*, and a power of Moving, *etc.* do subsist, *We have as clear a Notion of the Substance of Spirit, as we have of Body*; the one being supposed to be (without knowing what it is) the *Substratum* to those simple *Ideas* we have from without; and the other supposed (with a like ignorance of what it is) to be the *Substratum* to those Operations, which we experiment in our selves within. 'Tis plain then, that the *Idea* of corporeal *Substance* in Matter is as remote from our Conceptions, and Apprehensions, as that of Spiritual *Substance*, or *Spirit*; and therefore from our not having any notion of the *Substance* of Spirit, we can no more conclude its non-Existence, than we can, for the same reason, deny the Existence of Body: It being as rational to affirm, there is no Body, because we have no clear and distinct *Idea* of the *Substance* of Matter; as to say, there is no Spirit, because we have no clear and distinct *Idea* of the *Substance* of a Spirit.

§6. Whatever therefore be the secret and abstract Nature of *Substance* in general, all the *Ideas we have of particular distinct sorts of Substances*, are nothing but several Combinations of simple *Ideas*, co-existing in such, though unknown, Cause of their Union, as makes the whole subsist of itself. 'Tis by such Combinations of simple *Ideas* and nothing else, that we represent particular sorts of *Substances* to our selves; such are the *Ideas* we have of their several species in our Minds; and such only do we, by their specifick Names, signify to others, *v.g.* *Man*, *Horse*, *Sun*, *Water*, *Iron*, upon hearing which Words, every one who understands the Language, frames in his Mind a Combination of those several simple *Ideas*, which he has

usually observed, or fancied to exist together under that denomination; all which he supposes to rest in, and be, as it were, adherent to that unknown common Subject, which inheres not in any thing else. Though in the mean time it be manifest, and every one upon Enquiry into his own thoughts, will find that he has no other *Idea* of any *Substance*, v.g. let it be *Gold*, *Horse*, *Iron*, *Man*, *Vitriol*, *Bread*, but what he has barely of those sensible Qualities, which he supposes to inhere, with a supposition of such a *Substratum*, as gives as it were a support to those Qualities, or simple *Ideas*, which he has observed to exist united together. Thus the *Idea* of the *Sun*, What is it, but an aggregate of those several simple *Ideas*, Bright, Hot, Roundish, having a constant regular motion, at a certain distance from us, and, perhaps, some other: as he who thinks and discourses of the *Sun*, has been more or less accurate, in observing those sensible Qualities, *Ideas*, or Properties, which are in that thing, which he calls the *Sun*.

[. . .]

Chapter XXVII Of Identity and Diversity

[. . .]

§9. This being premised to find wherein *personal Identity* consists, we must consider what *Person* stands for; which, I think, is a thinking intelligent Being, that has reason and reflection, and can consider it self as it self, the same thinking thing in different times and places; which it does only by that consciousness, which is inseparable from thinking, and as it seems to me essential to it: It being impossible for any one to perceive, without perceiving, that he does perceive. When we see, hear, smell, taste, feel, meditate, or will any thing, we know that we do so. Thus it is always as to our present Sensations and Perceptions: And by this every one is to himself, that which he calls *self*: It not being considered in this case, whether the same *self* be continued in the same, or divers Substances. For since consciousness always accompanies thinking, and 'tis that, that makes every one to be, what he calls *self*; and thereby distinguishes himself from all other thinking things, in this alone consists *personal Identity*, i.e. the sameness of a rational Being: And as far as this consciousness can be extended backwards to any past Action or Thought, so far reaches the Identity of that *Person*; it is the same *self* now it was then; and 'tis by the same *self* with this present one that now reflects on it, that that Action was done.

§10. But it is farther enquir'd whether it be the same Identical Substance. This few would think they had reason to doubt of, if these Perceptions, with their consciousness, always remain'd present in the Mind, whereby the same thinking thing would be always consciously present, and, as would be thought, evidently the same to it self. But that which seems to make the difficulty is this, that this consciousness, being interrupted always by forgetfulness, there being no moment of our Lives wherein we have the whole train of all our past Actions before our Eyes in one view: But even the best Memories losing the sight of one part whilst they are viewing another; and we sometimes, and that the greatest part of our Lives, not reflecting on our past selves, being intent on our present Thoughts, and in sound sleep, having no Thoughts at all, or at least none with that consciousness, which remarks our waking Thoughts. I say, in all these cases, our consciousness being interrupted, and we losing the sight of our past selves, doubts are raised whether we are the same thinking thing; i.e. the same substance or no. Which however reasonable, or unreasonable, concerns not *personal*

