

of the Heaven to be distant from us by an interposition of infinite Circulations: This consequence must needs be true, and yet it would perfectly destroy infinite Circulation of the Heaven; for it would necessarily from hence follow that all the intermediate Circulations were finite, and determinate on both ends; at this end with that Circulation that is presently in motion, and *à parte ante* with that Circulation that is supposed to be infinitely distant from us, which excludes any possibility of infinitude in Motions intermediate. And if it be said that the first of these intermediate Circulations is likewise infinitely distant from this, then it should be infinitely distant and yet the next precedent Circulation should be before it, which destroys the very nature and reason of infinitude. And if it shall be said that that next succeeding Circulation after that which is so supposed infinitely distant from what is now current, is distant from us by a finite interval, and not infinitely, then that one Circulation which preceded it, and must necessarily be like ours, and consequently absolved in the space of twenty four Hours, shall by its accession to a finite number of Circulations, or consequently to a finite interval of duration, make up an infinite succession and an infinite duration; the addition of that one antecedent Circulation shall make the intermediate finite Circulations infinite, and the addition of a period of twenty four Hours (the uttermost extent of one Circulation) shall make a finite time or interval infinite, which are intolerable absurdities, and yet necessary consequences upon the supposition of the eternal Motion of the Heaven or Sun; or if you will, of the Earth, as the *Copernicans* will have it.

2. A second Reason is this, which though it be but a different and farther explication of the former, yet it renders it clearer and in more perspicuous terms, which is this: Whatsoever once was and now is not, as it is now past, so it was once present; and before it was so present was future: Take it in the former Instance; It is not possible that there could have been any Revolution of the Heaven that is now past, but that the same was once present; as whatsoever now is, is necessarily whiles it is so; whatsoever hath been, was necessarily whiles it was; *in prateritis non est contingentia*.

The consequent whereof is, that whiles it is impossible but that the remotest Revolution of the Heaven once was present, That Revolution when present, was necessarily the *Epocha*, the *terminus* from whence all other succeeding Revolutions took the course or journey; and yet this remotest Revolution could not be of a greater period than 24 Hours, which was not sufficient to make it eternal, yet all the succeeding Revolutions took their rise and journey from it; and must needs be closed within two bounds, namely, the most remote and the present Revolution.

Again, if it be impossible that there can be any Revolution now past which was not once present, then the most remote was once present, and at that time when it was so present had none before it or more ancient than it; and that Revolution being such as now we have, must necessarily have its beginning within the space of twenty four Hours, before which it was not, and consequently when it was so present could not be eternal; and consequently all the Revolutions that succeeded came after it, was terminated by it, and by such a Revolution that when it was

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was present had a beginning and could not be eternal, nor consequently all the Revolutions that hapned since that first, which are *utrinque clausa*, namely, with that which is remotest, and with this that now is in motion.

3. Whatsoever bodily Being is created eternally, must necessarily be created in some certain *situs* or disposition, and must of necessity remain an eternal duration in that *situs* or disposition wherein it was so created. For instance, if we should suppose the Sun created eternally, we must necessarily suppose 1. That he was created in some determinate *ubi* or *situs*, for that is indispensably necessary to every created individual Body; and therefore if he were eternally created we must suppose him created *in tali vel tali plaga mundi*, suppose we to be above our Horizon, or below it. 2. It must necessarily be, that in that *ubi* where he was so created, that he must by an eternal space or duration abide in that *situs* or *ubi* where he was so created; and he must (it is true) have a disposition to motion, but he must be *in dispositione tantum ad motum* by an infinite tract of duration: For if we shall suppose that he staid in his *situs* of his Creation but an hour, or a day, or a moment, and then set out to move, that moment of his existence before he moved would terminate and bound the duration of his motion, which could not be eternal because it had an antecedent moment before it, which secludes it from eternity: Neither can we suppose him to be eternally created in motion, for he must be before he can move, and must also have a *terminus motus à quo*. But suppose we might imagin him to be in the very first eternal imaginable instant of his eternal being put into motion, yet the *terminus* of that motion must necessarily be that *ubi* and *situs* wherein he was created, which would necessarily be the antecedent circumscription of the line of his motion; and if the line of his motion hath necessarily a *terminus* of its inception, it must of necessity have a *terminus* of its duration, and cannot be infinite in duration *à parte ante*: And as to this purpose there will be no manner of difference between a circular motion and a straight motion, if we could suppose in the vast abyss of imaginary infinite space there were some one determinate point from whence a direct local motion should be supposed to begin its motion, the line that such a straight motion should make would be finite, and consequently an infinite time could not possibly be consumed in such a motion. And upon the same account if the Sun were created in any point of the Hemisphere, and then presently took his start or motion to the West, and so onward in his circular journey, it were impossible that the line of that motion should be of an infinite extension, but being drawn out at length like a clew of thred wound off from a bottom, it would be of a finite extension, and consequently the period of that motion could never be infinite. For *Aristotle* tells us truly, that an infinite time can never be drawn out in a finite motion, nor an infinite motion be absolved in a finite time: This Reason the acute and judicious  *Suarez*, 2. *Metaph. disp. 29. sect. 1.* borrows from *Antonius Ruvo*, and though according to the opinion of *Aquinas* he be a stiff assertor of the possibility of the Eternal Creation of the World; *ibid. disp. 20.* yet he frankly confesseth and maintaineth that Motion is of such a nature as is not capable of an eternal duration *à parte ante*; and thereupon concludes, *Propter hanc ergo causam existimo*  
M *Eternita.*

*Eternitatem repugnare Motui, & Motum includere repugnantiam cum quadam immutabilitate, quam includit Aternitas: Ideoque de facto motum non solum non esse aternum, verum neque esse posse. Igitur ex motu aeterno colligi non potest Motor aternus vel immaterialis.*

And now let any Man consider what is gained by the Supposition of an Eternity of the Bulk or Carcass of the World, when yet it cannot hold with it in confort an Eternity of Motion: 1. That we must separate from Bodies that which is most connatural to them, especially the Heavenly Bodies, and this for an eternal period, 'till put in motion within the limits of time. 2. We shall hereby separate from the Body of the Universe for an eternal period that which renders it most useful, and most beautiful: To suppose an Eternal World, and yet eternally destitute of Motion, were to suppose the whole Universe destitute of Life, and all Vegetables, Animals, Meteors, the Ebbing and Flowing of the Sea, the whole Furniture at least of this inferiour World, to be none but dead, liveless, stupid Beings, for such it certainly would be, if the Heavenly Bodies should be destitute of their Motion.

And therefore it seems wholly disagreeing to Reason, that the World should be eternal, when it is evident, that Motion (which as *Aristotle* truly tells us is, *Vita quadam omnium mobilium*) cannot be eternal, and so there should be an eternal useles Carcass of a World from all Eternity, without that life of it, its Motion.

And on the other side, it seems more consonant to Reason, that the Fabrick of the World did not long antecede its Motion, and that since Motion is not, cannot be eternal, so neither is the Fabrick of the World, but they both began at least very neer together, and the World was not made from Eternity to lye fallow and uninhabited during that infinite abyss of its pre-existence to its first putting forth into any Motion, for such it must be, if destitute of Motion. And consequently the evincing of an impossibility of an eternal successive Motion, doth not only evince, that the whole World, with all its considerable Appendices, was not eternal, but doth with great evidence enforce, that the great Integrals of the World it self were not eternal, which had been imperfect without Motion.

And this doth salve two Objections at once, *viz.* 1. That drawn from Gods Omnipotence, that could have made the World eternal, if He pleased. The Answer is: That whatever could have been done in reference to the Rest of the World, yet as in reference to successive Motion the same could not have been made eternal, and yet without derogation to the Divine Power or Omnipotence, but because the nature of the thing could not sustain or bear such a duration.

And likewise this answers the Argument for the Eternity of the World, drawn from the Divine Benignity and Goodness, whereby He is supposed to be under a kind of intrinsic necessity of doing all the good He could, and consequently to make the World eternally. I answer, 1. That as before the World, in its complement and perfection with the advantage of Motion, though there was no determinate time, point, or period, but God might have made it sooner if He had pleased, yet (with all due reverence to His Majesty) it could not have been in its complement and perfection eternal, because its successive Motion could not be eternal, nor

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consequently all that glory, beauty and usefulness which accrues to the Universe by that successive Motion. 2. That although the Divine Will be determined by the Divine Perfection necessarily to will his own immense Goodness, yet he is not determined by his own Benignity necessarily to will any thing without himself; his own essential Goodness he wills, and that necessarily, and *ad ultimum posse*; but his Benignity is measured out *ad beneplacitum voluntatis*, and not by an absolute necessity *ad ultimum posse*: And therefore although it were admitted that he could have eternally made the World, or made more Worlds or better Worlds, yet he was not bound to it, because the emanations of his Benignity are not necessary, but governed in their extent and measure *juxta voluntatis beneplacitum*. 3. And upon the same account also; though he could have made the World sooner than he made it, yet he was not bound to it, but to make it when and how he pleased, though all his Works carry the impression of transcendent Wisdom and Goodness.

And therefore as these Reasons seem strongly to conclude 1. Against the very possibility of an eternal duration of those things that gave the principal ornament, beauty and usefulness to the Universe, namely, Variety and Succession of Individuals and *Species*, and Motion, so they do, at least *de facto*, evidence that if the rest of the Universe were able to sustain an eternal duration, yet they did not, because these would be very defective without those that cannot hold that state of Eternity with them.

2. Against the truth of that Reason and Assertion, That Divine Goodness did intrinsically necessitate his Will to create things in their best state from Eternity, since it seems evident that the condition and state of many things in the Universe that give it much of its usefulness, perfection and beauty, namely Motion, and Succession of Generations and Corruptions, of Animals, Vegetables and Men, are impossible to be as ancient as that intrinsic Goodness of the Divine Nature, which is as eternal as his own most perfect being.

3. I come now to the third Reason against the Eternity of considerable parts of the World, which is this; Sublunary Bodies, whether simple or mixt, are by the necessity of their nature subject to alteration and corruption: But whatsoever is subject thus to alteration or corruption, is incapable of sustaining an eternal duration *à parte ante*, and consequently sublunary Bodies are not capable of such an Eternity.

The first of these Propositions, namely, That all sublunary Bodies are subject necessarily to alteration and corruption: This naturally happens to sublunary Bodies upon both or one of these accounts, 1. From an intrinsic Cause, which is principally seen in mixt Bodies, in which the band and ligament between Matter and Form, nor of the parts of Matter themselves is not so strict and tenacious, but that they must necessarily in process of time fall asunder. Besides, by the continual contest between those contrary qualities bound up together in them, there do arise incessant alterations, and at last final dissolution of them, even from within themselves 2. From extrinsic Causes: For the very necessary compolure and position of things in the World is such, that there is a vicinity between Agents and Patients, and contrary dissenting active Qualities, that the one incessantly invades the other, and alters,

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changes, intends, remits and corrupts the other; which perpetual *lucta* is seen daily not only in the mixed and compounded Bodies, but even in the more simple elementary Bodies, which daily invade, change, alter, and corrupt one the other according to their various degrees of activity, contrariety and vicinity each to other.

And if the World had been eternal, we must suppose it eternally constituted of such natures so placed and disposed in such situation and constitution as now they stand, or otherwise, we do not reason *ad idem*, the World otherwise should have been of another make, constitution and position than now it is; things corruptible must have been incorruptible, and the vicinity, activity, contrariety and position of things and their natures and qualities must otherwise have been quite different, and so our debate would be transferred quite to another World of another nature and constitution from that touching whose Eternity we now dispute.

The second Proposition is this, That whatsoever is subject to such alteration or corruption cannot possibly be eternal, at least unless we shall wholly remove from it by an infinite duration that corruption or alteration to which it is thus necessarily subject, and so make it another thing than what indeed it is.

And because the due and clear explication of this Truth renders the Assertion plain in it self, I shall distinctly examin it; and because we have supposed that the corruption of things corruptible, and the alteration of things alterable depends, as before, upon a double Principle, *viz.* That intrinsecal defectibility of the connexion or union of the parts of things corporeal, which is rooted in the very Nature of the things themselves; and 2. From the vicinity of other contrary active Principles endued with contrary active Qualities which mutually invade one another; which position (considering the Frame and Constitution at least of this inferior World, is absolutely necessary, unless we shall make the World another thing, and of another Fabrick than what it is) as the moisture of the Water is contiguous to the dryness of the Earth, and the heat of the Sun is contiguous to the coldness and moisture of the Water, and cannot be otherwise in the Constitution of the World as now it stands, and consequently one must necessarily work an alteration in the other: I shall therefore pursue the same method, and first consider such Bodies as seem to have an intrinsic principle of alteration or corruption from the dissolubility of their parts, and the coadunition of several particles endued with contrary and destructive qualities each to other; or such as at least tend to a gradual alteration. And secondly, I shall consider such parts of the Universe as do mutually act one upon another, and thereby induce corruption or alteration of one by another, according to the prevalency and activity of the one or the other.

But before I come to either of the particulars I shall premise some things which will be of use in all that follows, *viz.* 1. That precedent to all Generation of any material Being, according to the course of Nature which we see, there must be a gradual preparation and alteration of the matter before there is a complete generation of any thing: This we see in the casual production of Insects and Vegetables, and in the natural production of Minerals or Meteors, and in the regular pro-  
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duction of Animals and Men. 2. That in things which yet hold their essential consistency, yet there are very many alterations, not only accidental, as where things are rarified or condensed, or made hot from being cold, or cold from being hot, but also such as seems connatural to the *Species*: Thus we see in a Man, first he is a weak little Infant, then a Youth, then a Man, then he becomes an Old Man, and yet continues still a Man till his dissolution; and to these various states of his Age there seem to be various alterations accommodate, as difference in stature, bigness, strength, activity, understanding; and the same is observable in proportion to their capacities in Animals, Vegetables, Minerals, and the like. 3. That these alterations are necessarily successive and gradual, whether they be such as are preparative to Generation or Corruption of Beings, or such as consist with the Existence of the being they have (as those alterations incident to the state of things in their consistency) yet they are not instantaneous, but successive and gradual; nay those very alterations that are wrought in things by an external contrary Agent, yet they are not in a moment, but gradual and successive, which is partly by reason of the resistance in the Patient, and partly because the Agent works upon the Patient by a certain local motion of it self or parts, or of its virtue and activity, which cannot be instantaneous and *tota simul*, but gradual and successive: Thus the Sun reduceth the Clay to its final degree of hardness, and the Wax to its final degree of softness successively and gradually; the Fire assimilates the Stubble, and converts it into Fire, not in an instant but by degrees, though sooner or slower according to the vicinity of each, and the precedent preparations of congruity of the Stubble to be wrought upon by the Fire. 4. That these alterations that are thus successive and gradual, as they cannot be perfectly instantaneous, so it is impossible they can last or continue for an infinite or eternal duration. The reason is, because as they must have an inception of their motion, so they must of necessity arrive to their complement within the compass of time, and can never hold out in their progress to an infinite duration: Let us suppose the Fire and the Stubble to have been created eternally contiguous one to another, the Fire could never have held an infinite duration in consuming that Stubble, for then it could never have been consumed; for that which had been burning an infinite time could never be burnt, no not so much as any part of it; for if it had burned part after part, the whole must needs be consumed in a portion of time: neither need we labour this, for we see that the Fire consumes Stubble or other combustible matter in a short portion of time, and since if we talk of an Eternity of the World, or of any thing in it, we must in common reason suppose it to be such as now it is, we must necessarily allow the like properties, activities, natures and operations to things as we find them now have. And since we see that all bodily alterations are effected in certain portions of measured duration or time, we cannot upon any reasonable account allow to those alterations an infinite antecedent duration, but if any Body or Thing in that imaginary period of Eternity allotted to it had any such alterations as we see now are incident to them, they could not possibly be of an eternal duration no more than they are now, for that were wholly to alter the state of the World and of those things that are in it.  
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5. And consequently whatsoever thing it is that hath or can have an eternal being *à parte ante*, must persist in that eternal being without any change, alteration or corruption; or if it have any alteration or corruption, the first alteration, change or corruption that it can have, must be in time, and after an eternal, unchanged, unaltered estate precedaneous to such alteration; for if we should suppose it to be eternal, then of necessity that alteration or corruption which it hath, must be subsequent to that eternal state which it had before it was altered or corrupted, and consequently must have had a persistence in that unaltered, uncorrupted estate infinite Ages before such alteration or corruption: If it were eternally altered, or eternally corrupted, then it was eternally, and eternally was not; it was eternally without alteration, and eternally altered: The thing must be before it can be altered or corrupted; and consequently its alteration and corruption must be subsequent and after that existence which it had unaltered or uncorrupted; and consequently the alteration and corruption must needs be younger than that estate which it had unaltered or uncorrupted, and consequently cannot be eternal.

Again, we cannot by any means suppose that any commencement of alteration in the first moment or degree of it could be coeternal to it; for (as is before evident) then that alteration would of necessity be perfected within the like portion of time as the like alteration is perfected: Now suppose it were a corruptive alteration, it may be that is perfected in the space of three or six or months from its first inception, the consequence whereof would be, that the like alteration of that eternal alterable or corruptible Body; if it began with the thing it self, would be perfected in the like space, *viz.* six months: And should that perfected alteration fall within the compass of Eternity, or out of it? If it should, then the thing was eternally unaltered and uncorrupted, and was yet eternally altered or corrupted; was eternally, and yet that Eternity was but a space of six months, for so long only it had its being uncorrupted: If the alteration or corruption was not eternally perfected, but perfected in time, then an addition of six months the more of that alteration added unto a finite duration or time succeeding after such alteration, should make it infinite and eternal. 6. And yet the supposition of an eternal state of any corruptible or alterable Being, in a state of incorruption or unalteration, were utterly to change the very nature of things; and to give them an eternal state, we must be forced to gratify them with a nature not only preter-natural to what they had, but quite of a distinct nature: For the purpose, That man that is even upon the intrinsic constitution of his nature dissoluble, must by being in an eternal duration continue immortal, unalterable, and not for a year, or a million or two of years, but for an eternal duration antecedent to his dissolution: Nay, it is inconceivable how any such man that hath stood the shock of an eternal duration without corruption or alteration, should after be corrupted or altered: from any internal principle of corruption or alteration it could not be, for then he could never have ridden out an eternal period; but it must be, if at all, by the power of a more powerful Being than himself, that must violently *de novo* introduce his change and dissolution. The Supposition therefore of an eternal existence of any thing corruptible, is to alter their very nature, and make that to be incor-

incorruptible which is corruptible. And to suppose that imaginary eternal state of things corruptible, to be utterly of another nature, kind, and condition than what we now see them to be, which is an unreasonable Supposition, unworthy of an admirer of Nature, which should be constant in his Supposition, and yet is the necessary consequence of the granting of an Eternity of corruptible Beings. But particular Instances of the several kinds of alterations and corruptions of things either *ab intrinseco* or *ab extrinseco*, will make the thing more plain.