Identity at all. The Question being what makes the same *Person*, and not whether it be the same Identical Substance, which always thinks in the same *Person*, which in this case matters not at all. Different Substances, by the same consciousness (where they do partake in it) being united into one *Person*; as well as different Bodies, by the same Life are united into one Animal, whose *Identity* is preserved, in that change of Substances, by the unity of one continued Life. For it being the same consciousness that makes a Man be himself to himself, *personal Identity* depends on that only, whether it be annexed only to one individual Substance, or can be continued in a succession of several Substances. For as far as any intelligent Being can repeat the *Idea* of any past Action with the same consciousness it had of it at first, and with the same consciousness it has of any present Action; so far it is the same *personal self*. For it is by the consciousness it has of its present Thoughts and Actions, that it is *self* to it *self* now, and so will be the same *self* as far as the same consciousness can extend to Actions past or to come; and would be by distance of Time, or change of Substance, no more two *Persons* than a Man be two Men, by wearing other Cloaths to Day than he did Yesterday, with a long or short sleep between: The same consciousness uniting those distant Actions into the same *Person*, whatever Substances contributed to their Production.

§11. That this is so, we have some kind of Evidence in our very Bodies, all whose Particles, whilst vitally united to this same thinking conscious self, so that we feel when they are touch'd, and are affected by, and conscious of good or harm that happens to them, are a part of our *selves*: i.e. of our thinking conscious *self*. Thus the Limbs of his Body is to every one a part of *himself*. He sympathizes and is concerned for them. Cut off an hand, and thereby separate it from that consciousness, we had of its Heat, Cold, and other Affections; and it is then no longer a part of that which is *himself*, any more than the remotest part of Matter. Thus we see the *Substance*, whereof *personal self* consisted at one time, may be varied at another, without the change of *personal Identity*: There being no Question about the same *Person*, though the Limbs, which but now were a part of it, be cut off.

[. . .]

§15. And thus we may be able without any difficulty to conceive, the same *Person* at the Resurrection, though in a Body not exactly in make or parts the same which he had here, the same consciousness going along with the Soul that inhabits it. But yet the Soul alone in the change of Bodies, would scarce to any one, but to him that makes the Soul the *Man*, be enough to make the same *Man*. For should the Soul of a Prince, carrying with it the consciousness of the Prince's past Life, enter and inform the Body of a Cocker as soon as deserted by his own Soul, every one sees, he would be the same *Person* with the Prince, accountable only for the Prince's Actions: But who would say it was the same *Man*? The Body too goes to the making the *Man*, and would, I guess, to every Body determine the *Man* in this case, wherein the Soul, with all its Princely Thoughts about it, would not make another *Man*: But he would be the same Cocker to every one besides himself. I know that in the ordinary way of speaking, the same *Person*, and the same *Man*, stand for one and the same thing. And indeed every one will always have a liberty to speak, as he pleases, and to apply what articulate Sounds to what *Ideas* he thinks fit, and change them as often as he pleases. But yet when we will enquire, what makes the same *Spirit*, *Man*, or *Person*, we must fix the *Ideas* of *Spirit*, *Man*, or *Person*, in our Minds; and having resolved with our selves what we mean by them, it will not be hard to determine, in either of them, or the like, when it is the *same*, and when not.

§16. But though the same immaterial Substance, or Soul does not alone, where-ever it be, and in whatsoever State, make the same Man; yet 'tis plain consciousness, as far as ever it can be extended, should it be to Ages past, unites Existences, and Actions, very remote in time, into the same Person, as well as it does the Existence and Actions of the immediately preceding moment: So that whatever has the consciousness of present and past Actions, is the same Person to whom they both belong. Had I the same consciousness, that I saw the Ark and *Noah's Flood*, as that I saw an overflowing of the *Thames* last Winter, or as that I write now, I could no more doubt that I, that write this now, that saw the *Thames* overflow'd last Winter, and that view'd the Flood at the general Deluge, was the same *self*, place that *self* in what Substance you please, than that I that write this am the same *my self* now whilst I write (whether I consist of all the same Substance, material or immaterial, or no) that I was Yesterday. For as to this point of being the same *self*, it matters not whether this present *self* be made up of the same or other Substances, I being as much concern'd, and as justly accountable for any Action was done a thousand Years since, appropriated to me now by this self-consciousness, as I am, for what I did the last moment.