1. Touching things alterable or corruptible from an intrinsic Cause, as Vegetables, Animals, Men. If any Vegetables were eternal, as an Oak, or an Elm, then some Oak was eternal, if it were, then if it were of the same nature as Oaks are now, it was first a slender Plant, and then gradually grew to his just dimensions, perhaps in two hundred years, and in about two hundred years more decayed, and was corrupted to dust; so that his duration exceeded not four hundred years, and in that period of time he grew perchance from an inch in diameter to six foot in diameter, and from a foot high to a hundred foot high: These alterations and augmentations were gradual and successive; he was not in the same moment one inch and six foot in the diameter, nor in the same moment was a Plant and dissolved and turned to dust; and yet if this Oak were eternal in all this portion of his duration, he must be eternally one inch in diameter, and yet eternally six foot in diameter; eternally one foot high, and yet eternally a hundred foot high, he must have eternally been a Plant, eternally a Tree, and yet eternally corrupted; his duration must have lasted but four hundred years, and yet he must be eternal, though his first being were but four hundred years before utter dissolution: And yet it is most certain that this Tree could not have been eternal; for being but of four hundred years standing, somewhat must have anteceded that period, and so somewhat more ancient than what had been eternal.

But let us suppose this eternal Oak had not been bound to the laws of duration of other Oaks, but to have lasted eternally, and probably would have lasted to this day, had not external force either violently or accidentally corrupted or destroyed him; yet did this Oak ever grow bigger or taller than what he once was, or did he put off his leaves in the Winter, and gather others in the Spring? Did he put forth new branches, which before he had not? If he did none of these things, surely he was not a vegetable Being, he was not like those Oaks that are now growing, but quite of another nature, and we have nothing to do with him, he is a perfect stranger to this World: If it did grow from lesser to greater, and did put forth new branches, certainly the increment could not be eternal, but must be done gradually and successively, and from one degree of bigness to another; and since that augmentation could never be of an infinite procedure, but being successive, we must come to the beginning of that increase within the measure of such a portion of time as we now find sufficient for such a production or increase, it may be two or three hundred years, which being but a finite duration can never be eternal: And this necessary Supposition of a successive alteration or increase, utterly destroys the possibility of an eternal duration in any thing capable of such alterations; 1. Because it necessarily supposeth some-

somewhat precedent to that state wherein it is, namely, a precedent alteration of it, whereby it is now become what it now is, and what before it was not, so that it had somewhat before its present state which stateth it to be what it now is, namely, that alteration or augmentation which so preceded its present state, and consequently that present state wherein it is, could not be eternal, for it had somewhat before it.

2. Because that very alteration that anteceded that state which it hath cannot possibly be eternal, but must be perfected within a certain portion of time destined to it, and consequently must have beginning within the compass of a determinate time, and cannot be eternally moving to its accomplishment.

And as this Instance gives the impossibility of an eternal Existence in any thing essentially alterable or corruptible, so it would be possibly more conspicuous in the Contemplation of the Humane Nature: If we should suppose a Man to have been eternal, Was that Man ever an *Embryo*, a Child, a Youth, a ripe Aged Man? Did he grow from a smaller stature to a greater, had he vicissitudes of temperaments and distempers, did he eat, digest, &c. If he did not, then those eternal Men were not of the same Make with the Men that are now, but quite another thing, which we know not what it was, or where to find it: But if he had all those changes he could not be eternal, he should be eternally a Child and eternally a Man, eternally young and eternally old, yea eternally living and yet eternally dead, for all these must fall within the compass of Eternity.

2. But let us now consider how the Case falls out in relation to alterations and corruptions occasioned *ab extrinseco*, and we shall find, 1. That as the World is framed, and as those that suppose it eternal, must suppose it to have been always so framed, there must necessarily be incessant mutations, alterations, generations, and corruptions by the invasion and juxtaposition of contrary Natures, Agents, Patients, Qualities, Motions; the Earth naturally dry is moistened by the vicinity of the Water, and again dried by the heat of the Sun; the Earth obstructs the fluidity of the Water by mingling its grosser parts with it; all things as it were in continual motion and agitation, and mutual preying as it were one upon another, which as necessarily occasioneth mutations, alterations, generations and corruptions, as the very intrinsecal dissolubility of the natures of mixt Bodies. 2. And as we find this now, so we must suppose that this hath been always so since the World had a being; unless we shall suppose, as I have often said, another kind of World than what we see: And although we are not acquainted with the state of things out of, or beyond this sublunary World, in which we see this vicissitude of alterations, yet whether there may not be some such mutations in the Ethereal World, we know not; but there may be such, though we cannot certainly know them. 3. And yet it is most certain, that it is impossible that any thing that is capable of these mutations and changes can be eternally under them, but must of necessity, if it were eternal, consist in such a state of fixedness and permanency that were not obnoxious to these changes. 4. And since it is not possible, for the inferior World at least, to be *de facto* one moment of time without these changes and variations, alterations, generations and corruptions; which,

as before, are not at all consistent with an eternal duration *à parte ante*, of that that is so subject to changes, we have just reason to deny and disesteem this imaginary Eternity can belong at least to the sublunary World. The late Author of a Book *De Aetate Mundi* hath given us an Instance herein, that if it would hold, we need not go farther; namely, That the great Rocks in the Sea are yet many of them eminently visible to this day, and yet daily experience shews us that those Rocks are gradually diminished by the beating of the Sea against them; which had they been so dealt with from Eternity, though they lost but one grain in a million of millions of years, they would not have been, but would have been consumed an indefinite time long since elapsed: But the Supposition fails, because it may be that these Rocks have at least vicissitudes of increase and diminution by the very alluvion of the Sea, or, which seems far more easily supposed, that the Earth and Seas might notwithstanding have been eternal, but yet the Sea might not have kept the same Channel where these Rocks now are, from eternity, but gained it in time; the Ancients telling us that the great *Atlantick* Sea was for the most part of it anciently a Continent, or at least a great Island as big as *Europe* and *Asia*, and after swallowed up and corroded into that vast Sea called the *Atlantick* Ocean, leaving behind it only those reliques now called the *Canary* Islands: I will therefore take my Instance in some other things.

1. It is evident that divers Minerals are bred in the Earth from an earthy consistence, by the heat of the Sun and other concurrent causes successively, as may appear to any man's observation touching Coals, Rocks, especially of Stone, which from a sandy kind of Earth gradually concoct into Free-stone, when they were before Earth, as may be seen in many Quarries by those pieces of unconcocted Earth not yet perfectly digested into Stone: If the Body of the Earth were eternal, either these concretions were also as eternal as the Earth gradually and successively digested into these concretions, or else the Earth must have had an eternal permanency in that state of simple natural Earth, without any such concretions or alterations in it: If we shall say the latter, we make the Earth another thing than what in truth it now is, which by the aid of the Sun hath these concretions and alterations even by a kind of necessity of Nature wrought in it: And besides, if in that portion of eternal duration wherein the Earth and Sun were in that very same natural state wherein they now are, the one active, piercing, and digestive by its heat; the other passive, receptive, and stored with materials for such a production. What should hinder but that there should be such production gradually and successively prepared, and at length generated by the conjunction of these active and passive Principles.

And yet if it be duly considered, supposing the Sun and the Earth to be both eternal, the Earth and its parts must of necessity persist in an eternal unchangeable state in that period of Eternity antecedent to the first alteration thereof to any such production: For if the production of these Minerals should be eternal, and consequently infinitely distant from us, the productions must be eternal, and yet there must necessarily antecede those productions a successive and gradual alteration of those parts of the Earth which were to be moulded in succession of time to Coals,

or Stone, or Minerals: And though perchance that alteration might take up a long preparation and disposition, yet it could not be eternal, but must be abſolved; though in a long, yet in finite time; and confequently the Earth, if eternal, muſt be before that preparation or alteration, and muſt have continued in an eternal ſtate, deſtitute of ſuch alteration or preparation, and in an eternal diſpoſition thereunto; which yet had been to ſuppoſe the Earth in that eternal period quite deſtitute of that mutation that upon the Suppoſition of the agency of the Sun had been connatural to it. So that upon the whole matter it ſeems plain, That neither ſucceſſive natural Beings, nor corporeal Beings, that are corruptible or neceſſarily ſubject to alteration, either from an inſinck Principle or from an extrinſick natural Cauſe neceſſarily contiguous or approximate to it in ſituation or virtue, cannot be eternal; which will deprive the greateſt part of the ſublunary World at leaſt of that poſſibility, and muſt leave only ſuch parts of the viſible Univerſe as are incorruptible, unalterable, and unſucceſſive (if any ſuch be) capable of this privilege of the very poſſibility of an eternal exiſtence *à parte ante*: And confequently the whole Univerſe cannot be eternal.

It remains then, they who aſſert the Eternity of the World muſt content themſelves with ſuch parts thereof as are capable of that duration. And accordingly there ſeem to have been three Opinions, which although they aſſume not the Aſſertion of the Eternity of the whole World, yet they endeavour to come as near to it as they can; which I ſhall diſtinctly ſet down and examin.

1. The firſt Opinion is of ſuch, that although they ſuppoſe the ſublunary World not to be eternal in its Frame and Conſtitution, yet they aſſert the Matter thereof eternal, though undigeſted, and not perfected till afterwards: But yet the Celeſtial or Ethereal World, the Stars and Planets they will have eternal, and that theſe were uſed as the great Engines in the ſubſequent formation of the inferior or ſublunary World.

Touching the Eternity of Matter, whether Celeſtial or Sublunary, I mean not in this place to meddle; but as to the Suppoſition of the eternal exiſtence of the Celeſtial or Ethereal World, this ſhall be all I ſhall ſay: 1. We are not acquainted with the Conſtitution of them, and whether they are in their nature corruptible or ſubject to alterations; if they are ſuch, they are as equally incapable of an eternal exiſtence as the ſublunary World. 2. But ſuppoſe them to have a radical incorruptibility and immutability in their natures, yet their Motion cannot be eternal upon the Reaſons before given. 3. And therefore though they are a goodly Fabrick, yet they are not in a ſtate of Permanency of ſo great uſe, beauty and perfection, as in a ſtate of Motion, which is a great part of their excellency, and that which accommodates the ſeveral parts thereof one to another, and all to the advantage and good of the inferior World; and therefore it ſeems not probable that they ſhould have an eternal exiſtence in Reſt and Permanence, and afterwards in a proceſs or period of time be endued with that which is their great perfection, namely their Motion, which neither was nor could be eternal: It rather ſeems more agreeable to the nature of the thing, and to the Divine Wiſdom, whoſe Works are full of wiſdom, excellence, and perfection, to reſpire the Fabrick till it were capable of its moſt uſeful and beautiful perfection, namely

namely Motion; which muſt either be natural to them, and then it were marvellous they ſhould yet enjoy an infinite duration deſtitute of what was natural to them, and yet not capable to be enjoyed by them in an eternal duration *à parte ante*: Or if it were adventitious from the immediate power of God, or by the inſtrumentality of Intelligences, yet ſurely it was foreſeen by him that knew all his Works from the beginning: and therefore was not likely to ordain an eternal conſiſtence of thoſe Bodies to which he intended to give Motion, their great perfection, not ſooner than time: And therefore though the Heavenly Bodies were admitted capable of an eternal Permanency, yet it is not probable they had their Being before, or at leaſt not ſo long before their Motion.

2. The ſecond Opinion is of thoſe that although they allow not the *Mundus aſpectabilis* to be eternal, yet do ſuppoſe that beſides that Eternal Generation of the Second, and the Eternal Proceſſion of the Third Perſon of the Sacred Trinity, Almighty God eternally created a World of Intelligences, whereunto he might and did communicate the emanations of his Bounty and Benignity, and that in the beginning of Time he Created this *Mundus aſpectabilis* which we ſee, for the farther communication of his Bounty and Goodneſs; and this they ſuppoſe more congenious and ſuitable to the Order of things, and of his own Goodneſs and the communication thereof, than to ſuppoſe the Creation of a material World either eternally or *quasi per ſaltum*, or at the ſame time with the Creation of thoſe purer Beings, who had a greater ſimilitude and proximity to his own moſt Divine and Spiritual Nature. This though it might poſſibly be ſo, yet we are without any ſufficient Evidence that it was ſo, and ſuch Conjectures of things without our knowledge, or thoſe *media* that we are capable to exerciſe for the acquiſt thereof, are uncertain and endleſs: Upon ſuch conjectural Congruities the *Platonists* had their *Dii ex Deo*, the *Manichees* their *Eones*, and *Origen* his *Mundus Animarum*: and therefore I leave it as a Conjecture.

3. The third Opinion is of thoſe who though they ſuppoſe the World not to be eternal, and perchance think with reaſon enough that the duration of Eternity *à parte ante* is ſuch as is only comperible to the Eternal God, and not communicable to any Created Being, at leaſt ſuch as is in its own nature either corruptible, alterable, or compounded: yet to the end that they may carry the Communication of the Divine Goodneſs and Benignity as far as is poſſible, are not contented to ſuppoſe the World to be ſempiternal or eternal *à parte poſt*, or to be as ancient as the Sacred Scriptures inform us, but will carry up the Creation of the World to an immense antiquity, long before Six Thouſand years, and thereby they think they do at once ſolve the large Accounts which the *Babylonians* and *Egyptians* and *Chineſes* give of the duration of their own Kingdoms and Hiſtories, and alſo do, as they think, ſatiſfie at leaſt in a great meaſure that immense Benignity of the glorious God, whom they declare not only infinitely Good in himſelf, but neceſſitated by the perfection of his nature to communicate his Goodneſs *ad ultimum poſſe* to things *ad extra*.

This Suppoſition of theirs ſeems to be grounded upon two matters

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which are as I think mistakes, or at least do no way appear to be evidently true; namely, 1. That Almighty God, though he be by them admitted a free and intellectual Agent, is necessitated *ab extrinseco* from the Perfection of his nature to do good *ad extra, ad ultimum posse*, which seems untrue. 2. And it seems likewise untrue, that if he were under that intrinsecal necessity, yet he were thereby bound to make the World sooner than we suppose he made it: For as to the fabulous protractions of the age of the World by the *Egyptians* or others, they are uncertain idle Traditions, whereof they have no evidence but from the Impostures of their fabulous Priests.

Touching the first of these, namely, the Intrinsecal Necessity of Almighty God to do good *ad extra, ad ultimum posse*, this is that Opinion upon which some have built their *Hypothesis* of the Eternity of the World, and others, driven from that *Hypothesis* by the absurdities that accompany it, build their imagination though not of the Eternity, yet of a prodigious Antiquity of the World. But it seems to me, That although Almighty God being infinitely and essentially Good, is necessarily carried to will and delight in that his own infinite Goodness; yet in his acts of Benignity *ad extra* he is not necessitated by his own Perfection to act *ad ultimum posse*, but although his own Nature be Benign and Bountiful, the seasons, degrees and measures, and other circumstances of its Emanations are guided and directed by the freedom of his own Will.

And the reason thereof is evident, namely, Because all the Good that is without, or that is possibly communicable by him to any thing without him, is finite, and cannot be infinite; and therefore he cannot be carried to it by an infinite desire and intention, and yet such it must be, if it be *ad ultimum posse*.

And if it should be so, there would be infinite absurdities follow which cannot be solved; as for instance, That either this present World must be actually of an infinite extension, or that there must be either infinite Worlds, or at least as many Worlds as is possible to be by the power of Omnipotence. That he hath made some Beings of that perfection, that Omnipotence it self cannot make them one grain perfecter, that they are but in the very next degree of perfection to himself, and cannot have the addition of one grain more to the excellence of their nature; that the Universe is so perfect, *omnibus numeris*, that it is not possible for Omnipotence it self to add to it, no nor to alter it in one jot or tittle, either to make it better or worse, or otherwise than it is; nay he cannot, *pro arbitrio* or dominion make one spire of Grass, or one Fly, or one Worm more or less than he hath made, because he hath made it as good as is possible to make it, and he is under the necessary obligation of his own indispensable Perfection to make and keep it just as he hath made it: That the whole Ocean of Omnipotence and infinite Goodness is already exhausted in the Work of the Universe, and hath nothing of good left that he can do more. These are the consequences of this Position, That the Divine Will is necessitated by the Perfection of his Nature to do good *ad ultimum posse*.

And as these absurdities evince the untruth of the Assertion, so it is apparent in the very Frame of the Universe it self and the integrals thereof, that

that it is untrue: For upon this Supposition admitted, there could not be a disparity in the Natures of things, but every thing should be constituted in that state of being that might be capable of as much of the Divine Beneficence as it were possible for God to communicate. And if it be said that this disparity of things in their degrees of specific or individual perfection contributes to the beauty and convenience of the Universe, which is the primary Object of the Divine Beneficence, this solves not the Objection; because it is possible that many things might have a greater measure of specific Perfection with great advantage to themselves and to the Universe also. But suppose this inequality of degrees of specific or individual Perfection might nevertheless contribute to the advantage of the Universe considered collectively, yet do we not see that daily there are many deficiencies even in individuals, which might have been supplied with exceeding benefit to themselves, and with advantage to the Universe? Are there not among men some that want the integrity of their Limbs, some that want their Senses, Memories, Understandings; some that are extremely vicious, and unjust, and degenerate even from the common Principles of Humanity, many that are diseased and infirm, many good men of short and difficult lives; and might not all these have the integrity of their Bodies and Minds proportionate to the perfection of their specific Nature; be virtuous, sound, long-lived, with advantage to themselves and mankind, and yet without detriment to the Universe? And therefore surely such they would have been, if the glorious God were necessitated to be Beneficent *ad ultimum posse*, unless we should presumptuously assert an impotence in him to rectify these things.

2. But if we should suppose this to be true concerning the Divine Obligation or Necessity, let us now examine what the making of the World a million of years elder than it, is would do in the business.

1. It is true, though we say the World is not, cannot be eternal *à parte ante*, yet it is certain that either upon the nature of the thing or the part of the Almighty and the absolute power of God, without relation to the determination of his Will, there can be no determinate moment, or *tempus signatum imaginarium*, within the bounds or limits (if I may so speak) of antecedent infinite duration, but God might have made it sooner than he made it; and if a year sooner than he made it, he might have made it a thousand years sooner than that.

2. Consequently, if the World be not eternal, it is impossible to assign any time for its making it which answered the *ultimum posse* of Almighty God for the making it; and therefore if we should suppose the World to have been made as many millions of years before it was made, as there have been minutes since it was made, it could not answer the *ultimum posse* of Almighty God, nor answer that imaginary Obligation or Necessity of his nature to do good *ad ultimum posse*, for still it might have been made before any *hora signata*.

3. Consequently the time of the Creation of the World, if it were on this side an eternal period, could neither be determined by his want of Power, nor by his necessitated Benignity *agere ad ultimum posse*, for in that indefinite time within the limits of Eternity no time can be assigned before which he could not have made the World, though it be admitted it could not be eternal.

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4. Consequently there could be nothing that could determin the time or period wherein the World was to have been made, but the absolute *Divinum beneplacitum*; there could be nothing without him to determin it, for nothing was till he made it, nor any thing but his own Will within him that could determin it: for his power and goodness were undetermined to do it sooner or later, since no time could be assigned for the doing of it but it might be done sooner.

And when all is done, his Beneficence, nor the good which the created Beings might receive from that Beneficence, had had no imaginable advance or enlargement, if the World had been created millions of millions of years before it was; and that upon these plain evident Reasons.

1. Because though the World had indeed been at this hour ancients, and lasted longer, if it had been created a million of years sooner, yet the future Eternity or Sempiternity of the World being of all hands admitted, though the Eternity *à parte ante* be denied, there will be a future infinity for the emanation of the Divine Goodness and Beneficence to his Creatures.

2. Considering the nature of the Beings themselves that partake of the Divine Beneficence, there is no advance at all to them by receiving it sooner or later: If *Plato* had been a million of years before he in truth was, and had lived his proportion of eighty years, he had tasted no more of the Divine Beneficence than if he had lived as he did about two thousand years since.

3. Neither is there any difference in respect of the ever-glorious God, for he received no access of happiness by the Creation of the World, nor stood at all in need of it: And if he might be imagined to have received any contentment in it, yet he had an eternal prospect of all things as if they had been really made eternally: And besides, if the World had been myriads of millions of years sooner than it was, yet it was still infinitely short of an eternal duration; Almighty God had been an infinite duration before without that World, which had it been made millions of years before it was, yet had not held any proportion to that infinite duration that preceded.

And whatsoever hath been formerly said against the Eternity of this World doth equally conclude against an eternal being of any World antecedent to this, much more against an eternal succession of infinite Worlds, either of which can have no certainty, nor have any evidence or probability; so that as there cannot be attributed an eternal duration *à parte ante* to any one such supposed pre-existing World, so much less to a succession of Worlds.

The very same Arguments that conclude against the possibility of eternal Motion, or the eternal successions of Generation and Corruption, or of successive Individuals of Mankind do as effectually conclude against an eternal succession of infinite Worlds, and therefore I shall spare the repetition of them.

The Arguments which I have before used are such, as though at the first view they seem intricate, yet they have strength of evidence in them, and such as are accommodate to the nature of the thing which requires Arguments of such a nature; and those Arguments that are  
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more experimental and obvious to sense, though they are more easie to be apprehended, yet are more easie to be evaded by the Assertors of the Eternity of the World.

In the before-mentioned Book *De Aetate Mundi* two experimental Arguments are brought against the Eternity of the World, upon which the Author lays some weight.

1. That if the World were eternal, by the continual fall and wearing of Waters all the protuberances of the Earth would infinite Ages since have been levelled, and the Superficies of the Earth rendered plain, no Mountains, no Vallies, no inequalities would be therein, but the Superficies thereof would have been as level as the Superficies of the Water.

2. That if this World had been eternal there would have been no Rocks appearing in the Seas above the Water, whereof there are very many visible; for the motion and agitation of the Water doth wear and eat off gradually the roots and other parts thereof, as is visible to our observation; some whereof have their roots so corroded by the Water, that they are ready to fall, and others have apparently by that means been either wasted or decayed, that now they are not extant which in some mens memory have been standing; and if the breadth of a Barley-corn had been consumed in a million of years, there had been nothing of them left.

That these things are true in fact, and that the reason why many of these effects are apparent to us to be as they are, is because that these Rocks and these Protuberances have not been eternal, may be well attributed to that *novitas essendi*, that finite period wherein they have continued, is very probable and evident to him that is satisfied otherwise, that the World had a beginning, I easily grant: But he that asserts the Eternity of the World will find out easie evasions of these sensible Arguments: They will tell us, and with truth enough, that in a great tract even of a finite duration the Earth must have and hath had great mutations: That by the eruption of Bituminous and Sulphureous Vapours, and the firing thereof, these protuberances of Mountains and Hills may be made, and have been made in many parts: That as Warts or Wens growing in our Hands are thrust up by the humors ministred by the extremity of the orifice of some Capillary Vein, and increase, so in the great Body of the Earth such protuberances may be thrust out and gradually increased, though not so easily perceptible in one Age, and by this means there may be a continued supply of what is successively abraded from them by decursion of Waters: That Matter is never lost or annihilated: That what is decayed by that decursion of Waters is in some measure supplied by the terrene *faeces* which that Water brings with it: That by continued vicissitudes the Earth is repaired by the insensible descent of Atoms of Matter raised in others places, the Atmosphere being evermore filled with little particles and concretes of Matter which are uncessantly discharged upon the Earth, and as uncessantly again supplied in the Air by the more gross and terrestrial parts of those Vapours that are raised principally from the Sea and watrish places, by means whereof the Water justly pays in process of time what is borrowed from the Earth by a perpetual circulation. And that hence it comes to pass that in process of time,



time, even to our view, Channels that were deep and broad, yet by a little time of dryness grow narrow and shallow; that those Mountains, whose chief substance is Rock, become cloathed with a superficial Mantle of Earth and Mould; that those places, which were formerly filled with Wood, have buried the fallen Trees three, four, or five foot deep in the ground, by an accretion or cover of Earth, derived to them sometimes by Alluvions or Floods, sometimes and most ordinarily by the descent of those Terrestrial Particles, that are drawn up together with watry Vapours, and either together with those Waters, or after arefaction thereof in the Air, discharged upon the Earth, which doth *reparare deperditum*.

And as to those Rocks in the Sea, they will also tell us, that the vicissitudes of the Sea and Land in a long process of time, much more in an eternal duration, are very many and various: Sometimes that becomes Land which was once Sea, as appears in that part of *Egypt* thorough which *Nilus* runs, long since observed by *Aristotle*, and before him by *Herodotus*; and even in our memory great quantities of Land are now firm and habitable, where Ships anciently rode; and on the other side many parts are become Sea, which were once firm Land: They instance in that traditional vast Island in the *Atlantick Ocean*, which is drowned, and hath left no Remains of it self, but those Islands called the *Canary Islands*; but whether that tradition be true or not, it is very probable, that by particular Inundations the Face and State of the Terrestrial Globe, by great vicissitudes, is much changed. And therefore though they suppose the Terrestrial Globe Eternal, yet the Earth and Water hath not eternally kept the same position or site that now it hath: And therefore the Sea, so often (at least in an Eternal Period) shifting its Channel, hath not eternally washed the same Rocks that now it doth; but after an indeterminate and vast uncertain Period, it may be of ten or twenty thousand years, leaves that Channel which before it had, and gives those Rocks that it wasted opportunity to recruit again, and then perchance after a like vast Period of Time visits the same Channel again; and therefore though the World might be Eternal, the alluvion of the Sea upon those Rocks might not be eternally continued, but interpolated. And though the Earth be not animated with a Sensible Soul, yet it is possible that it may be a great Immortal Vegetable, which may reproduce or increase Rocks or Mountains in various vicissitudes of vast Periods of Duration. And this they think very probably to be collected by the observation of things, and yet if it be not to be proved to be thus, yet thus possibly it may be, which is sufficient to elude the force of those sensible Arguments.

And the truth is, these Solutions do evade the edge and conclusivity of those Physical Arguments, and therefore much weight is not be laid upon them, but upon those of another nature, whereof in the foregoing part of this Chapter.

And there is no way to encounter the Solutions that these Men do, or may give of these two last Arguments, but to have recourse to what hath been before said, namely, that since the Solutions are grounded upon a Supposition of Eternal successive Motions, whereby by vicissitudes of long uncertain Periods of the Decays and Reparations of the inferior World,

World, and by eternal vicissitudes of the translation of the Earth and Seas to several fires either by interpolated, or successive Motions. And since by what hath been before proved, there is an utter impossibility in Reason and Nature of any Eternity *à parte ante* of continued or interpolated Motion, there is likewise an impossibility in Nature that there should be this eternal vicissitude of decays and repairs of the Earth, or shifting of stations between the Earth and the Sea. And thus we are at last driven to resort to those though more obscure yet more conclusive Arguments against the Eternity of the World which are mentioned in the beginning of this Chapter, or such as are of the like nature, some whereof will be hereafter farther considered.

*Averroes*, who was a strong Assertor of the Eternity of the World, insisteth upon a Reason which is witty, but upon a mistake of the nature of eternal duration, *viz.* That if the World were not eternal, but created in some certain *Epocha* or Period, it could never have been at all, because an eternal duration must necessarily have anteceded the first production of the World; and that Supposition excludeth the possibility of such its production; and is contradictory to that supposed *novitas essendi* of the World; for, *infinitum non potest pertransiri*, an infinite duration pre-existing to the Worlds production could never be passed through, so no possible accession to the first existence of the World through the vast compass of a pre-existing infinite duration.

But this reasoning of his is insufficient, because it takes in but a portion of Eternity which is *à parte ante*, whereas that Maxim is to be applied to the full and entire compass of Eternity or Infinitude. For if that Argument should hold, neither *Averroes* nor *Plato*, nor any man else could have been born in the World, but must have had an eternal existence upon the very same reason that *infinitum non potest pertransiri*; for it is certain that as well an infinite duration anteceded the Birth of *Plato* or *Averroes*, as it must do the production of the World if admitted to have *novitas essendi*.

And thus much touching this preparatory Disquisition concerning the Eternity of the World in general.

## C A P. IV.

Concerning the Origination of Mankind; and whether the same were Eternal, or had a Beginning.

IF the World it self were not eternal, this Disquisition touching the Eternity of Mankind were needless, because decided in that decision.

Therefore our Inquiry touching the Origination of Mankind, and whether it had or had not a Beginning, is in this place by way of Supposition or Admission, namely, Whether admitting the great Integrals at least of the Universe, the Heavens and Heavenly Bodies, the Elementary World were or at least might be eternal; whether yet Mankind were,

were, or might be eternal? And the Question possibly will be much of the same kind, with relation to other at least perfect Animals and Vegetables, yea and all mixed or compound Bodies; for we shall easily find, that admitting those greater Integrals of the World were eternal, yet whatsoever is said against the Eternity of Mankind will bear as hard against the Eternity of perfect Animals; and almost of all compound Bodies.

And although for the more orderly discussion of this Enquiry concerning the Original of Mankind, I must *gratia argumenti*, and according to the Method proposed, admit the Eternity of the great Integrals of the World; yet it will appear upon a due examination to be such an Admission as must in a great measure be contradicted in the debate of what is propounded to be proved, and the particular Reasons against the Eternity of the Humane, Animal, or compounded Bodies will necessarily infer an impossibility, or intollerable absurdity in the thing admitted, For instance:

To suppose an eternal existence of the Heavenly Bodies and of the Elementary Bodies in the site and position in which they are, and to suppose them in an eternal rest and unactivity, and without motion, action, passion, or perfection of the less noble by the more noble, were to suppose them eternally kept in a useless, needless, imperfect state, for an immense, eternal duration, till the first moment of their being put into Motion.

Again, to suppose the Heavenly Bodies and their Motions and Influence, the Fiery Nature dispersed through all the Sublunary World, with its activity and motion, and the Passive Nature of the more passive Elements to have been eternally in the World, and in all that eternal duration not to have produced mixed and compound Bodies in that eternal duration until such a determinate point of it, were a thing strangely repugnant in Nature, unless Almighty God were pleased to uphold their being, and yet suspend their activity for an immense eternal period.

And yet to suppose that the composition of Bodies out of the Elements (by virtue of the activity and influx of Motion, out of Matter that must by that influx be prepared for composition) should be as ancient as those Heavens, or that Motion, that Fiery active Principle that must compound them out of those simpler Bodies out of which they must be compounded (as all this must be, if they are eternal) is as impossible as any thing that can be thought of.

Again, if we should resolve the Eternity of the World into the Divine Will, which being necessitated by his goodness to do all the good he can, even *ad ultimum posse*, and upon that account made the World eternal, it were a strange Supposition to imagin that this God should give the great Integrals of the World an eternal being in eternal rest, without Motion, which is their perfection; or if together with Beings he gave or indeed could give an eternal Motion, it were a strange Supposition that he should suspend the efficacy of that Motion or Activity of the active Principles upon the passive (which both existed) for an infinite space, and then after took off that suspension: And yet farther, suppose Almighty God did or could give an eternal being to those Active or Passive Natures, and an eternal production of all mixed Bodies for

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an eternal duration but only Mankind (that is the noblest of all sublunary Natures, and apparently the glory of the sublunary World, and the very end of much of what is produced) I say, it is strange that the inferior World should be moved, agitated, and mingled into various mixed Bodies, and thus continue during the immensity of an eternal duration without Mankind in the World, if Almighty God were necessitated by the Benignity of his nature to do the uttermost good he could; and if he could produce Man eternally, there was an equal necessity for him to do it as to produce a Tree or a Stone eternally.

All this tends but to this, That if in the debate of this matter we can find that Man either could not be, or was not eternally produced, we have the same reason to believe that no compound Nature was produced eternally, that no local Motion or corporeal Action was or could be from Eternity; and consequently, that the Heavenly or Elementary Bodies were not from Eternity: The very single clearing of this one thing, that Man was not eternal, breaks the whole *Hypothesis* of the Eternity of the World, cuts asunder all the connexion of evidence, that is, for it, renders the most considerable perfection of the World, its Motion, Action, and Operation impossible to be eternal, and the existence of the Bulk, Position, and Fabrick thereof (unuseful, imperfect, and deficient without its Motion, Activity, and Operations) improbable to be eternal. So that the Position which I endeavour to prove, namely, the Non-eternity of Mankind, doth in truth destroy the Supposition of the Eternity at least of the inferior World. But this I only subjoyn by the way.

Concerning the Origination of Mankind, *Censorinus* in his golden Book *de Die Natali*, cap. 4. gives us the short state of the Question, and the several Authors that hold either way, viz. *Alii, semper homines fuisse, nec unquam nisi ex hominibus natos, atque eorum generi caput exordiumque nullum extitisse; alii, fuisse tempus cum homines non essent, & his ortum aliquando principiumque natura tributum.* Of the former Opinion he reckons *Pythagoras Samius, Ocellus Lucanus, Archytas Tarentinus, Aristotle, Theophrastus, Plato, Xenocrates, Dicaearchus*, and others.

But for the more clear stating of the Inquiry, I shall resume somewhat which hath been before said touching the Question before-going of the Eternity of the World, and some other things I shall add thereunto.

First, it is to be observed, that the Question is not here, Whether the successive Individuals of Mankind may or shall be eternal *à parte post*, perpetuated to everlasting by successive generation. For although whether that shall be or no, depends upon the Divine *Beneplacitum*, yet there is no intrinsic repugnance *ex parte rei*, but that as the World, and the Generations of Men in it have been thus long continued by the communication of the Divine Influence and Providence, so both the one and the other by the same Influence and Providence may be continued without end: And the reason is, because such a duration, and such a successive multiplication of Individuals imports only a potential infinitude, and such as never shall nor can be completed into an actual infinitude of duration or number: So that as Number is potentially infinite by addition of new parts to it, which yet never shall nor can arise to a number actually infinite, because after every period thereof there still may be a farther accession of a farther period, yet it never will nor can be actually infinite,

infinite, because still there will or may be farther additional periods of duration to that which went before.

The Question therefore rests only as to that part of the imaginary Line of the duration of successive Individuals that anteceded any given moment; or, Whether Mankind had any beginning of being, or were eternal or without beginning.

And touching this, there have been some that have affirmed Mankind to be without beginning or eternal; others that have affirmed that Mankind had a beginning.

Touching the latter of these, and the various Conjectures touching the manner of it, I shall write hereafter; at present I shall consider and examine the former.

Again, of those that have affirmed Mankind to be without beginning, and that maintain not only the Eternity of the rest of the World, but also of Mankind; they are of two sorts, *viz.* 1. Such as have affirmed that the successive Generations of Men have been eternal, not only without any beginning, but without any first Parents of Mankind, and that they have been always *geniti ex genitis*. 2. Those that have supposed that there were some first Parents of Mankind, which by a natural and univocal generation multiplied their *Species*, but yet that those first Parents of Mankind were eternal Individuals, having an eternal existence in their individual nature, and in relation to them the rest of Mankind were *geniti ex non genitis*.

As to the former of these Opinions, they seem to be divided into these ensuing Parties or Opinions.

1. Such as think the successive Generations of Men were eternally so, and independent upon any Efficient, and necessarily by the eternal established course of Nature independent upon Almighty God, or any first Efficient of the *Species*.

2. Such as think the successive Generations of Men were eternally so, but dependently upon Almighty God, yet as a necessary Effect produced by Almighty God as a necessary or natural Cause, as the Light is a co-existent Effect of the Sun.

3. Such as think the successive Generations of Men were eternally so, but dependently upon God as an efficient voluntary Cause of them by eternal Creation, yet suppose that Will intrinsically determined to such an eternal Creation of Mankind by the indispensable benignity and goodness of his nature.

4. Such as though they take Almighty God to be under neither of the former necessities, but an Agent purely voluntary, and determining his own Will by it self only, and that deny the eternal successions of humane Generations as to the fact; but yet affirm it possible that Almighty God might, if he pleased, have created the World and Mankind eternally.

Having thus stated the Opinions of the Assertors of the Eternity or Beginning of Humane Generations, I shall pursue this Method; 1. In this Chapter I shall consider the possibility or impossibility of eternal Generations of Mankind, with relation to the four preceding Suppositions that assert it. 2. In the next Chapter I shall consider the possibility or impossibility of any one Man or Woman eternally existing, from whom  
Mankind

Mankind had their production by univocal generation. 3. I shall afterwards consider of those evidences of fact and probability, that *de facto* may seem to prove that Mankind had their beginning in time, and the Objections against it. 4. I shall then descend to the Consideration of the various Suppositions of those that have supposed a temporary Origination of Mankind.

At the present therefore I shall propound those Reasons that to me seem conclusive, that although it might for Arguments sake be supposed that some parts of universal Nature, namely, such as are permanent and fixed, and not *in fluxu*, might be eternal; yet it is simply impossible that the Generations of Mankind can be eternal in any of the four foregoing ways.

And before I come to give my Reasons, I shall premise two things.

1. In relation to the four foregoing Opinions, there seems to be this implied in them: 1. The two former do most clearly take up the entire collection of Mankind and the Generations of them to be a meer natural Effect or Work, with this odds, that the former acknowledgeth no Efficient at all; the latter acknowledgeth God the Efficient or first Cause of the eternal World and the Generations of Mankind as a natural Cause: And consequently they must needs hold, that as Man is now generated, so he was eternally so; and as he is now, so he always hath been; and the measure that we take of him now will fit to all those innumerable Men that have been within the vast compass of Eternity: As Man is now a compound Body of the four Elements, so he always was; as he is now nine Months *in utero matris*, such was the method and the *mora* of every Man's production; for the Effect is a natural uniform Effect, whether independent upon God as the Efficient thereof, or dependent upon Him as a Natural Effect. And therefore whatsoever is impossible to be attributed to *Peter*, or *John*, or any other individual Man, is incompetent to every Man in all this infinite Collection within the unlimited extent of Eternity.