§17. *Self* is that conscious thinking thing, (whatever Substance, made up of whether Spiritual, or Material, Simple, or Compounded, it matters not) which is sensible, or conscious of Pleasure and Pain, capable of Happiness or Misery, and so is concern'd for it *self*, as far as that consciousness extends. Thus every one finds, that whilst comprehended under that consciousness, the little Finger is as much a part of it *self*, as what is most so. Upon separation of this little Finger, should this consciousness go along with the little Finger, and leave the rest of the Body, 'tis evident the little Finger would be the *Person*, the *same Person*; and *self* then would have nothing to do with the rest of the Body. As in this case it is the consciousness that goes along with the Substance, when one part is separated from another, which makes the same *Person*, and constitutes this inseparable *self*: so it is in reference to Substances remote in time. That with which the *consciousness* of this present thinking thing can join it self, makes the same *Person*, and is one *self* with it, and with nothing else; and so attributes to it *self*, and owns all the Actions of that thing, as its own, as far as that consciousness reaches, and no farther; as every one who reflects will perceive.

§18. In this *personal Identity* is founded all the Right and Justice of Reward and Punishment; Happiness and Misery, being that, for which every one is concerned for *himself*, not mattering what becomes of any Substance, not joined to, or affected with that consciousness. For as it is evident in the instance I gave but now, if the consciousness went along with the little Finger, when it was cut off, that would be the same *self* which was concerned for the whole Body Yesterday, as making a part of it *self*, whose Actions then it cannot but admit as its own now. Though if the same Body should still live, and immediately from the separation of the little Finger have its own peculiar consciousness, whereof the little Finger knew nothing, it would not at all be concerned for it, as a part of it *self*, or could own any of its Actions, or have any of them imputed to him.

§19. This may shew us wherein *personal Identity* consists, not in the Identity of Substance, but, as I have said, in the Identity of *consciousness*, wherein, if *Socrates* and the present Mayor of *Quinborough* agree, they are the same Person: If the same *Socrates* waking and sleeping do not partake of the same *consciousness*, *Socrates* waking and sleeping is not the same Person. And to punish *Socrates* waking, for what sleeping *Socrates* thought, and waking *Socrates* was never conscious of, would be no more of Right, than to punish one Twin for what his Brother-Twin did, whereof he knew nothing, because their outsides were so like, that they could not be distinguished; for such Twins have been seen.

§20. But yet possibly it will still be objected, suppose I wholly lose the memory of some parts of my Life, beyond a possibility of retrieving them, so that perhaps I shall never be conscious of them again; yet am I not the same Person, that did those Actions, had those Thoughts, that I was once conscious of, though I have now forgot them? To which I answer, that we must here take notice what the Word *I* is applied to, which in this case is the Man only. And the same Man being presumed to be the same Person, *I* is easily here supposed to stand also for the same Person. But if it be possible for the same Man to have distinct incommunicable consciousness at different times, it is past doubt the same Man would at different times make different Persons; which, we see, is the Sense of Mankind in the solemnest Declaration of their Opinions, Humane Laws not punishing the *Mad Man* for the *Sober Man's* Actions, nor the *Sober Man* for what the *Mad Man* did, thereby making them two Persons; which is somewhat explained by our way of speaking in *English*, when we say such an one *is not himself*, or *is besides himself*; in which Phrases it is insinuated, as if those who now, or, at least, first used them, thought, that *self* was changed, the *self* same Person was no longer in that Man.

[. . .]

§25. I agree the more probable Opinion is, that this consciousness is annexed to, and the Affection of one individual immaterial Substance.

But let Men according to their divers Hypotheses resolve of that as they please. This every intelligent Being, sensible of Happiness or Misery, must grant, that there is something that is *himself*, that he is concerned for, and would have happy; that this *self* has existed in a continued Duration more than one instant, and therefore 'tis possible may exist, as it has done, Months and Years to come, without any certain bounds to be set to its duration; and may be the same *self*, by the same consciousness, continued on for the future. And thus, by this consciousness, he finds himself to be the *same self* which did such or such an Action some Years since, by which he comes to be happy or miserable now. In all which account of *self*, the same numerical Substance is not considered, as making the same *self*. But the same continued consciousness, in which several Substances may have been united, and again separated from it, which, whilst they continued in a vital union with that, wherein this consciousness then resided, made a part of that same *self*. Thus any part of our Bodies vitally united to that, which is conscious in us, makes a part of our *selves*: But upon separation from the vital union, by which that consciousness is communicated, that, which a moment since was part of our *selves*, is now no more so, than a part of another Man's *self* is a part of me; and 'tis not impossible, but in a little time may become a real part of another Person. And so we have the same numerical Substance become a part of two different Persons; and the same Person preserved under the change of various Substances. Could we suppose any Spirit wholly stripp'd of all its memory or consciousness of past Actions, as we find our Minds always are of a great part of ours, and sometimes of them all, the union or separation of such a Spiritual Substance would make no variation of personal Identity, any more than that of any Particle of Matter does. Any Substance vitally united to the present thinking Being, is a part of that very *same self* which now is: Any thing united to it by a consciousness of former Actions makes also a part of the *same self*, which is the same both then and now.