But the two latter, though both suppose an eternity of Generations, and though in Eternity there cannot be supposed well a first, yet do what they can, if they suppose a production of Man by eternal Creation, they cannot deliver themselves from these consequences; 1. That there must be some Man or Men that had his or their beginning in some other way than other persons had it, namely by Creation; for although Creation be an instantaneous act of the Divine Will and Power, it must of necessity be terminated in some individual determinate Person, and it cannot be *quid vagum*; the consequence whereof must necessarily be, That if there were an eternal Creation of any Man or Men, they that were thus created had their production (if we may suppose such a production) by a different way from the production of those that had their being by generation; and herein this Supposition of the Origination of Humane Nature differs from the two former Suppositions. 2. And consequently, that if the Creation of Man and of the rest of the World must be in the same point, as I may call it, of Eternity, the rest of the World or any part thereof could not be precedent to the Creation of Man, for then they have lost what they contend for, namely, an eternal Creation of Man: If it were but one imaginable moment after, then the  
World

World might indeed have had an eternal existence, but it would be impossible for Man to have had that eternal existence by Creation, unless in the same first imaginary conceivable moment of Eternity (an expression improper enough I confess) Man and the rest of the World were con-created: The consequence whereof, as I before said, is, that those Men must not as the former suppose all Individuals of Mankind had the same natural manner of production, for among the whole Collection some one or more had a supernatural manner of production, namely, by Creation.

2. This being premised concerning the different states of the two former and two latter Opinions, somewhat I shall say in general touching the Reasons I use against all these Suppositions: 1. In general, That that kind of reasoning which reduceth the opposite Conclusion to something that is apparently impossible or absurd, is as much a Demonstration in disaffirmance of any thing that is affirmed as can possibly be in any case, if the Conclusion of the affirming party doth necessarily infer an impossibility or absurdity in the nature of the thing affirmed, it is a Demonstration, *Argumentum cum contradictione conclusionis*; and such will those be which I shall bring. 2. Because the former Suppositions touching the Eternity of Mankind, though they conclude in the same Assertion, yet because they do it by several Suppositions, the Arguments that I shall use shall be of three natures; 1. Such as oppose in special the two first Assertions: 2. Such as especially oppose the two last: 3. Such as in common oppose both.

1. The Argument that I use against the two first Suppositions is this, That it is evident to Experience and the Concessions of those very men, that the Body of a Man and all other compounded Bodies consist not only of Matter antecedent to their Composition, but also of such a Matter as is digested from those more simple Bodies which we call the four Elements, Fire, Air, Water, and Earth: And therefore of necessity, and according to the Principles of these very men, before the existence of any compounded Body there must be of necessity, 1. A pre-existence of those simple Bodies out of which this compounded or mixed Body is compounded: 2. A pre-existence of those more active Principles in Nature that are necessarily pre-requisite to the mixing of these particles of Elementary Bodies, and to the disposition of them to the Union and Constitution of that mixed Body whereinto it is to be formed, namely, the Motions and Influx of the Heavens, the Activity of the fiery Nature, subduing the more passive parts of Matter to the susception of that Form wherein it is to be brought. 3. A *mora*, or due space of time intervening between the first coagulation of Matter and the first instant of the disposing thereof, and the complement thereof in its determinate *Species*, which according to the degree of its specific perfection is sometimes longer, and sometimes shorter, as the Statuary strikes more strokes upon that piece of Marble that is completed into the Statue of *Cesar* than into the Cube or Pedestal whereon he stands: all these must precede, not only in nature, but in time, before the complement of any compounded Body in its specific constitution. And therefore since all mixed Bodies require necessarily the antecedence of these simple Bodies, this action of the more active Principles, this *mora* in the full disposition and digestion of

of them into their complement of a mixed Being, it is simply necessary that there must be a posteriority in time of every compounded Body, especially the Body of Man, to these more simple Bodies out of which it is constituted, and those successive and gradual actions, and of the more active Nature by which it is disposed and completed in its being: And if once we admit a priority and posteriority, it is impossible the latter can be eternal, because it hath necessarily something that actually preceded it.

2. The Argument against the Eternity of Mankind upon the two latter Suppositions is thus; If Man were eternally created, or con-created with the rest of the World, it is of absolute necessity that that Creation must be terminated in that individual Person that was thus created. For whether Creation be eternal or not eternal, it must necessarily be terminated in some individual Being that is so created. And it is necessary also that that created Person were created in some determinate state, and in a state answerable to the nature of these Men that we now see, and though his Life were longer than ours, yet it would be certain that he lived as we do, one day, one month, one year after another, and that those first created Persons did generate their kind by the conjunction of Sexes, as is done in the World. And therefore if both Sexes were created, yet sooner or later they propagated their kind, as is now done; for though they themselves had a differing manner of production from those that succeeded them, we must conceive that their Constitution was the same, otherwise we shall not so much suppose an eternal Creation of Man, as of something else of a nature essentially differing from Man, which is contrary to the *Hypothesis* it self: And if this be supposed, we shall never deliver our selves from intollerable difficulties and absurdities. For, 1. There would of a necessity be a first Man, which cannot be consistent with the attribution of Eternity to Mankind. Again, 2. That first Man, if created eternally, must needs be distant from us by a less portion of duration after he had lived a year or two; and consequently the duration from his age of two years could not be eternal, for it is short of the period of his Creation by two years, and therefore not eternal; neither could his Creation be eternal, for then the adding of two years to a duration less than infinite should make it infinite, which is absurd and impossible. Again, 3. Was the generation of the first born Man at an infinite distance from us, and eternal, or no? If it were, then it must be of the same antiquity with the Creation of the first Man; and so the first born Man was eternal, and was consequently before he was born; and his Eternity should be ten, twenty, thirty, or forty years short of the Eternity of his Father, yet both eternal: If the Birth of that Man were not eternal, then consequently the Generations of Mankind are neither infinite nor eternal; nay consequently the Creation of the first Man could not be eternal nor an infinite distance from us, for there must necessarily be a determinate Period between the Creation of the first Man and the Birth of the second, and that time must necessarily be finite; and the addition of a finite duration to a finite duration can never make an infinite duration.

Eternity therefore, and a duration actually infinite, cannot be applied to successive Beings: The absurdities and incongruities that arise upon such an application are infinite and incurable, and not to be attempted:  
Nothing

Nothing but an infinite and indivisible Being is able to sustain an infinite and eternal duration, it will never fit other things, it is too great for them.

3. I now come to consider those Reasons that are applicable indifferently to all the former four Suppositions, and render them all alike vain, absurd, and impossible. I shall resume some of those that I used before against the Supposition of the World's Eternity, and I shall subjoin some others more particularly applicable to the condition of Man.

1. If the successive Generations of Mankind were eternal, then of necessity some one Man among them that preceded us was infinitely distant from us that are now living in point of duration, and infinite numbers of Men have intervened between us and him; this is plain and undeniable.

If so then, if this Man lived to the ordinary age of man, for the purpose, till thirty years old, and then had a Son, and after this he lived to seventy years old, and died: Was this Son of his distant from us an infinite duration, an infinite period of years; or were there infinite Persons that intervened between this Son and us his remote descendants or no? If there were, then the duration from his Father, which was thirty years before his Son, must be thirty years greater than the duration of the Son, and yet the Son as eternally existing as his Father: if not, then thirty years added to the finite duration from the Son to us must make it infinite. There were infinite Persons in the interval between us and his Father, and but finite between us and his Son, and yet the odds between both must be but one. The Father's Death must be eternally distant from us as well as his Birth, and yet his birth seventy years before his death.

2. I shall here also resume the Argument above-given against the Eternity of Motion (which yet is no other but a different kind of application of the Argument last mentioned.) Whatsoever is now past and gone, was most certainly once present; therefore the most remotely distant Man in that vast Period of Eternity was certainly once actually existing, and though he be now past, yet those Attributes and Conceptions that were applicable and affirmable of him when present, are now affirmable and applicable to him though past, (abating only the relations of past and present,) if when he was present and actually existing he could not be eternal, so neither can the addition of all the succeeding myriads of Men by successive procreation make any one day of that Man's age to be infinitely distant from us, for it could not be so when he was present and existing. That Man whereof we speak was such a Man as we are, lived successively as we do, and though possibly he might be longer-lived than us, yet his age was measured by days and years as ours is, and could never be without beginning; and consequently this Man, when existing, was the *Radix* of all that succeeded him, the *terminus claudens* of all his succeeding Generations, which bounds and terminates *à parte ante* all the succeeding Generations, as that Man when present was not eternal, so neither can the addition of successive Generations produce a Line of duration of infinite extent, for that duration is *utrinque clausa*, namely, with that Man which was once present, and that Moment wherein I now write.

3. My

3. My third Argument (which though it be common, is very evident) is this:

It is impossible, *ex natura rei*, that any multitude can be actually infinite, or, (which is all one) so great that there cannot be a greater, or, *multitudo omnium maxima*: But if we should suppose an eternal succession of Generations of Men, or an infinite *Series* of successive individual Men, there would necessarily follow an infinite multitude, or a multitude than which there could not be a greater. And therefore *ex impossibili*, there could not be such an eternal succession of Generations.

The first Proposition, namely, That it is impossible there should be an infinite multitude, or (which is all one) a number actually infinite, is evident by those many contradictions, absurdities, and intollerable incongruities that would follow upon such a Supposition.

It must needs be granted that an infinite multitude is the greatest multitude that can be, there can be no greater; if there can be a greater, then the former was not infinite. For when we have to do with any thing whose very essence, as I may call it, consists in being greatest, there *magis* and *minus* do alter the very essence of the thing, and is identical with *magis* and *minus*: A greater or larger Line, or Superficies, or Body is not *magis linea, superficies, aut corpus*, than a shorter, narrower, or lesser Line, Superficies, or Body, because they agree in the same common nature, the one as well as the other is a Line, Superficies, or Body. And so of other things.

But when the very Essence of the thing consists in a certain essential difference of *major* or *minor*, there *major* or *minor* vary the kind.

And therefore a Line of two foot long (with relation to that extent) essentially differs from a Line of a foot long, which under that notion is essentially greater or more extended than a Line of a foot long, and it is impossible that a Line of a foot long should be as long as a Line of two foot long, as it is impossible that a part should be equal to the whole. And yet upon the supposition of an infinite multitude, it must necessarily follow that one infinite multitude must be greater than another, and yet both infinite; upon the supposition of infinite Generations of Men, there must have been an infinite multitude of antecedent Individuals and Generations of Men a million of years since, and yet necessarily by the addition of those Individuals that have accrued since in that great Period of a Million of years, there must needs be an accession of a vast number to that multitude that was before, whereby it must necessarily be greater; and yet both supposed infinite, that is, such than which there can be nothing greater. Again, the multitude of the individual Men must be infinite, and yet the multitude of these Mens Eyes must be double to the number of Men, and yet both be infinite. And it is but a vain thing to say, that though the collection of Men be antecedently infinite, yet it is *clausa* and  *finita* in the present extreme: as if a Line should be extended infinitely from the point *A*, the Line would be finite at the point *A*, though infinite towards the other part, and the apposition of the accessional number of Men is to that part that is finite: For though the Generations of Men are limited towards the extreme that is next us, or at the Period of a Thousand years before us: and though the apposition of the accessional number be towards this hithermost extreme which is *clausa* or

or *finita*, yet the apposition is to the whole number or multitude, and the collection thereof, and therefore the absurdity of the Supposition of an infinite pre-existing multitude, which is more enlarged by the increase, is equally evident, as if we could suppose an apposition of the number to any other part, for the scope of the Argument is to prove the impossibility of Infinite and Multitude, because no Multitude can be greater than Infinite, yet such would it necessarily be, if we should suppose the multitude now greater than it was a thousand years before: And to render it yet more plain, suppose on the other side we should take the other Operation of Arithmetick, namely, Subduction: If out of that supposed infinite multitude of antecedent Generation, we should by the Operation of the Understanding subduce Ten, whether we subduct that Number of Ten out of the last Generations of Men, or out of Generations a thousand years since, or indeterminately out of the whole Collection, certainly the residue must needs be less by Ten than it was before that Subduction made, and yet still the Quotient must be as great as before, which is still infinite.

Again, the incongruity of the Supposition of an infinite multitude appears in this, that the part must be as infinite as the whole: It is the Instance of *Algarel*, in his Dialogue with *Averroes*; the Number of 4 multiplied into it self produceth the Square Number of 16, and that again multiplied by 4 produceth the Cubick Number of 64. If we should suppose a multitude actually infinite, there must be infinite Roots, and Square and Cubick Numbers, yet of necessity the Root is but the fourth part of the Square, and the sixteenth part of the Cubick Number. The Instance of *Algarel*, in his first Disputation with *Averroes*, which *Averroes* endeavours to answer (but tyres himself in vain to do it) may explain this Consequence: The *Sun* passeth through the Zodiack in one year, *Saturn* passeth through it in thirty years, so that the Revolution of *Saturn* to the Revolution of the *Sun* is as one to thirty, and consequently as one Revolution of *Saturn* contains thirty Revolutions of the *Sun*, so two Revolutions thereof must contain sixty Revolutions of the *Sun*, and so if we should suppose their Revolutions infinite, yet the proportion of the Revolutions must necessarily hold the same, namely, in all the whole Collection, the Number of the *Suns* Revolutions must be thirty times as many as the Number of *Saturns* Revolutions, and consequently the Revolutions of *Saturn* can be no more than one thirtieth part of the Revolutions of the *Sun*, and yet both being supposed infinite, the part, namely, the thirtieth part, must be as great as that whereof it is the thirtieth part, which is impossible.

And this impossibility holds in all other things that have succession or extension, as in quantity, motion, successive duration of things, in their nature successive. But it is more plain and conspicuous in discrete quantity, or different Individuals, which are already measured by Number, without any breaking the continuity that is in things that have continuity, as continued quantity and motion. And therefore they that go about to demonstrate the impossibility of Eternal Motion, *à parte ante*, or infinite extension in a Body, Line, or Superficies, do first break it into parts to measure them, and reduce them to discrete quantity, because the demonstration is more clear and sensible thereby, and therefore they break the

the Measures of Motion into Hours, Days, Years, or such like Measures, or into Periodical Revolutions, and so they break continued Quantity into Palms, Feet, Perches, or the like; because though the repugnancy of Infinity be equally incompetent to continued or successive Motion, Duration, or continued Quantity, and depends upon the impossibility of the very nature of things successive or extensive with Infinity, yet that impossibility is more conspicuous in discrete Quantity or Multitude, that ariseth from parts or Individuals already actually distinguished: But the reason of both is the same, especially if broken and divided into real or imaginary parts.

But in the Matter in question, namely, Multitude of successive Men, or successive Generations of Men, there is already a separate, divided, discrete multitude, without any antecedent work of my Understanding, or otherwise, to reduce it into parts or discrete multitude; and so the Instances of the Absurdities that arise by an infinite multitude of Individuals and distinct Generations, is made more plain and open to view: And he that is desirous to prosecute these *Assmata* of Infinity and Multitude, let him resort to the Prelections of *Faber*, collected by *Monsuerius*, in his *Metaphysica demonstrativa de infinito*.

And to say the truth, there are none of the Ancients that have any weight in them, that do not agree, that it is impossible that any Quantity, either discrete or continued, should be actually infinite, but only potentially, either by addition of supposed parts to either, or by division of Quantity continued into parts infinitely divisible: But the greater difficulty rests in the Assumption, which is next to be considered.

The second Proposition is this, That if Eternal Generations of Men were admitted, there would be this absurd Consequence, that a multitude given might be actually infinite, which remains to be proved.

The Objection that stands in the way seems to be this, That there is no repugnancy that Multitude might be possibly infinite, for as we may without any inconvenience suppose, that the Generations of Mankind might be sempiternal or eternal, *à parte post*, so there is no inconvenience to suppose them eternal, *à parte ante*, for they never co-exist, but are successive, and so do not constitute any multitude co-existing actually infinite, which is indeed impossible; but there is no implication or repugnancy that there might be an infinite succession of Generations, for they are not together, but one Generation passeth and another succeedeth.

And hence it is they say, that *in moventibus vel causis per se subordinatis*, there cannot be *processus in infinitum*, but we must necessarily fix in a First Mover, between whom and the last Motion or Effect there cannot be a *series* of Infinite Causes for two Reasons: First, Because if there were Infinite Movers or Causes, moving *per se* to the same effect or motion, the motion would be infinite, and so would the time wherein that motion would be absolved, for *infinitus motus non fit in finito tempore*. Secondly, And again, there would be an actual Infinity of co-existing Causes, which is impossible; and therefore for the purpose, to the production of this generation of an Insect by putrefaction, there is not an infinite *series* of Causes *per se* co-operating to its production, but the *series* of Causes is finite; for the active qualities of the Elements move the Matter, and

the Heat and Influence of the Heavens agitate and move, it may be, the Elementary Body, and the Intelligences move the Heavenly Bodies, and Almighty God the *Primum Movers* moves the Intelligences, and these are finite in number: But in *causis aut moventibus accidentaliter subordinatis*; there may be an Infinitude or Eternity, thus the Father may beget the Son, and the Grandfather beget the Father, and so backward to Eternity, and so in the successive productions of all Animals *ex semine*. For though the Individuals successively existing from all Eternity, must needs be infinite, yet they do not coexist, but as one Generation comes another decays, and so make no infinite multitude; and consequently, that all the absurdities that are heaped upon the Supposition of infinite multitude or numbers, conclude nothing to the matter in question, because there is no infinite multitude, because no infinite Individuals or Generations of Mankind coexisting: And though this cannot at all, according to their supposition, any way admit the possibility of an infinitely extended Body, Line, Superficies, or Place, because that would be an actual infinitude in extent; yet as to successive continued things, as successive Motion, as that of the Heavens, and successive Duration, as that of Motion which we call Time, there is nothing of inconvenience according to their Supposition, if they be infinite, eternal, and without beginning; because though they consist of infinite Parts, yet they are not altogether, or coexisting, without which there is no real Multitude.

So that the Question will be hereby reduced to this Point, Whether in this succession of Generations and Individuals of Mankind there be such a Multitude produced that is consistent with Infinitude therein.

I shall not here lay hold of that Supposition of the Immortality of the Souls of the several Individuals of Mankind (which if supposed, would make an infinite multitude actually coexisting of separate Souls) because some of those that maintain the Eternity of Mankind, deny the Immortality of the Soul; others deny the Immortality of the Soul in its individuation, supposing it to resolve into a certain common Element of Souls; and others, as the *Pythagoreans*, though allowing the Immortality of Souls in their individuation, yet suppose a finite number of Souls might supply the infinite Successions of Men by Transmigration of these in their due time: This I lay aside, because it would necessarily occasion other Disputes with Men of those Periwasions.