§26. *Person*, as I take it, is the name for this *self*. Where-ever a Man finds, what he calls *himself*, there I think another may say is the same *Person*. It is a Forensick Term appropriating Actions and their Merit; and so belongs only to intelligent Agents capable of a Law, and Happiness and Misery. This personality extends it *self* beyond present Existence to what is

past, only by consciousness, whereby it becomes concerned and accountable, owns and imputes to it *self* past Actions, just upon the same ground, and for the same reason, that it does the present. All which is founded in a concern for Happiness the unavoidable concomitant of consciousness, that which is conscious of Pleasure and Pain, desiring, that that *self*, that is conscious, should be happy. And therefore whatever past Actions it cannot reconcile or appropriate to that present *self* by consciousness, it can be no more concerned in, than if they had never been done: And to receive Pleasure or Pain; *i.e.* Reward or Punishment, on the account of any such Action, is all one, as to be made happy or miserable in its first being, without any demerit at all. For supposing a Man punish'd now, for what he had done in another Life, whereof he could be made to have no consciousness at all, what difference is there between that Punishment, and being created miserable? And therefore conformable to this, the Apostle tells us, that at the Great Day, when every one shall *receive according to his doings, the secrets of all Hearts shall be laid open*. The Sentence shall be justified by the consciousness all Persons shall have, that they *themselves* in what Bodies soever they appear, or what Substances soever that consciousness adheres to, are the *same*, that committed those Actions, and deserve that Punishment for them.

[. . .]

Book IV Of Knowledge and Opinion

Chapter I Of Knowledge in General

§1. *Since the Mind*, in all its Thoughts and Reasonings, hath no other immediate Object but its own *Ideas*, which it alone does or can contemplate, it is evident, that our Knowledge is only conversant about them.

§2. *Knowledge* then seems to me to be nothing but *the perception of the connexion and agreement, or disagreement and repugnancy of any of our Ideas*. In this alone it consists. Where this Perception is, there is Knowledge, and where it is not, there, though we may fancy, guess, or believe, yet we always come short of Knowledge. For when we know that *White is not Black*, what do we else but perceive, that these two *Ideas* do not agree? When we possess our selves with the utmost security of the Demonstration, that *the three Angles of a Triangle are equal to two right ones*, What do we more but perceive, that Equality to two right ones, does necessarily agree to, and is inseparable from the three Angles of a Triangle?

§3. But to understand a little more distinctly, wherein this agreement or disagreement consists, I think we may reduce it all to these four sorts:

1. *Identity, or Diversity.*
2. *Relation.*
3. *Co-existence, or necessary connexion.*
4. *Real Existence.*

§4. *First*, As to the first sort of Agreement or Disagreement, *viz. Identity, or Diversity*. 'Tis the first Act of the Mind, when it has any Sentiments or *Ideas* at all, to perceive its *Ideas*, and

so far as it perceives them, to know each what it is, and thereby also to perceive their difference, and that one is not another. This is so absolutely necessary, that without it there could be no Knowledge, no Reasoning, no Imagination, no distinct Thoughts at all. By this the Mind clearly and infallibly perceives each *Idea* to agree with it self, and to be what it is; and all distinct *Ideas* to disagree, *i.e.* the one not to be the other: And this it does without any pains, labour, or deduction; but at first view, by its natural power of Perception and Distinction. And though Men of Art have reduced this into those general Rules, *What is, is; and it is impossible for the same thing to be, and not to be*, for ready application in all cases, wherein there may be occasion to reflect on it; yet it is certain, that the first exercise of this Faculty, is about particular *Ideas*. A Man infallibly knows, as soon as ever he has them in his Mind that the *Ideas* he calls *White* and *Round*, are the very *Ideas* they are, and that they are not other *Ideas* which he calls *Red* or *Square*. Nor can any Maxim or Proposition in the World make him know it clearer or surer than he did before, and without any such general Rule. This then is the first agreement, or disagreement, which the Mind perceives in its *Ideas*; which it always perceives at first sight: And if there ever happen any doubt about it, 'twill always be found to be about the Names, and not the *Ideas* themselves, whose Identity and Diversity will always be perceived, as soon and as clearly as the *Ideas* themselves are, nor can it possibly be otherwise.