I do therefore say, That upon the Supposition of the Eternal Succession of the Generations of Men, and the infinite successive Individuals thereby arisen, there doth arise such a Multitude as is equally inconsistent with Infinitude, as if the Individuals had been all coexisting, and that all those foregoing *Assumpta* that render any number or multitude of coexisting Individuals impossible to be infinite, render the multitude of successive Individuals impossible to be infinite; abating only the inconvenience indeed falls not upon the successions of Individuals, some by death and corruption making room for new Successors.

And to make good what I say, I shall deliver these ensuing Conclusions.

1. That as in things that are present, while they actually are, they also necessarily are; so in things that have been, they have been while they

were,

were, actually and necessarily: It is as certain that my Father and Grandfather once actually were *in rerum natura*, as it is certain that I now actually am; for though in things that are yet to come, they are only in possibility, and not in act; yet in things that have already been, they have been as actually as what now is; *in praeeteritis non datur possibilitas*; and it is as certain that what is past, once was actually present and existing, as what now is, is actually present and existing. This I say to prevent that Objection, That things past and things to come are of the same nature in relation to their existence, and that only our manner of apprehension is that which makes things future only *inter possibilita*.

2. That things that once existed and are now past, do as really constitute a multitude (if many) as things that are coexisting: It is as evident that the Grandfather and Father and Son did as really make up a multitude, that is, one man, and one man, and one man, (which multitude we call artificially three, though the Father and Son were both *posthumi*) as if they all had or did all now exist together; and it is as true a Predication to say that these were many, as it were in case they had all coexisted, or were now coexisting: And those three Revolutions of the First Moveable that were past three days since, are as really a multitude of Revolutions, as the three Stars that this hour coexist in Heavenly Constellation are a multitude of Stars; and when I speak of a multitude, I mean more than one.

3. That although number; or the digesting things under this or that number, whether Collective, as three, six, nine; or Ordinal, as the second, third, or fourth, be but an operation of the Understanding only, yet antecedent to any act of the Understanding, and without the help of it, *unum* and *multa*, and of those *multa, plura, or pauciora* have a reality: *Plato* is one, and *Plato* and *Aristotle* are *multi*, or more than one; and *Plato* and *Aristotle* and *Tully*, are a greater multitude than *Plato* and *Aristotle*, antecedently to any operation of the Understanding.

4. That antecedently to any act of the Understanding, even in those things that have a successive existence, and are not all together, there is as real an unity or multiplicity as in things coexisting. For instance, The Revolution of Heaven that was dispatched the first Natural day of the last week, was as really, as that Revolution which now is in concluding really is; and as it really was, so it really was but one: And the Revolutions that followed in the two next Natural days were really more than one, and therefore *multa*; and the Revolutions of the three next days after, was a multitude greater than the Revolutions of the two former days; and all those six Revolutions were really a greater multitude of Revolutions than any one of the former multitudes, and this without and before any operation of the Understanding, though indeed the Understanding gives them their numeral distinction of one, and two, and three, and six.

5. That the impossibility of Infinitude with Multitude, or the impossibility that any Multitude should be infinite, doth not arise either upon the existence or non-existence of the Subjects of that Multitude together at this or any other determinate time, but from the very nature of Multitude it self: So that whether the *multa* were present, or past,

or

or fixed, or successive, yet the very supposition of Multitude doth exclude the possibility of its infinitude: For 1. It supposeth a discrete Quantity, and any Quantity must needs be limited. 2. It supposeth a consistence of many Unities into which it must necessarily be resolved, as the constituent Subject or Matter of them. 3. It supposeth a Term which cannot be the greatest: It is impossible that any Multitude can be so great but that a greater may be given: So that as although there were no Man in the World to take notice of it, every Triangle would contain three angles equal to two right-angles, though no Man were in the World to discover or assent to it; so though there were no things in the World existing to be denominated *multa*, and no Understanding in the World to form the conception of it, it would be an eternal Truth, That what consisteth of many Unities, as all Multitude necessarily doth, cannot be Infinite, nor consequently any Multitude arising by succession cannot in the nature of the thing be Eternal.

Upon the whole matter therefore, I conclude that it is impossible that the Generations of Men or their successive Individuals can be Eternal; that a Multitude doth as well arise by successive as by coexisting Individuals, that if the Generations of Men and their successive Individuals were Eternal, there would necessarily follow, that the multitude of such Individuals were infinite as well as if they were all coexisting, and that it is equally repugnant to the nature of multitude, whether of successive or of coexisting Individuals to be infinite: Therefore there could not be such an eternal succession of Individuals or Generations.

And that this Supposition, That multitude of coexisting Individuals, or of Causes or *moventes per se*, cannot be infinite; but that successive Individuals or Causes and Effects *per accidens* might be infinite and eternal, is in truth a Supposition not fitted to the truth of things, or grounded upon any rational difference between the things, but a Supposition fitted merely to serve that other precarious Supposition which *Aristotle* and his followers had taken up touching the Eternity of the World.

And these shall be all the Reasons that I shall trouble my self withall against the Eternity of Mankind, or the successive Generations and Individuals thereof, having willingly declined those many other Ingenious Reasons given by others (as of the Impertransibility of Eternity, and the impossibility therein to attain to the present term or limit of antecedent Generations or Ages, the necessity of every *posterius* to have a *prius*, that there be an equal number of *priora* and *posteriora*) which either are so many various Explications of the Reasons going before, or at least are not so evidently concludent, or are subject to Exceptions in some particulars.

The Objections both against the Reasons before given, and against the Supposition it self, I shall take up after the next Chapter, wherein I shall examin the other Supposition before mentioned, namely, The eternal existence of some first Man and Woman, and the successive Generations from them, wherein, because it is touched before, I shall be brief.

C A P.

## C A P. V.

Concerning the Supposition of the first Eternal Existence of the common Parents of Mankind, and the production of the succeeding Individuals from them.

I Come to that other Supposition, namely, of the Existence of some one Man and Woman the common Parents of Mankind eternally, and the successive multiplication of the Race of Mankind from them by the ordinary course of generation. And although this Supposition carries with it the clear evidence of its absurdity, and therefore may seem to be scarce worth the pains of a Confutation; yet because it lyes in my way, and the Observations upon it may be useful for other purposes, I shall say somewhat concerning it.

This first eternal Pair we cannot conceive to have an existence by a bare course of Nature, without an eternal Creation of them by Almighty God, and an unintermitted Influence from him to support them in a state of Incorruptibility through the vast abyss of Eternity: For he that will suppose things purely under that course of existence that is proper to them by the course of Nature, must needs suppose the Individuals of the humane Nature to have been always such, and of such a Frame as now they are, that is, mortal and corruptible Beings; and though their Ages might anciently be of a longer continuance than now they are, yet (upon a bare natural account) they could not be conceived immortal, incorruptible, immutable, no more than they are now.

Therefore since the great admirers of Nature do therefore frame their *Hypotheses* of an eternal Succession of Men, because they think themselves bound to think that all things have ever been as now they are, and because they will not substitute other *Hypotheses* of the Origination or Existence of things in any other manner than they now see them. Certainly as to these, and *ad hominem*, it is an Evidence beyond contradiction, that there never was any such pair of Man and Woman that eternally existed, but that all Men and other perfect Animals, if they were eternal in their *Species*, were eternally produced *ex prius genitis* as now they are, and that there was no one first individual of Man or Beast that had an eternal Existence, because such a Supposition equally crosseth that course of the nature of things which now they see, which therefore they make the standard, and their measure of things that are past.

They therefore that must support an existence of the first individual Parents of humane Nature, and that those Individuals had an eternal existence, must necessarily suppose that they had that existence by an eternal Creation of Almighty God, and an eternal Influx and Support from him in that incorruptible estate through all the vast extent of an eternal duration.

And by this means they do think, and that truly, that they assert a dependence of the *Species* of things upon Almighty God, which cannot possibly be supposed to be dependent upon him, unless they had in their indivi-



individual nature their existence from him; since it is impossible there can be any Supposition of the existence of any *Species* (as for instance, the *Species* of Man) unless it be supposed to exist in Individuals; nor consequently a dependence of the *Species* of Mankind upon God as its Cause, unless there were a dependence of the first Individuals thereof upon him *in fieri* as their Cause: And they likewise hope (but vainly) hereby to avoid the inconveniences of successive eternal Generations without any first *Caput* or *Radix* of those Generations, though they fall hereby into the same difficulties, and others that are equally intricate and inexplicable.

And although in this Supposition we must admit the first pair that were the Roots of Mankind did herein differ from the state of Mankind now, that whereas now Men live ordinarily seventy or eighty years, and are subject to Death, yet those first *radices humani generis* were by the Influence of the Divine Power immortal, and not confined to the age incident now to Mankind, but were able to endure the immense duration of an eternal being; yet we must also suppose that in other respects they were of the same Make with these individuals of Mankind that are now: For otherwise instead of a supposition of an eternal being of the first individual Man and Woman that had their being by eternal Creation, we shall fall into a supposition of something that was not in truth Man. And therefore, as according to the Doctrine of *Moses* and the Truth, *Adam* the first created Man, though consisting of a composition intrinsically dissolvable, had he continued in Innocence, should or might have held by the continued Influx of the Divine Will and Power a state of immortality and indissolubleness of his Composition; yet as to the Essentials of his nature, and the Integrals thereof, he should have been and continued like other Men.

And therefore those first imaginary eternal Individuals, the Root of Mankind, should have consisted of Flesh and Blood and Mind and Soul and Body as other Men do, they must have the support of their Lives by receiving of nourishment, by digesting thereof according to the various process of Digestion as we do, they must draw in their Breath or Air and emit it again as we do, they must have had the like successive motion of the Heart and the like circulation of their Blood as we have, the like local motion of their Bodies, the like variation and succession of Thoughts as we have, and though the supposed Eternity of them should have excluded from them corruption or dissolution in that vast Period of Eternity, yet even that duration of his must be in this respect like ours, that it was a successive duration, a duration that was measured out by the supposed coexistence of the eternal succession of days, and months, and years: And such a duration, as though there had been no such collateral or coextended extrinsic measure, yet it was intrinsically successive, and not indivisible, because he was in his nature a corporeal successive Being as well as we; and as we in the very Constitution of our *Automaton* have certain successive gradual marks and signs and operations, whereby though there were no external successive measure, by comparison whereto the succession of our duration might appear, as the Motion of the Heavens and Heavenly Bodies, and the like; yet by those connatural successive marks and signs our beings and durations would be

be measured, and the successions thereof would appear; as the vicissitudes of Respiration, the Pulses; Palpitations of our Hearts, the variety and succession of acts of Sensation, the succession of our Thoughts and Cogitations; whereby it is apparent we have not only intrinsic marks and distinctions of our successive duration, but also that our operations are various: I do, I think and speak that to day which I did not yesterday, the number of my Respirations or Pulses were thus many yesterday, and as many to day, and it may be more, upon the variety happening in my Body by local motion, repletion, or any casual perturbation. And as all this I find in my self and other men, so I must needs conclude the very like was in these first Individuals that are supposed to be eternal: For though they had (*ex suppositione*) an immortality and preservation from putrefaction or corruption by the eternal and continued influx of the Divine Goodness and Power, yet they were not in a state of perfect immutability in their actions, operations, or existence: For then we must suppose them not to have been Humane Creatures, but Gods, or at least Angels; which nevertheless are not wholly exempt from their degrees of mutability and variation, at least in their intrinsic operations: it being the sovereign Prerogative of Almighty God only, to be without variableness or shadow of change.

And now I shall not inquire what are become of those eternal pair of first Parents, where they are, or if they are dead, how it came to pass they could weather and stand the shock of an eternal duration, and yet be at any time subject to a dissolution. It may be said they were translated into Heaven, or possibly they may be since dead, the Divine Beneficence subducting in this or that point of time that Influence which it communicated from the time of their first Creation, whereby they were kept in a state of immortality till that moment of the subduction thereof wherein they began to undergo the common Laws of Dissolution.

But I do say that there is the same impossibility that any corporeal Individual of such a Make and Constitution as Man is, should be eternal *in hoc individuo*, as there is in the eternal succession of several Individuals: Such a kind of duration cannot be sustained by succession of Humane Individuals, much less can it be sustained by any single Individual of Humane Nature.

1. The same absurdities and impossibilities would follow upon the admission of the Eternity of one single Humane Individual as of successive; because that Individual hath necessarily a concomitant succession of interpolated Motions, namely, the Pulses of the Heart, and the successive Motions of Respiration, and divers others. All which will produce multitudes incapable of Infinity, as much as the several individuals of Mankind.

And among all these Pulses and Respirations some one will be necessarily, infinitely, actually distant from some other Pulse within the limits of time, whereupon all those former heaps of incongruities and impossibilities before observed will be consequential.

2. It is impossible that any Being can be eternal with successive eternal Physical changes, or variety of states or manner of existency naturally and necessarily concomitant unto it. But if we should suppose any one

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one Man eternal, yet he must in the very constitution of his being necessarily have Physical changes and variety of states and manners of existence accompanying him, or else we must unman him, and make him another thing: Therefore no individual Man can be eternal. The Major Proposition is evident to any that consider it. For let us suppose the first Man created eternally in a state of Childhood, Youth, or Rest, it is necessary that he continue eternally in that state, and the first moment he moves or alters that state, must be on this side the uttermost limits or compass of Eternity, namely, within such a compass as is finitely distant from this hour, for two Causes: Because Rest must needs be antecedent to his Motion, his Childhood antecedent to his Youth, and that to his Manhood; and therefore if his Rest, Childhood, or Youth were eternal, his motion or alteration of his state cannot be eternal, for then this contradictory Proposition should be true, That Man did eternally rest, and eternally move, or which is all one, eternally move and eternally not move, for Rest in Bodies is but an absence or privation of Motion: That he was eternally a Child, eternally a Youth, and eternally a grown Man.

But let us suppose that it were possible that he might be created eternally in a state of Rest, or yet in some determinate point within the extent of Eternity he should begin to move; that interval that anteceded his Motion must be either in a finite or infinite distance from us: If we should suppose it infinite, we contradict our selves; for we shall make the first Motion eternal, and consequently infinitely distant from us; and yet to have a beginning, and such a beginning that was infinitely later than the Eternity of Rest. And if we shall suppose the interval between the first imaginary beginning of that Rest and the beginning of that Motion, finite, (suppose for the purpose, the time of a Month) then we shall upon the very same account make the beginning of that Motion to be less than eternal, because begun a Month after what was eternal; and consequently also we shall make the beginning of that Rest to be not eternal, because that first Motion having a beginning after Eternity, could not be eternal; nor consequently the beginning of that Rest could not be eternal; for, *ex suppositione*, it is but a Month ancients than that Motion, which was not eternal: and a finite duration added to a finite duration cannot make an infinite duration: Therefore if Man, *ex suppositione*, were created in any state whether of Motion or Rest, Childhood, Youth, full grown Age, or whatever other state it be, he must necessarily so persist an infinite duration, and if he undergo any alteration from that state, that alteration must be in time; or of a puiſe date to Eternity.

The second Proposition is this; That Man in his very Constitution is such, that there is incessantly and naturally concomitant with him Physical changes, and a variety of states and real changes, without which he would be in vain, and indeed he could not be what he must be supposed to be, namely, essentially a Man.

It hath been heretofore shewn what great variety of Motions and Alterations do necessarily accompany his very Constitution, and let any Man but think with himself what a kind of thing Man would be during all that immense abyss of his first being, if he be supposed eternally and unchangeably resting, unchangeably moving, eternally and unchangeably  
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a Child, a Youth, a full grown Man, or any other determinate unchangeable state. As we have before observed, though we should admit a possibility of an eternal Creation of Man or of any created Being whatsoever, we must suppose him created under some of the conditions which are incident to an individual nature; he must be created in some determinate *ubi*, and in some determinate *fitus* and state; he must be created in Rest or in Motion, a Child, or a Youth, or a full grown Man: This Man, unless he put off his nature; must in some finite or limited time at least after the eternal imaginary moment of his Being move locally, or with the Motions of alteration, augmentation, growth or decay. These and the like Motions are, upon the account of his Constitution, necessarily incident to him within certain ordinary Periods, and are connatural to his very Constitution.

And therefore it is irrational, and indeed impossible that this created Man should eternally be in a state of Rest without Motion, without Alteration, Augmentation, Diminution; and yet thus he must be conceived to be, if he were eternally made: If once we admit a variation from the state of his Creation, that variation must be necessarily after an eternal and infinite duration, and therefore within the compass of Time: If this Man should be conceived to move or alter his condition within a year; nay a million of years after his Creation, his Creation could not be eternal, because his Creation would be antecedent to that first alteration but a finite time; and that first alteration could not be eternal, but within the compass of a finite time; and consequently his Creation antecedent that first alteration by a finite time could not be eternal; or of an infinite distance from the time wherein I write: And consequently this Creation of Man is not; cannot be eternal, because Man in his very Constitution hath the necessary concomitants of those alterations that are inconsistent with an eternal duration, and such as he cannot be without, according to the very intrinsic fabric of his native Constitution one Week, much less an eternal duration.

Again, the truth is, the very Supposition of eternal Creation of any Being essentially distinguished from Almighty God is a perfect contradiction in it self: That which is eternal, is that which is without beginning; that which is created, hath necessarily a beginning, although by Creation.

But I shall not prosecute this any farther, the Supposition of any individual of Mankind eternally created is so absurd that it deserves not half the words that have been used about it: But I have not been so prolix in it for the sake of the Supposition it self, but rather because it gives a fair opportunity of clearing of some things which could not be so aptly done otherwise.