§5. *Secondly*, The next sort of Agreement, or Disagreement, the Mind perceives in any of its *Ideas*, may, I think, be called *Relative*, and is nothing but the Perception of the Relation between any two *Ideas*, of what kind soever, whether Substances, Modes, or any other. For since all distinct *Ideas* must eternally be known not to be the same, and so be universally and constantly denied one of another, there could be no room for any positive Knowledge at all, if we could not perceive any Relation between our *Ideas*, and find out the Agreement or Disagreement, they have one with another, in several ways the Mind takes of comparing them.

§6. *Thirdly*, The third sort of Agreement, or Disagreement to be found in our *Ideas*, which the Perception of the Mind is employ'd about, is *Co-existence*, or *Non-co-existence* in the same Subject; and this belongs particularly to Substances. Thus when we pronounce concerning *Gold*, that it is fixed, our Knowledge of this Truth amounts to no more but this, that fixedness, or a power to remain in the Fire unconsumed, is an *Idea*, that always accompanies, and is join'd with that particular sort of Yellowness, Weight, Fusibility, Malleableness, and Solubility in *Aqua Regia*, which make our complex *Idea*, signified by the word *Gold*.

§7. *Fourthly*, The fourth and last sort is, that of *actual real Existence* agreeing to any *Idea*. Within these four sorts of Agreement or Disagreement, is, I suppose contained all the Knowledge we have, or are capable of: For all the Enquiries that we can make, concerning any of our *Ideas*, all that we know, or can affirm concerning any of them, is, That it is, or is not the same with some other; that it does, or does not always co-exist with some other *Idea* in the same Subject; that it has this or that Relation to some other *Idea*; or that it has a real existence without the Mind. Thus *Blue is not Yellow*, is of Identity. *Two Triangles upon equal Basis, between two Parallels are equal*, is of Relation. *Iron is susceptible of magnetical Impressions*, is of Co-existence, *GOD is*, is of real Existence. Though Identity and Co-existence are truly nothing but Relations, yet they are so peculiar ways of Agreement, or Disagreement of our *Ideas*, that they deserve well to be considered as distinct Heads, and not under Relation in general; since they are so different grounds of Affirmation and Negation, as will easily appear to any one, who will but reflect on what is said in several places of this Essay. I should now proceed to examine the several degrees of our Knowledge, but that it is necessary first, to consider the different acceptations of the word *Knowledge*.

§8. There are several ways wherein the Mind is possessed of Truth; each of which is called *Knowledge*.

1. There is *actual Knowledge*, which is the present view the Mind has of the Agreement, or Disagreement of any of its *Ideas*, or of the Relation they have one to another.

2. A Man is said to know any Proposition, which having been once laid before his Thoughts, he evidently perceived the Agreement, or Disagreement of the *Ideas* whereof it consists; and so lodg'd it in his Memory, that whenever that Proposition comes again to be reflected on, he, without doubt or hesitation, embraces the right side, assents to, and is certain of the Truth of it. This, I think, one may call *habitual Knowledge*: And thus a Man may be said to know all those Truths, which are lodg'd in his Memory, by a foregoing clear and full perception, whereof the Mind is assured past doubt, as often as it has occasion to reflect on them. For our finite Understandings being able to think, clearly and distinctly, but on one thing at once, if Men had no Knowledge of any more than what they actually thought on, they would all be very ignorant: And he that knew most, would know but one Truth, that being all he was able to think on at one time.

[. . .]

Chapter II

Of the Degrees of our Knowledge

§1. All our Knowledge consisting, as I have said, in the view the Mind has of its own *Ideas*, which is the utmost Light and greatest Certainty, we with our Faculties, and in our way of Knowledge are capable of, it may not be amiss, to consider a little the degrees of its Evidence. The different clearness of our Knowledge seems to me to lie in the different way of Perception, the Mind has of the Agreement, or Disagreement of any of its *Ideas*. For if we will reflect on our own ways of Thinking, we shall find, that sometimes the Mind perceives the Agreement or Disagreement of two *Ideas* immediately by themselves, without the intervention of any other: And this, I think, we may call *intuitive Knowledge*. For in this, the Mind is at no pains of proving or examining, but perceives the Truth, as the Eye doth light, only by being directed toward it. Thus the Mind perceives, that *White* is not *Black*, That a *Circle* is not a *Triangle*, That *Three* are more than *Two*, and equal to *One* and *Two*. Such kind of Truths, the Mind perceives at the first sight of the *Ideas* together, by bare *Intuition*, without the intervention of any other *Idea*; and this kind of Knowledge is the clearest, and most certain, that humane Frailty is capable of. This part of Knowledge is irresistible, and like the bright Sun-shine, forces it self immediately to be perceived, as soon as ever the Mind turns its view that way; and leaves no room for Hesitation, Doubt, or Examination, but the Mind is presently filled with the clear Light of it. 'Tis on this *Intuition*, that depends all the Certainty and Evidence of all our Knowledge, which Certainty every one finds to be so great, that he cannot imagine, and therefore not require a greater: For a Man cannot conceive himself capable of a greater Certainty, than to know that any *Idea* in his Mind is such, as he perceives it to be; and that two *Ideas*, wherein he perceives a difference, are different, and not precisely the same. He that demands a greater Certainty than this, demands he knows not what, and shews only that he has a Mind to be a Sceptick, without being able to be so. Certainty depends so wholly on this Intuition, that in the next degree of *Knowledge*, which I call *Demonstrative*, this intuition is necessary in all the Connexions of the intermediate *Ideas*, without which we cannot attain Knowledge and Certainty.

§2. The next degree of Knowledge is, where the Mind perceives the Agreement or Disagreement of any *Ideas*, but not immediately. Though where-ever the Mind perceives the Agreement or Disagreement of any of its *Ideas*, there be certain Knowledge; Yet it does not always happen, that the Mind sees that Agreement or Disagreement, which there is between them, even where it is discoverable; and in that case, remains in Ignorance, and at most, gets no farther than a probable conjecture. The Reason why the Mind cannot always perceive presently the Agreement or Disagreement of two *Ideas* is, because those *Ideas*, concerning whose Agreement or Disagreement the Enquiry is made, cannot by the Mind be so put together, as to shew it. In this Case then, when the Mind cannot so bring its *Ideas* together, as by their immediate Comparison, and as it were Juxta-position, or application one to another, to perceive their Agreement or Disagreement, it is fain, by the Intervention of other *Ideas* (one or more, as it happens) to discover the Agreement or Disagreement, which it searches; and this is that which we call *Reasoning*. Thus the Mind being willing to know the Agreement or Disagreement in bigness, between the three Angles of a Triangle, and two right ones, cannot by an immediate view and comparing them, do it: Because the three Angles of a Triangle cannot be brought at once, and be compared with any other one, or two Angles; and so of this the Mind has no immediate, no intuitive Knowledge. In this Case the Mind is fain to find out some other Angles, to which the three Angles of a Triangle have an Equality; and finding those equal to two right ones, comes to know their Equality to two right ones.

§3. Those intervening *Ideas*, which serve to shew the Agreement of any two others, are called *Proofs*; and where the Agreement or Disagreement is by this means plainly and clearly perceived, it is called *Demonstration*, it being *shewn* to the Understanding, and the Mind made see that it is so. A quickness in the Mind to find out these intermediate *Ideas*, (that shall discover the Agreement or Disagreement of any other,) and to apply them right, is, I suppose, that which is called *Sagacity*.

§4. *This Knowledge by intervening Proofs*, though it be certain, yet the evidence of it is *not* altogether *so clear* and bright, nor the assent so ready, *as* in *intuitive* Knowledge. For though in *Demonstration*, the Mind does at last perceive the Agreement or Disagreement of the *Ideas* it considers; yet 'tis not without pains and attention: There must be more than one transient view to find it. A steady application and pursuit is required to this Discovery: And there must be a Progression by steps and degrees, before the Mind can in this way arrive at Certainty, and come to perceive the Agreement or Repugnancy between two *Ideas* that need Proofs and the Use of Reason to shew it.

[. . .]

Chapter III Of the Extent of Humane Knowledge

§1. Knowledge, as has been said, lying in the Perception of the Agreement, or Disagreement, of any of our *Ideas*, it follows from hence, That,

First, We can have *Knowledge* no farther than we have *Ideas*.