And upon all this that hath been said, although it should be admitted that there were an eternal being of a first Man and a first Woman, yet it were impossible in Nature that the Generations of Men should be infinite; and this appears upon the Reasons here given, and likewise upon the former Consideration of the impossibility of the Eternity of Mixed Bodies. For it is absolutely necessary that there be an interval between the first existence of the first created Parents of Mankind and the production of any descendent from them by ordinary course of pro-  
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creation or generation: For such a production cannot by any possibility be as ancient as the producents; though Creation may be instantaneous, yet Generation in its first inception, complement and perfection, cannot be instantaneous. *Ideoque necesse est ut primus homo per procreationem sive naturalem generationem productus, per novem menses integros post primam conceptionem in utero lateat, & demum post ejusdem in lucem editionem, per omnes gradus infantia, pueritia, juventutis, ad complementum maturioris aetatis deveniat: unde etiam necesse est ut primus homo per generationem, posterior sit primis hominibus per creationem, per spatium ad minus novem mensium. Unde si daretur primos humani generis parentes extitisse per aeternam creationem, impossibile est primos homines ex iisdem prognatos extitisse per aeternam generationem; parentum enim existentia precedere debet existentiam filii, aliter filius per generationem & pater in suis positivis existentis erunt aequè antiqui, utriusque aeterni: Et si detur existentia patris (licet non sub ea relatione) ante existentiam filii, filii existentia principium habeat necesse est posterius existentia patris, & sic non aequè antiquum, & consequenter nec aeternum.*

Upon the whole matter, I do conclude, That although the Creation of the common Parents of Mankind might be *de facto* a very long time since, nay although there can be no imaginable time nor imaginable point wherein the Creation of the Individuals might not have been by the Divine Power, nor no imaginable point but that the Creation of the World or Mankind might have been sooner, if the Divine Will had been so pleased, (for that denotes only a possibility of pre-existence sooner than it was, if the infinite Agent had so pleased, and not an actual Eternity) yet it is not possible in the nature of the thing that Mankind or any other created Being, that hath succession either continued or discrete necessarily accompanying it, should sustain an actual, eternal, and consequently infinite duration.

## C A P. VI.

*Certain Objections against the Truths formerly delivered, and against the Reasons given in proof thereof, with their Solutions.*

**T**Here are certain considerable Objections against those things that are delivered in the precedent Chapters, and against the conclusiveness or evidence of those Reasons, these I have delivered over to this Chapter.

The First Objection is thus: That Eternity, and Infinite, and the notions thereof are too large for our Understanding, and we are lost when we go about to frame Conceptions of them; and all our Argumentations touching them are ineffectual and unconvincing, because our Understanding being but a finite power is capable only of finite Objects, and that the *media* whereby we go about to evince any thing must needs be finite, or otherwise they are not comprehensible by us, and therefore wholly disproportionate to frame Conclusions touching an Object that

of all hands is agreed to be infinite; our Faculties are proportionate to those Objects that are derived to us by the help and instrumentality of Sense, either immediately, or at least mediately, and therefore are not proportioned to the nature of Eternity and Infinity. And therefore our Reasoning touching these matters is as if he that were born blind should Philosophize touching Light or Colours, whereunto he hath not, nor never had a Faculty accommodate.

I answer, It is true that there is something which I may call Positive in the conception of Eternal or Infinite, which the Understanding cannot master. But since it is very plain that all things in the World come under the distribution of finite or infinite, or that which hath a beginning, or that which hath not a beginning and is consequently eternal; If I can (as most certainly I may) have a conception of what is finite, and what are the Laws and necessary Connexions of it, I can by that Notion conclude that whatsoever is finite, or that must be under the Laws and Rules of finite Beings, cannot be infinite: I have a Globe in my Hand, though I know not the Eternity, yet I know that whatsoever hath or must necessarily have limits or *finis*, is not, cannot be infinite, and therefore this Globe cannot be infinite: And if I can find in any other thing a parity of Reason, I do and may remove infiniteness from it as reasonably and evidently as I do from this Globe I hold, or this Hour I write, or this Life I live: I do therefore certainly know that whatsoever is limited or bounded by somewhat that necessarily anteceded it, cannot be eternal.

I do not determine what Eternal or Infinite is in the Positive nature of it, only I remove Infinity from what I find to be necessarily finite, and determine, that whatsoever hath bounds or limits to it, is *quid finitum*, and not *quid non finitum*; and whatsoever hath necessarily a beginning is *quid temporale*, and not *quid aeternum*: And all my endeavour hath been to shew that the things before disputed are and needs must be of such a nature as comes under the notion of what I know, namely, *finitum* or *temporale*; and not under the negation thereof, namely, *infinitum*, or *non finitum*, or *sine principio*.

2. *Obiect.* That by denying the possibility at least of Eternity to created successive Beings, I put a restraint to the infinite Goodness of God, who thereby is straitened in the communication of his Goodness, coeternal to his being, which is part of his Divine Perfection; and also to the extent of his Power and Omnipotence: which is too bold and adventurous.

I answer, Touching the Goodness of God, and the necessity of his communication thereof, I have before said enough in the Second Chapter, I shall not repeat it: But as touching the other restraint upon his Omnipotence, I say, the denying of Power in God to make a Creature, especially a successive created Nature as ancient as himself, is no more a derogation from his Power, than to deny him Power to make a Creature as great, and as good, and as powerful as himself: The Infinity of his Duration is a part of the Divine Perfection (in my judgment) incommunicable to any created Being, and it is part of the eminence, and excellence, and transcendence of that Divine Perfection, as well as others that are not communicable to any created Being. But secondly, Suppose

Suppose that Eternity might be communicated to any created Being, as for the purpose, to the more pure Mental Natures, yet I do not disparage the Omnipotence of God when I say it is not communicable to a successive Being that is *in fluxu*; not for want of Power in God, but for want of Capacity in the nature of the thing to sustain such a duration upon the intrinsecal incongruity of the one to the other: It would not be a derogation to the Divine Omnipotence, to deny that the Diagonal of a Square should be commensurate in length to the Sides, for the nature of the thing will not bear it.

3. *Object.* But a late Author hath with ostentation enough produced an Argument whereby all those Reasons and Instances concerning the impossibility and absurdity of infinite Generations, infinite Individuals, and infinite Motion supposed to have actually existed, are easily discharged, and therefore he concludes, that notwithstanding all that hath been said, the Generations of Men might have been actually eternal, and that there may be infinite numbers of successive Men, Generations and Revolutions, and that consequently it is not repugnant that infinite may be greater than infinite, that there be infinite Days, and Years, and Men, and yet in that infinite 365 times more Days than Years, yet both infinite, the number of Men infinite, and yet the number of their Hands or Eyes double to the number of the Men: That the Supposition that these are contradictions, are but mistakes and delusions of our Understanding not able well to digest the business of Eternal, Immenſe, or Infinite. And this he thinks he proves by two principal Instances which he thinks are unquestionable.

1. That there is and would be such a thing as Duration, and that duration would be successive though there were no being *in rerum natura*, which he calls *tempus aeternum*.

2. That there is unquestionably an infinite Space actually: And yet all these imaginary consequences and absurdities follow upon that Supposition, which are urged as the Reasons against the successive eternal duration of Individuals above mentioned: For in that infinite space there are infinite Miles and infinite Leagues, and yet thrice so many Miles as Leagues: The extent at both the extremes of East and West infinite, yet each extreme divided, infinite: and many such the like Instances, which yet notwithstanding avoid not the truth of an infinite extension.

To this I answer briefly in this place, (for I have elsewhere examined at large the truth of both these *Hypotheses*) I do in the first place premise, That as the excess (as I may call it) of Being, namely Infinity, is difficult to apprehend, so the defect of Being, namely Nothing, is very difficult to apprehend: When we go about to apprehend simple Nothing, yet our Imagination clothes it with something like Existence, and gives imaginary being to Nothing, before we can come to shape a thought concerning it.

And certainly Duration and Space are in themselves relative to something that doth *durare*, and something that is *spatium*, namely, something extended: And if any (thing I cannot say) but if any Conceptible is more nothing than another, Duration without a thing that dureth, and Space without a thing that is extended in it, is the veriest, the absoluteſt Nothing that can be: While they are in conjunction with the thing

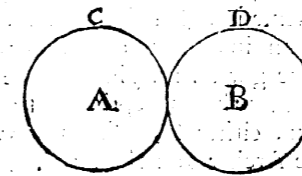
thing that sustains them, they are the meanest Being that is, for they are but modes of being; and therefore when the things that must sustain them are not, they are the pureſt nothing that can undergo the notion of Nothing.

To say there is a duration, whether successive, or permanent, or indivisible, when there is nothing that doth sustain that duration, is a Phantasm of Nothing under the notion of Something: For it is most apparent to any man that will but lay aside the Phantasm, That the duration of every thing is diversified in relation to it self, according to the nature of the thing that endures, and though it coexists with a thing that appropriates another kind of duration, as suitable to its being, yet it retains still its own duration, as appropriate to it self. Thus the duration of the glorious God is another kind of duration than that of Motion or Bodies, and yet it coexists with that duration. Nay possibly the duration of a permanent Being (we will take it, a piece of Gold) hath another kind of duration than that of Motion, that is successive: So that all the notion that we have of Duration without relation to something that endures, is a fiction that the Understanding takes up, and the Image whereby it conceives it, is partly by the successiveness of its own operations, and partly by those external measures that it finds in Motion, rendered a successive Nature, and *pars post partem*: And thus the imaginative Understanding dresseth up a Nothing, namely, Duration without a thing that endures, and then attributes to it what she finds in her self, and the things she converseth with, namely Succession, when really there is no such thing as duration or successive duration, unless there is something that doth so endure.

And that this is nothing else but a creature of the Imagination appears by this: No man alive can suppose that there is any existence of duration that is to be a thousand years hence, it rests merely in possibility, yet the Imagination will dress up that future duration under certain proportions that it borrows from the things it sees and converseth with.

And what is said of Duration without a Body that dures, is in truth to be said of Space without a Body to which it relates, and therefore well called *spatium imaginarium*.

The just apprehension of Space seems to be this, That whereſoever there is a Body actually existing to which Space relateth, there is an actual space: And therefore if we should suppose nothing to be beyond the convex Superficies of the last Heaven, yet the immediate contiguity of that convex to nothing were a real space, because it denotes a true relation to that which is, namely, the convex Superficies of the highest Arch of being: Nay, if we should suppose that the Universe were perfectly spherical, and another Universe of the same dimension and figure were created contiguous to it, as *A* and *B*, though they were contiguous only in the point of contingency, yet their two imaginary Poles *C* and *D* would have really a space between, which would be commensurate to the Semidiameter of both Spheres, for still there is a real distance between the parts of two Bodies, and from that relation ariseth



arifeth a real space : So if the Air within a concave Sphere or Cube were annihilated or not there, yet there would be a real space between the sides of the Cube or Sphere though no Body intervened, because still there remained the ambient sides, to which that space may as well relate and be commensurate, as if the vacant space were full of Air.

But without relation to some Body, there can be no actual Space; for Space is a term merely of relation to something that is *spatiatum*.

But then comes in the Author, and brings *Lucretius* with him, and tells us, that before the World was there was Space, or otherwise how could there be room for the Universe unless there were space to receive it: and supposeth that if an Archer were upon the convex Superficies of the Heaven there would be space for him, and if he shot his Arrow upward, there would be space for that Arrow to fly, or else the Arrow would not move from the string.

And all this is very true, and yet it proves nothing of real Space beyond the confines and relation of Bodies.

But as in relation to the infinite active Power of God, nothing had (as it were) a passive potentiality to be something, to be a Body, to be a World, so consequently nothing had a potentiality, as I may call it, to become Space when the World was made, and together with the production of Body there was a production of Space: As if at this day in the sunshine there should be produced an opacous Body, together with it the shadow would be produced: and as the shadow, though really nothing when there was no opacous Body, had a kind of potentiality to be, upon the existence of that Body, so this abyss of Nothing had a kind of potentiality to be Space, when something was produced to which it might have relation, as *quid spatiatum*.

And the same Answer is most clearly evident, as to *Lucretius* his Archer.

There was nothing, and therefore no space, till the Archer came to the convex of the uppermost Heaven, but only a potentiality, if I may so call it, to receive him when he was there; and when he shot up his Arrow, that space that really was not before, but only potentially to serve a Body when it comes there, now becomes space for the flight and return of his Arrow; but when it was returned, now the space no more existed for the Arrow, nor for the Archer after his coming from the convex of the highest Heaven: so that though nothing may be space when it hath a Body to which it may relate, yet till that relation it is not space, but nothing.

And certainly that which imposeth upon persons to assert an infinite Space, is this: Their Imagination and Phantasie doth first create a Phantasm, that doth *subire vices corporis*, and they fill an imaginary space or an imaginary extension with that Phantasm, and then indeed they have got an imaginary space; I say, their Phantasie and Imagination follows the conception of the imaginary space with an imaginary extension, either supposing the World infinitely extended, or else fancying the Archer and the Arrow, and when that is handsomely fancied, the Phantasm it self doth effectually in the Imagination serve the turn to make up a relation between a Body and it, though really there be neither infinite Body, nor infinite Space, till the Body comes to give it its relation.

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And if men will needs be concluding, that because I cannot deliver my self from the apprehension of space *ultra pomeria caeli*, therefore it must be supposed really to be; we shall find another imagination hardly able to deliver it self from the apprehension of something beyond the last Heavens, and again something beyond that, because it cannot frame to it self an apprehension of nothing, or of any space to be without a Body in it; and so upon the same reason prove the World infinitely extended.

And yet I appeal to the Phantasie of these very men which either suppose an infinite empty Space, or an infinite World, whether they can bring their Imagination to such a discipline as to suppose this Infinitude all together, but are fain to go on from one step to another, and to think first of a space larger than the Heavens, and then of a space larger than that, and so gradually; so that if Imagination should be a sufficient *medium* to prove a real existence, it would only prove an indefinite space or extension, not a space or extension actually infinite; for Imagination will never be able *per saltum* to conceive actually Infinite, nor without an Image of Existence to conceive that which actually is not.

Therefore it seems to me to be too precarious an Argumentation against the strong evidence of Reason, to prove the existence of an infinite Space or infinite Body, barely by bold affirming it; or because a man's Phantasie, or Imagination, or Intellect being accustomed to the knowledge only of things extended and real space, cannot deliver it self from the thought of an imaginary space or exteat, though there were nothing in the World to sustain it.

And upon this account a late Excellent Author hath used a very incongruous *medium* to prove a most certain and important Truth, namely, the existence of God, because there was really a Space before the World was created: Whereas first of all, there could be no Space without a Body; and secondly, if there could be such a Space, it were of a divisible existence, which could hold no proportion with the indivisible nature of the glorious God; Space being *quid extensum*, and divisible; but the Essence of God purely spiritual and indivisible, and equally immense, whether there were a World or no World, Space or no Space.

4. The Fourth *Objection* is this: That it seems that it is not inconsistent that one Infinite should be larger than another, and yet both infinite: Instances may be given of two kinds, 1. One Infinite in Intension may be larger than another; there are degrees of perfection in Created Natures, a Brute is more perfect than a Vegetable, and a Man more perfect than a Brute; and an Angel more perfect than a Man, and one Angel more perfect than another, at least gradually; and consequently the Perfection of Almighty God must more infinitely exceed the perfection of a Man than it doth of an Angel, and more infinitely exceed the perfection of an Angel of an inferiour Order than an Angel of the supreme Order, and yet He infinitely exceeds the perfection of the most perfect Angel. 2. In Extension, or somewhat analagous to it: Certainly the the Eternal God had an eternal duration the first moment that he had Created the World as he hath now, and yet with Humility and Reverence in so great a Mystry, we may say, and that truly, that he hath endured at this day above five thousand years longer than he had endured

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at the Creation of the World: so that it is not repugnant to the nature of Eternity to be longer or shorter.

I answer, That for the obviating of this difficulty I have willingly declined that Instance against the eternal succession of Mankind that purely consists upon the account of additional accessions to the latter end, as I may call it, of Eternal Duration.

But first, I say that this answers not at all the Reason given, the stress whereof rests not upon the incompetibility of an excess of one Infinity above another either in Intension or Extension, but the incompetibility of any multitude to be infinite, because it is impossible that any number or multitude can be infinite if there can be another multitude or number given that exceeds it, which will fall out in the successive Individuals and Generations of Men: But the glorious God, as he is most simply and indivisibly One, and all his Perfections essentially and indivisibly the same with his most One and indivisible Being; so the infinite excesses both of his Essential Perfections and of his Eternal Duration beyond all other Beings, are not measurable by multitude or number of degrees or successive moments, which would in it self imply either parts or divisibility, but exceeds them all by an infinite interval that neither hath nor can have any bounds or limits: As his Perfection is infinitely greater than the perfection of a Man, so it is infinitely greater than the perfection of an Angel; and were it not infinitely greater than the perfection of an Angel, it could not be infinitely greater than the perfection of a Man, because the intensive distance between the perfection of an Angel and of a Man is but finite: And therefore though that interval between an Angelical and a Humane perfection be subducted out of the extent of the Divine Perfection, still the extent of the Divine Perfection is infinite; for what is so subtracted or subducted out of the extent of the Divine Perfection, leaves still a Quotient, if I may so call it, Infinite.

Secondly, That which gives a clear Answer to the Instance is this: The Perfection of Almighty God is a Primitive Essential Perfection, antecedent to all created perfection; and all created perfection is a perfection indeed given by the glorious God, according to such measures and degrees as he is pleased to bestow: But as it is a derivative perfection, so it is a distinct kind of perfection from that which is in God, and of another nature, and makes no alteration in the Divine Perfection, nor borrows any of it: The glorious God was equally perfect before a Brute, or a Man, or an Angel, or a World was created, as he was after; and the production of Creatures of various degrees of essential perfection contributes nothing to it, nor takes any thing from it, nor makes any alteration in it: only it gives a new or farther relation from the Creature new created unto the Creator, and that in those various ranks or degrees of perfection is indeed diversified by disparity in the Creatures themselves, and in that comparative preference that one hath above another; but still it is without and below the essential infinite Perfection of God, and doth no way affect or alter it. Take this Example in some measure to explain my meaning; I have a Rod of six foot long in my Hand, I take another Rod of four foot, another of two foot long, and apply them to my Rod of six foot long; I thereby find that my Rod of four foot takes up a greater space upon my Rod of six foot than that of two foot, yet it makes

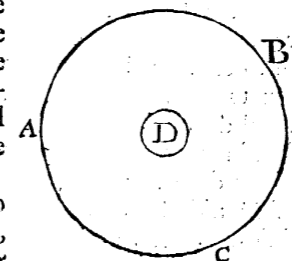
makes no alteration in my Rod of six foot, but that continues of the same length as before, only by the application of the shorter Rods to it there ariseth a new relation, or rather variety of comparison between the Rod of six foot and the other Rods. Thus the Divine Perfection is primitive, absolute, unchangeable; and when a Man is created, there is a Creature made that hath a perfection greater than a Brute, and when an Angel is created, he hath a perfection greater than a Man, and thereby comes in a nearer degree or likeness of perfection to the Divine Excellence than a Man doth; but yet it doth not at all alter that Perfection that is primitively and essentially and infinitely in Almighty God, but is a perfection of quite another kind as well as degree.

And upon the same account it is, that although the extent of the Divine Duration is now greater than it was five or ten thousand years since, yet the duration of the Divine Existence was no less infinite ten thousand years since than it is now; because the duration of ten thousand years is but finite, and therefore though taken out of an infinite duration, leaves still the duration infinite; for finite taken out of infinite, leaves still that which remains infinite.

Besides, the duration of the glorious God is the duration of such a Being as is indivisible, and as he hath no divisibility in himself, so neither is his Eternal Duration divisible into parts.

It is true, that when his own Power hath produced a World, and with it Motion, he coexists with that Motion and successive Duration of created Being, which is little else besides a relation to the things existing: And therefore he cannot be said now to coexist with that which yet is not, but shall be, because the coexistence with any thing imports an existence of both the terms of that relation: And although by reason of that relation to Beings that are successive and have succession of parts, as Local Motion, or successive Generations; it seems to us that he hath a kind of succession in his duration, yet most certainly the existence of a divisible succession in created Beings doth no more make his duration successive than if nothing had been besides himself: As the unsuccessive duration of Almighty God with relation to himself, which is the *modus existentiae divinae*, doth not communicate unto Motion or other created Being the same manner of duration which is appropriate to the Divine Existence; so neither doth the existence of Motion or created Beings transfer to the Divine Being such a kind of duration as is proper to them, namely, a divisible successive duration consisting of successive and innumerable parts: For, as I before have observed, the duration of every thing, which is only the mode of its existence or *permanentia in suo esse*, is diversified according to the nature of the existence thereof. And though by reason of the coexistence of one thing with another there ariseth a various relation or connotation between them, yet it alters not that intrinsecal manner of duration that is appropriate to the Essences of the things themselves.

If we should suppose the Circle *ABC* to move about a fixed unmoveable Center at *D*, whereby the part that is now in *A*, an hour



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hence will be at *B*, and an hour after that at *C*, and thereby is gained successively different relations of site or position between the fixed or stable central Body at *D*, yet it is without any variation either of *situs* or motion in the central Body at *D*, which all this while rests unmoveable, and keeps the same unaltered site or position in it self: So it is in the coexistence of successive Beings with the indivisible, fixed, permanent state of the glorious God.

But in all this there is nothing that answers or weakens the Reason before given against the Eternity of successive Generations or Individuals, which is not upon this account, that that which is eternal cannot be extended to a greater extent at the hithermost and concluding extreme, as I may call it, for at the hither end it is *quasi quid finitum*; but that those Beings that must by their successive existence *excrescere in multitudinem sive numerum*, cannot be eternal upon a certain intrinsic incongruity between Multitude and Number of the one part, and Infinite of the other part: But in the eternal duration of the glorious God there is neither Multitude, nor so much as Succession. And this is my second Answer.

3. My third Answer is this: That although it may be, and certainly is consistent with an eternal duration, that it may be shorter, or it may be longer upon the hither end thereof, namely, that extreme wherein it is finite, as is before shewn; yet it is impossible to be consistent with the very notion of an eternal duration to be longer or shorter, *à parte ante*, in the extreme or remote part thereof, as I may call it; for upon that Supposition it should be *utrinque clausa*, terminated in the moment wherein I write, and terminated or limited by an antecedent being or duration of something else: (With Reverence be it spoken) If any thing in the compass of Nature might bear an eternal Creation, yet if that Creation were but a moment after the Divine Existence, that created Being could not be eternal because it had a pre-existence of the Divine Being before it: Nay, though I use the expression of an antecedent moment to render my conception, yet that very imaginable moment must be an infinite duration antecedent to that created Being; and it could not possibly be otherwise; for if it were possible to be otherwise, it would consequently deny the Eternity of God himself: for that created Being being impossible to be eternal, since it must, *ex suppositione*, have a pre-existing moment of the Divine Existence, if that *mora pre-existentia divine* were not eternal, but a moment, or any limited duration less than eternal and infinite, it would be but an addition of a limited time to a limited or non-eternal time; and therefore cannot be eternal (and here by the way, the Eternal, Incomprehensible Generation of the Son, and Procession of the Holy Spirit are no way concerned in this Dispute, which are not created Beings, nor distinct from the Divine Essence, or essentially distinct from one another, but One Incomprehensible God Blessed for ever) though under a personal distinction.

This therefore being the true state of the matter, the Reason herein given doth not at all infirm the important Reason against the Eternity of Mankind, because necessarily there would upon such a Supposition follow an Eternity that had a beginning, an Eternity that was puisne to some other thing or some other Eternal: And that although that duration

duration which is infinite in one extreme, namely, *à parte ante*, and finite at another extreme, namely by the present time, may have an increase, accession, or addition in that part in which it is finite; yet it is impossible that it should have any thing before it in that extreme wherein its Infinity and Eternity consisted. This is the chief stress of the former Debate, which is no way impugned by the Instance here given; for the glorious God and his Eternal Existence is such, that it hath not, cannot have any thing antecedent to it; neither is it measured by successive parts, but is simply eternal, infinite, before all things, without beginning of Being or Duration as well as without end; and such a Duration, as it is impossible to suppose any thing before it, or any thing equally ancient to it; but ever was, and ever had Being or Existence, that is, eternally and immutably the same; what once he was he ever was, still is, and ever shall be.

5. A Fifth *Objection* is this: That because we have formerly supposed that nothing can possibly be eternal, and together with it have variety of Operations. The glorious Eternal God hath variety of Operations in all the Works of Creation and Providence, his emanant Actions; and also in the Counsels and Determination of his Will, his immanent Actions: And therefore the Position seems to be derogatory to the Eternity of Almighty God.

I had not inserted this *Objection* but for the fuller vindication of the Truth, and to shew, that it no way in the least imaginable degree derogates from the Truths concerning God.

I therefore answer, that when we are speaking of alterations or changes, it may reasonably be supposed to be one of these kinds.

1. An alteration that with it carries a change of the Nature or Essence of a thing; and thus in a large sense generation or corruption, or the essential change of any thing or Being into another thing; thus corporeal Matter under any determinate form is changeable, and such a mutability is impossible to be consistent with Eternity: and it is thus impossible for the glorious God to be subject to any change, for he necessarily and therefore eternally exists, and must ever exist.

2. An alteration of states or conditions of any Being, which yet as to its essential condition persists as before: thus Bodies are every moment changed, sometimes in quality, as from hot to cold, sometimes in figure, sometimes in dimensions, as the motions of augmentation and diminution; a Child grows unto the stature of a Youth, and then of a Man; and such Beings as these cannot sustain an eternal duration, *à parte ante*: and in this respect the ever-glorious God is perfectly unchangeable, without so much as a shadow of change, but eternally and immutably the same.

3. A change of the internal and immanent acts of the Understanding and Will in a Being endued therewith; as to know that which before it knew not, to will, purpose, or determine what before it willed not or purposed not. The Schoolmen are indeed many of them a Generation of Men that think they can give an estimate of the manner of the Divine Operations, even those that are immanent, when yet God knows 'tis more possible for the Infant of a span long to discern and understand and

and define and determin the most sublime and abstruse Notions of the most Seraphical Doctor, than for such a Doctor to give an estimate of the hidden Operations of the Divine Intellect and Will: And therefore they are too bold to adventure upon such determinations touching these Operations of the glorious God; and in the upshot arrive at nothing touching them but presumptuous, uncertain and dangerous Speculations: and it must needs be so, for as the Heavens are higher than the Earth, so and much more are the thoughts of the unsearchable God higher than our thoughts. The more sober and weighty part of the Schoolmen do conclude this Question in the negative, and assert, That Almighty God by one eternal act knew all things from all Eternity, and by the like eternal act willed from all Eternity what he any way willed, and though the termination of that Will respected Objects that neither were nor could be eternal, yet his Knowledge and Will was eternally the same as ever; and he begins not to know any thing which he did not eternally know, nor to will any thing which he did not eternally will, though the execution of that Will respects things to be done in time and futurity. And certainly as this is the most probable Opinion, so it takes away the pretence of the Objection; the immanent Acts and Operations of the glorious God being eternal and without change.

It is true, some late Schoolmen, and after them *Clara* in his 4<sup>th</sup> Problem seems to assert, that, *Divina voluntas potest velle aliquid novum sine mutatione sui.*

But suppose that this Supposition were admissible; yet this would not any way be inconsistent with the Eternity of the Divine Nature and Essence: 1. This is no Physical change in Almighty God, but a voluntary and free operation of his Will, which possibly was so at first willed by him to be changed according as he saw cause in his infinite Wisdom. 2. That this which is here called a change of his Will, is not in truth a change of his Will, but a change in the Object, which only seems to make a diversification of the Will, but indeed is the same Will diversified only in the habitude to the Object. The Will of God is like a straight unalterable Rule or Line, but the various comportments of the Creature either thwarting this Rule or holding conformity to it, occasions several habitudes of this Rule unto it. We need no better explication hereof than that of the Prophet *Ezekiel*, Chap. 33. from the twelfth to the twentieth Verse.

4. A change of Actions and Operations in relation to some external Object, or terminated therein; and such a change as this is consistent with an Eternal Being, though the change happen in any given portion of Time: Thus the Almighty and Eternal God created the World by his Power and Will in the beginning of Time, and orders, governs and disposeth of the things by his Providence in all the Periods of Time, and yet without any Physical or real change in himself. And thus he began to be a Creator, when before he was not a Creator; and began to be a Governour of the World after it was made, and exerciseth divers external acts of his Providence daily which before he did not. For those various acts of his are terminated in such Objects as neither were nor could be eternal, namely, the World and the Government thereof: And although he thereby gain a change of relation or relative denomination,

nation, yet it is no real or Physical change in himself. For all relations arise from the supposition of existence of both the terms of relation, as between the Creator and the thing created, and the Governour and thing governed; and therefore although one of the terms of that relation, namely the Eternal God, had an eternal existence in his own absolute nature; yet the World, that was the other term of relation, had no eternal existence, but was created in the beginning of Time, and the relation of a Creator or Governour must necessarily therefore arise in Time, and not from Eternity, because one of the terms of the relation, namely the World, had not any existence before Time began.

But in the eternal Generation of the Son and Procession of the Holy Spirit, the *termini relationis* were all eternal, and consequently the relation of Paternity and Filiation between the First and Second Person, and the relation between the Sacred Persons of the Trinity and the denomination thereof must needs be eternal, because the terms of relation between whom that relation ariseth were eternal: But it is not so between the Eternal God and a temporary World, for the relation could not arise till the World had an existence; and a change or acquest of a new relation is not at all any real change in God, but is an accident resulting from the existence of both the *termini*, and can be no ancients than the coexistence even of the latest and newest of those terms, which if began in time must necessarily produce a new relation, yet without any real change in the pre-existing and eternal God.

And thus I have done with those Physical and Metaphysical Evidences of the Inception of the World and of Mankind, and against the Eternity of both. And although I shall descend in the ensuing Section to Moral Evidences of probability strongly perswading the same Truth, yet I lay the principal weight and stress of this Argument upon what is laid in the preceding Chapters of this First Section, which though perchance they may have something of obscurity, as being bottomed upon and fetched from the true nature of the things themselves, and therefore not so obvious and plain to all Capacities, yet they have a conclusency in them not inferior, or at least little inferior to Demonstrations.



## S E C T. II.

## C A P. I.

*The Proofs of Fact, that seem with the greatest Moral evidence to evince the Inception of Mankind: And first, touching the Antiquity or Novity of History.*

I Have now done with those Evidences that in my Understanding seem, *quasi ab intrinseco*, to evince the Inception of Mankind from that intrinsecal impossibility and inconsistency that the Supposition of the eternal existence thereof bears with his Nature: I now descend to the examination of those Evidences of Fact, which do or may seem to contribute to the proof of what is designed, namely, *Novitatem generis humani*.

And although that Evidences of Fact of things remote from our Sense cannot be said infallible and demonstrative, because the nature of such matters of fact (simply as they are matters of fact) is not capable (as such) of Demonstration; yet they may be Evidences of high credibility, and such as no reasonable Man can with any just reason deny his assent unto them.

That which hath been, hath as certainly and infallibly, yea and as necessarily been, as that which is: *Omne quod est, dum est necessarium est, & omne quod fuit, cum jam preterit necessarium fuit quando fuit, & in preteritis non est contingentia*. Only that which is, and is obvious to Sense, hath this advantage of evidence which that which hath been wants, namely, the immediate evidence of Sense, wherein though it is not universally impossible but that Sense may be deceived, yet because it is the best evidence that we have of matters of fact, we give credit to it as a sensible evidence, and we have reason so to do.

But of things transacted before our time, and out of the immediate reach of our Sense, we may have such an evidence as in reason we ought as reasonable Men to acquiesce in, though the evidence be still in its own nature but moral, and not simply demonstrative or infallible: And the variety of circumstances renders the credibility of such things more or less, according to the various ingredients and contributions of credibility that are concentred in such an evidence.

It is impossible to demonstrate by evidence infallible (or which is all one, by evidence that is impossible to be false) that there was such a Man as *Julius Caesar* or *Augustus*, that there was such a Man as *William* the Conqueror, or King *Henry* the Eighth, or that such a Man was his Father, or such a Woman his Mother; or that there is such a City as *Venice*, or *Rome*, (to me that never saw it,) for all these I have but by relation from others, and it is not impossible but those Histories or informations or relations by which I am informed of these things may be false: And they

they are such matters as have in them a less evidence than my own Sense of Sight; for the evidence of my Sense is simple and immediate, and therefore I have but a shorter cut thereby to the assent to the truth of the things so evidenced: But in things that I have by relation from others, my evidence is of greater distance; for first, I see them not by my own Eyes, but it is others that must first see the thing they relate; and secondly, though I should think that whatsoever might be believed, if obvious to the Sense of others, might have as great a credibility as if obvious to my own, yet I must have a second postulation that must have an ingredient to elicit my assent, namely, the veracity of him that reports and relates it. And hence it is, that that which is reported by many Eye-witnesses hath greater motives of credibility than that which is reported by few; that which is reported by credible and authentick witnesses, than that which is reported by light and inconsiderable witnesses; that which is reported by persons disinterested, than that which is reported by persons whose interest it is to have the thing true, or believed to be true; that which hath the concurring testimony of real existing monuments, than that which is without them; and finally, that which is reported by credible persons of their own view, than that which they receive by hear-say from those that report upon their own view: So that it is not with Evidences of Fact as it is with Logical or Mathematical Demonstrations, which seem to consist in indivisibles, for that which thus is demonstratively true is impossible to be false; but Moral Evidence is gradual, according to the variety of circumstances. Yet such a man would be exploded as an irrational man, that will not believe there was such a man as *Julius Caesar*, because the Historians that write of him might possibly conspire to deceive the World with a Romance, or that the Books may be supposititious or corrupted; or will not believe that such a Man was his Father, or such a Woman his Mother, because he might be supposititious; or will not believe there is such a City as *Rome*, which he never saw, because Travellers are wont to love to tell strange things, and so may many as well as one.

So that as eternal Truths may have one kind of certainty by Logical Demonstration, and as Mathematical Conclusions have an infallible certainty by Mathematical Demonstration, and as matters objected immediately to our Sense have another kind of certainty by sensible evidence, so matters simply of fact not objected immediately to our Sense have another kind of certainty, though not altogether equal to the former, nor simply infallible, yet so highly credible that may justly elicit the assent of reasonable men, and such as is proportionate to the nature of the thing, and therefore more cannot be reasonably expected for the proof of the fact.

In the pursuance of this Argument, namely, Evidences of Fact touching the Origination of Mankind, I must therefore say that the Evidences thereof are not of an infallible certainty, and so much the rather because it relates to a matter that at the nearest that can be supposed is near six thousand years distant from us, and some suppose more; therefore the Evidences of Fact are as it were percolated through a vast Period of Ages, and many very obscure to us. And therefore all Proofs of this kind except that of Divine Revelation (which though true, and infallibly true,

we must not by the Laws of Argumentation bring in here, because at one word it determins the Question) will arise to no higher than Moral, and therefore fallible in their own nature. We rest upon what hath been before said for Evidences and Reasons, that to me seem demonstrative.

But yet the Evidences of Fact which we shall produce must be considered also with these Advantages for their credibility.

1. They are such as bear a great congruity and consonancy with, and subservience to those former Arguments that *ex natura rei* and *intrinsecè* prove an impossibility of an eternal duration of Mankind, *à parte ante*, which though it doth not, cannot evince that Mankind must have their Origination or Beginning *in hac vel ista hora*, yet they do evince that Beginning it must have, and the evidences of fact are as so many *testes, testes, or suffragiales*, that bear witness to that Truth that the former sort of Arguments do plainly evince.

2. Though these Evidences of Fact taken singly and apart, are not without their Objections that may seem to weaken them, yet *juncta juvant*: That evidence at Law which taken singly or apart makes but an imperfect proof, *semiplena probatio*, yet in conjunction with others grow to a full proof, like *Silurus* his twigs, that were easily broken apart, but in conjunction or union were not to be broken.

Truths (especially of Fact) are not made Truths by Arguments or Evidence: If there were once such a man as *Cesar*, it is most certainly true that he was, though no Historian ever mentioned him; and therefore if there were ten thousand Authors that mention him kept sacredly and inviolably in certain Archives unto this day, all this evidence doth not make him to be, but only gives us a light and evidence of great probability that he was: The Stars in the Milky-way, and those *Astellæ Jovis* are not therefore in the Heavens or *Aether*, because the Telescope hath discovered them, for they were there before, but the position of those Glasses present them to our perception, and evidence their being, which cannot be discovered without them.

And so it is with Evidences of Fact, they do not make the thing to be, but evidence them to be, and because if to any one *quisitum* of fact there be many but probable evidences, which taken singly have not perchance any full evidence, yet when many of those evidences concur and center in the evidence of the same thing, their very multiplicity and consent makes the evidence the stronger, as the concurrent testimonies of many Witnesses or many Circumstances even by their multiplicity and concurrence make an evidence more conclusive.

Now these Evidences of Fact I shall cast into these ranks.

1. We have no authentical History of former Ages extant, but what hath been written within the compass of four thousand years.

2. The subject matter of those Histories give us no account of the Original of great Monarchies, Kingdoms, or Commonwealths, but what appear thereby to have begun within the compass of about five thousand years.

3. The original Invention and Inventors of most considerable Arts had their Origination, as far as we can find, by Monuments of ancient times, within the compass of about six thousand years.

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4. The Original of the *Apotheoses* of most of the Heathen fictitious Deities appears by the ancient Monuments of former times to have had their beginning within the compass of five thousand years.

5. The most authentick Histories and Monuments of Antiquity give us an account of the first Fathers, or *Capita familiarum*, and of the Plantation of the known Parts, Continents and Islands of the World within the compass of five thousand years.

6. The Inhabitants of the World do daily increase, and their increment surmounts daily their decrease, which could not be, unless the World of Mankind had their original within some proportionate time, and could not consist with such a vast excess of duration which some would assign, much less with an eternal duration, or such as never had a beginning.

7. There hath in all Ages, and among all People been a constant tradition retained and believed, touching the Origination of Mankind *ex non genitis vel per generationem propagatis*.

These are the Heads of those Evidences of Fact which I shall use in this Argument touching the Origination of Mankind, whereunto possibly other occasional Topicks of the like nature may be added,

And touching these Evidences of Fact, this I shall subjoyn.