§2. *Secondly*, That we can have no *Knowledge* farther, than we can have Perception of that Agreement, or Disagreement: Which Perception being, 1. Either by *Intuition*, or the immediate comparing any two *Ideas*; or, 2. By *Reason*, examining the Agreement, or Disagreement of two *Ideas*, by the Intervention of some others: Or, 3. By *Sensation*, perceiving the Existence of particular Things. Hence it also follows,

§3. *Thirdly*, That we cannot have an *intuitive Knowledge*, that shall extend it self to all our *Ideas*, and all that we would know about them; because we cannot examine and perceive all the Relations they have one to another by *juxta*-position, or an immediate comparison one with another. Thus having the *Ideas* of an obtuse, and an acute angled Triangle, both drawn from equal Bases, and between Parallels, I can by intuitive Knowledge, perceive the one not to be the other; but cannot that way know, whether they be equal, or no; because their Agreement, or Disagreement in equality, can never be perceived by an immediate comparing them: The difference of Figure makes their parts incapable of an exact immediate application; and therefore there is need of some intervening Quantities to measure them by, which is Demonstration, or rational Knowledge.

§4. *Fourthly*, It follows also, from what is above observed, that our *rational Knowledge*, cannot reach to the whole extent of our *Ideas*. Because between two different *Ideas* we would examine, we cannot always find such *Mediums*, as we can connect one to another with an intuitive Knowledge, in all the parts of the Deduction; and where-ever that fails, we come short of Knowledge and Demonstration.

§5. *Fifthly*, *Sensitive Knowledge* reaching no farther than the Existence of Things actually present to our Senses, is yet much narrower than either of the former.

§6. From all which it is evident, that *the extent of our Knowledge* comes not only short of the reality of Things, but even of the extent of our own *Ideas*. Though our Knowledge be limited to our *Ideas*, and cannot exceed them either in extent, or perfection; and though these be very narrow bounds, in respect of the extent of Allbeing, and far short of what we may justly imagine to be in some even created understandings, not tied down to the dull and narrow Information, is to be received from some few, and not very acute ways of Perception, such as are our Senses.

[. . .]

Chapter IX

Of our Knowledge of Existence

§1. Hither to we have only considered the Essences of Things, which being only abstract *Ideas*, and thereby removed in our Thoughts from particular Existence, (that being the proper Operation of the Mind, in Abstraction, to consider an *Idea* under no other Existence, but what it has in the Understanding,) gives us no Knowledge of real Existence at all. Where by the way we may take notice, that *universal Propositions*, of whose Truth or Falshood we can have certain Knowledge, concern not *Existence*; and farther, that all *particular Affirmations or Negations*, that would not be certain if they were made general, are only concerning *Existence*; they declaring only the accidental Union or Separation of *Ideas* in Things existing, which in their abstract Natures, have no known necessary Union or Repugnancy.

[. . .]

Chapter X

Of our Knowledge of the Existence of a God

§1. Though God has given us no innate *Ideas* of himself; though he has stamped no original Characters on our Minds, wherein we may read his Being: yet having furnished us with those

Faculties, our Minds are endowed with, he hath not left himself without witness: since we have Sense, Perception, and Reason, and cannot want a clear proof of him, as long as we carry our selves about us. Nor can we justly complain of our Ignorance in this great Point, since he has so plentifully provided us with the means to discover, and know him, so far as is necessary to the end of our Being, and the great concernment of our Happiness. But though this be the most obvious Truth that Reason discovers; and though its Evidence be (if I mistake not) equal to mathematical Certainty: yet it requires Thought and Attention; and the Mind must apply it self to a regular deduction of it from some part of our intuitive Knowledge, or else we shall be as uncertain, and ignorant of this, as of other Propositions, which are in themselves capable of clear Demonstration. To shew therefore, that we are capable of *knowing*, i.e. *being certain that there is a GOD*, and how we may come by this certainty, I think we need go no farther than our selves, and that undoubted Knowledge we have of our own Existence.

§2. I think it is beyond Question, that *Man has a clear Perception of his own Being*; he knows certainly, that he exists, and that he is something. He that can doubt, whether he be any thing, or no, I speak not to, no more than I would argue with pure nothing, or endeavour to convince Non-entity, that it were something. If any one pretends to be so sceptical, as to deny his own Existence, (for really to doubt of it, is manifestly impossible,) let him for me enjoy his beloved Happiness of being nothing, until Hunger, or some other Pain convince him of the contrary. This then, I think, I may take for a Truth, which every ones certain Knowledge assures him of, beyond the liberty of doubting, viz. that he is something that actually exists.

§3. In the next place, Man knows by an intuitive Certainty, that *bare nothing can no more produce any real Being, than it can be equal to two right Angles*. If a Man knows not that Non-entity, or the Absence of all Being cannot be equal to two right Angles, it is impossible he should know any demonstration in *Euclid*. If therefore we know there is some real Being, and that Non-entity cannot produce any real Being, it is an evident demonstration, that from Eternity there has been something; Since what was not from Eternity, had a Beginning; and what had a Beginning, must be produced by something else.

§4. Next, it is evident, that what had its Being and Beginning from another, must also have all that which is in, and belongs to its Being from another too. All the Powers it has, must be owing to, and received from the same Source. This eternal Source then of all being must also be the Source and Original of all Power; and so *this eternal Being must be also the most powerful*.

§5. Again, a Man finds in himself *Perception*, and *Knowledge*. We have then got one step farther; and we are certain now, that there is not only some Being, but some knowing intelligent Being in the World.

There was a time then, when there was no knowing Being, and when Knowledge began to be; or else, there has been also a *knowing Being from Eternity*. If it be said, there was a time when no Being had any Knowledge, when that eternal Being was void of all Understanding. I reply, that then it was impossible there should ever have been any Knowledge. It being as impossible, that Things wholly void of Knowledge, and operating blindly, and without any Perception, should produce a knowing Being, as it is impossible, that a Triangle should make it self three Angles bigger than two right ones. For it is as repugnant to the *Idea* of senseless Matter, that it should put into it self Sense, Perception, and Knowledge, as it is repugnant to the *Idea* of a Triangle, that it should put into it self greater Angles than two right ones.

§6. Thus from the Consideration of our selves, and what we infallibly find in our own Constitutions, our Reason leads us to the Knowledge of this certain and evident Truth, That

there is an eternal, most powerful, and most knowing Being; which whether any one will please to call God, it matters not. The thing is evident, and from this Idea duly considered, will easily be deduced all those other Attributes, which we ought to ascribe to this eternal Being.

[. . .]

Chapter XI

Of our Knowledge of the Existence of other Things

§1. The Knowledge of our own Being, we have by intuition. The Existence of a GOD, Reason clearly makes known to us, as has been shewn.

The *Knowledge of the Existence* of any other thing we can have only by *Sensation*: For there being no necessary connexion of *real Existence*, with any *Idea* a Man hath in his Memory, nor of any other Existence but that of GOD, with the Existence of any particular Man; no particular Man can know the *Existence* of any other Being, but only when by actual operating upon him, it makes it self perceived by him. For the having the *Idea* of any thing in our Mind, no more proves the Existence of that Thing, than the picture of a Man evidences his being in the World, or the Visions of a Dream make thereby a true History.

§2. 'Tis therefore the actual receiving of *Ideas* from without, that gives us notice of the *Existence* of other Things, and makes us know, that something doth exist at that time without us, which causes that *Idea* in us, though perhaps we neither know nor consider how it does it: For it takes not from the certainty of our Senses, and the *Ideas* we receive by them, that we know not the manner wherein they are produced: v.g. whilst I write this, I have, by the Paper affecting my Eyes, that *Idea* produced in my Mind, which whatever Object causes, I call *White*; by which I know, that that Quality or Accident (*i.e.* whose appearance before my Eyes, always causes that *Idea*) doth really exist, and hath a Being without me. And of this, the greatest assurance I can possibly have, and to which my Faculties can attain, is the Testimony of my Eyes, which are the proper and sole Judges of this thing, whose Testimony I have reason to rely on, as so certain, that I can no more doubt, whilst I write this, that I see White and Black, and that something really exists, that causes that Sensation in me, than that I write or move my Hand; which is a Certainty as great, as humane Nature is capable of, concerning the Existence of any thing, but a Man's self alone, and of GOD.

§3. *The notice we have by our Senses, of the existing of Things without us*, though it be not altogether so certain, as our intuitive Knowledge, or the Deductions of our Reason, employ'd about the clear abstract *Ideas* of our own Minds; yet it is an assurance that *deserves the name of Knowledge*. If we persuade our selves, that our Faculties act and inform us right, concerning the existence of those Objects that affect them, it cannot pass for an ill-grounded confidence: For I think no body can, in earnest, be so sceptical, as to be uncertain of the Existence of those Things which he sees and feels. At least, he that can doubt so far, (whatever he may have with his own Thoughts) will never have any Controversie with me; since he can never be sure I say any thing contrary to his Opinion. As to my self, I think GOD has given me assurance enough of the Existence of Things without me: since by their different application, I can produce in my self both Pleasure and Pain, which is one great Concernment of my present state. This is certain, the confidence that our Faculties do not herein deceive us, is the greatest assurance we are capable of, concerning the Existence of material Beings. For we cannot act any thing, but by our Faculties; nor talk of Knowledge it self, but by the help of those Faculties, which are fitted to apprehend even what Knowledge is.