1. That I do not lay the weight of this Argument upon those Evidences of Fact, because they have or may have their several allays and fallibilities, which I shall impartially subjoyn to every particular Topick.

But I lay the weight of the Argument upon what hath been before said, which to me seems to be little less than demonstrative, drawn from the intrinsic nature of the thing, and from that absurdity which would arise upon the Supposition of the Eternity of Mankind, and the impossibility of an eternal duration, *à parte ante*, to successive Natures.

2. That although singly and apart these Evidences of Fact are not so conclusive but have their allays and exceptions, yet they have these advantages that advance their evidence, as very credible, 1. In that the Supposition which they are produced to prove, is not impossible to be true:

2. That there is nothing of probability of Reason or Instance that can be produced against the truth of that Supposition which is contended to be proved by them: 3. They have so much the more weight and evidence, in that they do suffragate and bear witness to the truth of that Supposition (namely, the Inception of Mankind) which holds so great a congruity with the intrinsic reason and nature of the thing, the contrary whereof, namely, the Eternity of Mankind, is apparently contradictory to a strict and true reason.

3. That although these Evidences of Fact, taken singly and apart, possibly may not be so weighty, yet the very concurrence and coincidence of so many Evidences that contribute to the Proof of the thing designed, carries with it a great weight, even as to the point of Fact: it is not probable that that Supposition should be false which hath so many concurrent Testimonies bearing witness to it: And therefore although I shall impartially subjoyn those Allays and Abatements which may be brought against the several Instances, whereby if single, they might seem of less weight and moment; yet I do not thereby take off that Evidence

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which in confort and conjunction they give to the truth of the Supposition intended to be proved by them.

4. That it cannot be expected in an Argument of this nature, which is touching a matter of Fact, that Evidences of Fact can be no more than topical and probable; and therefore though there may be Allays and Abatements that may take away a necessary or infallible conclusency in these Evidences of Fact, yet it is sufficient that they be probable and inductive of Credibility, though not of Science or Infallibility. *Aristotle*, as I remember, in the beginning of his *Politicks* tells us that all Truths have not the same kind of Evidence, neither indeed can have, and therefore it is unreasonable to expect such an Evidence as the thing cannot possibly bear, though it be a real Truth.

5. That among these Evidences of Fact, though all contribute to the Proof of the Supposition, yet the three last seem to be of that nature that they are of greatest weight, and less subject to exception.

6. That in as much as in this Argument I design only the use of Reason and Reasonable Evidence, and endeavour to make my Supposition evident to Reasonable Men as such; I do not therefore make use of the divine and irrefragable Authority of the Holy Scriptures: For they that subscribe to the Infallibility and Divine Authority of them, need none of this Method of Ratiocination that I use to prove this Supposition of the Origination of Mankind, which is so plainly and distinctly delivered in the Holy Scriptures; and therefore where I have recourse to the Holy Scriptures, I use it but as a Moral Evidence, a History highly credible; and I demand of my Readers this equal Justice, That he would at least give it that credit that the Antiquity, Congruity, and Moral Evidence of it deserves, which certainly would be much more than what the most do ordinarily allow to the History of *Thucydides*, *Herodotus*, *Livy*, *Tacitus*, *Manethon*, *Xenophon*, *Ctesias*, or *Berosus*.

7. Though in this large Discourse I may seem to lose time by proving of that which is not questioned by sober Men, that in a laborious Discourse of this nature I do rather raise a Question that would be at quiet if let alone, at least I lose time, and, *magno conatu nihil efficiam*; yet I hope in the Conclusion it will be of use to confirm our Faith, to magnifie the value of the Holy Scriptures, and to give some stop to those *Atheistical* and *Epicurean* Opinions that begin more than formerly to obtain in the World.

## C A P. II.

Concerning the first Evidence, the Antiquity of History, and the Chronological account of Times.

**B**UT before I begin, I shall prefix a short Chronological Scheme of Times, to which I shall have occasion oftentimes to refer; wherein I shall not be over-sollicitous for great curiosity or exactness. For although there is scarce any one Chronological Writer that differs not from another in the precise connexion of Times and Things, yet there will

will be certainty enough for my purpose, if I take so much out of them wherein they do in substance agree, though they differ in their particular Account.

And although the Account of the Years of the World according to the *Seventy*, do seem more useful to the solution of some difficulties in Chronology, who assign 2262 years from the Creation to the Flood, and from thence to the Birth of *Abraham* 1132 years; whereas the *Jewish* Account assigns for the former Period 1656 years, and for the latter 292 years. So that according to the *Seventy*, from the Creation to the Birth of *Abraham* were 3394, but according to the *Jews* only 1948 years; yet I shall rather choose to follow the *Jewish* Account, and take *Helvicus* Abstract for my little, small Chronological Table.

Anni Mundi.	JUDAICI.	ASSYRII.	ARGIVI.	ÆGYPTII.	ATHENIENSES.	HISTORICI.
1656	<i>Diluvium.</i>					
8171		<i>Belus.</i>				
1771		<i>Ninus.</i>				
1823		<i>Semiramis.</i>				
1870		<i>Ninus.</i> <i>Sardanapalus.</i>				
1948	<i>Abraham natus.</i>					
2093			<i>Inachus.</i>			
2123	<i>Abrahami mors.</i>					
2149			<i>Phoroneus.</i> <i>Regnante in Attica Ogyge, &amp; intra annos Phoronei, diluvium Ogygium.</i>			
2200			<i>Apis.</i>	<i>Ægyptiorum dynastia: The-mosis.</i>		
2210						
2220	<i>Joseph in Ægypto.</i>					
2235			<i>Argus.</i>			
2300						<i>Promethei seculum.</i>
2373	<i>Moses natus.</i>					

Anni Mundi.	JUDAICI.	ASSYRII.	ARGIVI.	ÆGYPTII.	ATHENIENSES.	HISTORICI.
2430					Athenien- fium dynastia prima : Cecrops.	Deucalioni diluvium.
2450	Exitus ab Egypto.		Danaus.			
2475						
2490	Jofhua dux.					Garymedis raptus.
2573						
2660			Cadmus e Phœnicia in Græciam migravit.			Hercules Amphitryo- nis filius.
2710						Argonau- tarum expedi- ditio.
2750						Bellum Tro- janum, & Troja exci- dium.
2850						Reditus He- raclidarum.
2905	David Rex Israelis.					Ionica mi- gratio.
3000						Homeri atq.
3060	Athalia & Joas.					Lycurgus legiflator.
3175	Uzziab.					Olympiades incepti.
3195						Roma con- dita.
3325						Solon & fe- ptem Sapien- tes.
3391						Pythagoras, Cyrus.

Having premifed thus much touching the Chronological Account of some Times and Things past, without confining my self to the exactness of Years, and with omission of many things happening in these Periods; I shall now proceed with the first of my Instances, namely, touching the Histories of former Ages, and their Antiquity; reserving the

the matter of their Histories, and what may be collected from them, to the ensuing Chapters.

Those Nations whose Historians put fair for the greatest Antiquity, are the Romans, Grecians, Persians, Assyrians or Babylonians, Egyptians, and the Jews: of all these there is something extant.

As touching the Chinese and their long derived Annals, there is much spoken by report or relation, but nothing authentick thereof is extant to the common view but some ingenious yet uncertain Collections out of *Martinus* by Mr. *Webb* in his Essay touching the Primitive Language; *Vossius*, and some others: and therefore I shall spare any thing touching them.

First touching the Romans, though there were many Monuments of Antiquity preserved in writing among them, as appears by their Laws of Twelve Tables, their *Fasti Consulares*, the Transcripts whereof are extant to this day; yet we cannot expect so much Antiquity of Historians and Writers among these, as we may among other People of greater Antiquity; since the first Foundation of their City was some time after the *Olympiads* began, viz. in the 7<sup>th</sup> *Olympiad*, and about the year of the World 3190.

The Grecians, whose Monarchy preceded that of the Romans, have more ancient Historians than the Romans: And not to reckon up their Philosophers and Poets, that applied not themselves to History, I shall only mention these that follow: *Xenophon*, that lived about the 97<sup>th</sup> or 98<sup>th</sup> *Olympiad*; *Thucydides* and *Herodotus*, who lived about the 85<sup>th</sup> or 88<sup>th</sup> *Olympiad*; but he among them of greatest note and antiquity was *Homer*, who wrote the History of the Trojan War; touching the time of his life and writing the Chronologists agree not, some making him 200 years after the Destruction of *Troy*, some more, some less; but all placing him before the first *Olympiad*, and after the Destruction of *Troy*, those two famous Epochs among the Greeks.

This is the ancientest Poetical Historian that is extant among the Greeks, although it is not unlike that many were more ancient among them, as is mentioned by *Tatianus* in *Euseb. preparat. lib. 10.* as *Linus* the Tutor of *Hercules*, *Amphion*, *Orpheus*, *Museus*, and some others; yet we have little extant of them but Poetical Raptures and Fictions, and those also but in fragments and pieces traditionally preserved in subsequent Authors.

Among the Persians, though their Monarchy were more ancient than that of Greece, yet we have less extant of Historical Writings concerning them; the ancientest that I have heard of is that of *Xenophon*, though a Grecian, and *Ctesias*, who is supposed to have lived contemporary with *Xenophon*; *Megasthenes*, a Persian Historian about the 120<sup>th</sup> *Olympiad*, out of whom *Abydenus* that wrote touching the Assyrians and Babylonians extracted many things relating to the Persians, as appears by his Fragments cited by *Euseb. lib. 9. Prepar. sect. 41.*

Touching the Chaldean or Babylonian Historians, though that Monarchy be extended to a vast Period by some of their ancient Historians, yet the ancientest credible Historians that we have concerning them are, *Berosus* who lived about the 130<sup>th</sup> *Olympiad*, and *Abydenus* before mentioned: only it is reported by *Simplicius* out of *Porphyry*, that *Calisthenes*

one of *Alexander's* Captains brought to *Aristotle* from *Babylon* a relation of their ancientest Altronomical Calculations, 1903 years before the Taking of *Babylon* by *Alexander*, which is supposed to be in the year of the World 3620 according to the *Septuagint*; which gives a probable conjecture of the Inception of the *Babylonian* Monarchy to be about 200 years before the Birth of *Abraham*.

Touching the *Phœnicians*, from whom it is supposed that not only Learning but Letters themselves were brought into *Greece* by *Cadmus*; the first and ancientest Historian is supposed to be *Sancuniathon*, who is related by *Philo Biblius* according to *Euseb. prepar. lib. 1. sect. 9.* to have been before the Destruction of *Troy*, and very near the time of *Moses*, and to have written a History à *prima Universi molitione*, and that he searched many Monuments of Antiquity: The Writings of *Mercurius Trismegistus* whom the *Egyptians* call *Thoth*, and the *arcana Ammonœorum volumina*, purged the History of former times from Fables; and gave a full account of former Ages, whose Writings *Philo Biblius* translated into *Greek*, and digested into nine Volumes, he gathered much from *Hierombal* the Priest of *Jao*, whom *Bechart* upon very probable reasons supposeth to be *Gedeon* called *Jerubbaal*; and having set up an Ephod in his City, might be supposed a Priest, and from the intercourse between them the Idol *Baal-berith* was brought from *Berith* the City of *Sancuniathon*, into *Judæa*.

Touching the *Egyptians*, they pretended to the greatest antiquity both of Government and Learning; the latter they principally derived from *Hermes*, stiled by some *Mercurius Trismegistus*, and by the *Egyptians* *Thoth*; the *Phœnicians* made claim to this man as theirs, attributed to him the Invention of Letters, of Navigation, of the Virtues of Herbs, *Euseb. lib. 1. Preparat. sect. 10. de Phœnicum Theologia*; he is supposed more ancient than *Moses*, but we have nothing authentick existing which he wrote: The ancientest Historian of the Affairs of *Egypt* was *Manethes* the *Egyptian* Priest, who lived about, or as some think, before the time of *Alexander*, he carries up the *Res Egyptiacas* to an excessive Antiquity, and yet with great particularity and pretended certainty: some account him fabulous, because he carries up the *Egyptian* Dynasties before the Flood, yea and long before the Creation; others assert the probability of the *Egyptian* Dynasties to over-reach the universal Flood, but save that prodigious excess of their numerous Years by reducing them to Months, or *Anni Lunares*, which were anciently so accounted among the *Egyptians*.

The *Egyptians* have had other Writers of their Histories, but of a later date, as *Ptolemæus Mendesium*, mentioned sometimes by *Eusebius*; and those *Arabick* Historians mentioned by *Kircher* in that Book that delivers the History of the succession of their Dynasties.

Lastly, I come to the *Jewish* History begun by *Moses*, and continued down in a clear succession and series of times till their return from the *Babylonish* Captivity and this History hath a just prelation above all the Writings of other Historians in these ensuing respects.

1. It hath the greatest and most particular certainty, and far beyond any of the Historians before mentioned; it contains the certain Periods of Times, Names, Men, Places, Actions, and all Circumstances requirable in

in a History to inform; it is not involved in Mystical expressions or Mythologies, but is plain, familiar, and intelligible.

2. It hath the greatest evidence of Truth that can be expected by a reasonable man, namely, Evidence from it self, the particularity and circumstances of the things it relates; Evidence from the ancientest Heathen Authors, especially *Sancuniathon*, *Berosus*, and *Abydenus* before mentioned; Evidence from the several parts thereof, the Book of one Age bearing witness to another, as the Books of *Josbua* to those of *Moses*, the Books of *Kings* to those of *Moses* and *Josbua*, though written in several Ages; *Evidentia rei, or facti*, there cannot be greater Evidence than the Regiment of a People for so many Ages according to the Laws given and recorded by their first Historian *Moses*, and the enjoyment of their Possessions according to the distribution of their next Historian *Josbua*.

3. It is no broken Piece, or Historical Fragment, but it is carried down from the beginning of Time to all the ensuing Ages of the *Jewish* State, without any *chasma* or interval.

4. It hath the evidence of the highest credibility that any thing of that nature is capable of, That the Books of *Moses* especially, which are the *Caput Historiæ Judaicæ*, were written by that Man *Moses*, and that he lived in that Age wherein he is supposed to write: 1. The constant uninterrupted Tradition of that Kingdom and Nation from its first coalition, even to this day. 2. The attestation of all the succeeding Writers of that Historical Series of the *Jewish* Affairs. 3. The inviolable Observation of those Laws given by *Moses* and recorded in that History, as of the Laws given by him. 4. The Suffrage of all Heathen Authors both modern and ancient, that have occasion to mention the concerns of that People.

5. It is a History that contains matters of far greater moment and antiquity than any other Writers but such as in probability made their Collections out of it, namely, of the Transactions from the first Creation of the World until the Universal Flood, and from thence to the time of him that first wrote it, namely *Moses*.

6. It is a History that was really written by *Moses*, who was far more ancient than all the Heathen Writers above mentioned (excepting only *Trismegistus*, of whose Writings we have nothing extant) and more ancient than most of those Things or Notes recorded by those most ancient Heathen Writers which for the most part filled their Books: He wrote 540 years before *Homer*; 200 years before *Sancuniathon*, according to *Bechart's* account; 300 years before the Expedition of the *Argonauts*; 350 years before the *Trojan* War; and a considerable time before the *Apotheoses* or Inaugurations of many of the Heathenish Deities. So that as the Matter of his History, so the Time of his writing is far more ancient than the writing of the most ancient Heathen Historians that are at all extant. Much of this I shall have occasion to resume and enlarge in the ensuing Chapters, yet this was necessary in this place.

The Inference that is made from hence is, That probably if the World of Mankind had been Eternal, or if it had any such vast distance from its Beginning as some suppose, we should have had Historical Monuments and Writings long before the Age of *Moses*.

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But for all this, I must needs say, this Consideration singly (I say singly) taken and weighed, maketh not much against an eternal or at least a vaster *Epocha* of the first Origination of Man than is ordinarily supposed; I shall therefore set down those allays that make against the strength of the consequence drawn from this Topick.

1. It is evident that the use of Letters and Writing were far more ancient than the time of *Moses*; the *Egyptians* and *Phœnicians* carry up the original of the invention thereof to *Mercurius Trismegistus*, which is supposed long before *Moses*: And although *Cadmus* is supposed to have brought the use of Letters out of *Phœnicia* into *Greece* some time after the Age of *Moses*, according to *Polydore Virgil, lib. 1. cap. 6.* out of *Pliny, Herodotus* and others; yet it appears by what is before mentioned, that there were in *Phœnicia* very ancient written Volumes called *Volumina Amœnorum* long before the time of *Sancuniathon*. And if we believe the Tradition of *Josephus*, the Pillars of *Seth* were extant in his time; and according to *Tertullian* some Fragments of the Writings of *Enoch* were traditionally extant in his time: But howsoever *Moses* (if he be the Author of the History of *Job*, whom some think to be contemporary at least with *Jacob*) mentions Books and Writings to have been common things in the time of *Job*, *Job 19. 23. Josephus lib. 1. cap. 3. Tertull. de Habitu Mulierum.*

2. Surely if Writing were so ancient, it is probable that many Histories might be before the time of *Moses* which were lost in succession of time, as it must be agreed that most of those ancient Monuments that in the granted Period of the World were extant before *Moses* time are since lost, and many millions of Books that have been written since *Moses* time have by the injury of Time and Men been lost; much more those Books which were written antecedent to *Moses* time: And the truth is, the preservation of the Books of *Moses* entire unto this day, when so many of a far later date are lost, is to be attributed to the special Providence of Almighty God.

2. Again, they that assign the shortest time between the Origination of Mankind and the Writings of *Moses*, allow it to be somewhat above 2460 years: So that although *Moses* were admitted the first Historian that ever wrote, it would very near as strongly conclude against the antiquity of 2460 years before his writing as against an eternal existence of Mankind: if it should be an Argument against the latter, it would be such also against the former.

3. Considering the many mutations and casualties of Wars, Transmigrations, especially that of the General Flood, there might probably be an obliteration of all those Monuments of Antiquity that immense Ages precedent at some time have yielded. *Cecrops* was contemporary with *Moses*, and *Belus* and *Ninus* were before him; yet we have no Monuments extant of the *Assyrians* so ancient as *Belus*, or of the *Athenians* so ancient as *Cecrops*, but such as are Traditions, and written long after their times. So that although I have mentioned this concerning the known Periods of Historical Writers, yet I think we are to be careful not to lay too great a stress singly on it, and it is the least of all that follow in weight or evidence: And yet this was fit to be mentioned, because it is necessary for the more clear discovery and application of that which follows.

C A P.

## C A P. III.

The second Evidences of Fact, namely, the apparent Evidences of the first Foundation of the greatest and ancient Kingdoms and Empires.

I Come to my Second Evidence of Fact, which is the subject Matter of Histories, and principally concerning the Evidence arising from them of the first Original of the most considerable Monarchies in the World.

Touching the great Monarchies of the World, their Original is so well known, and delivered down to us from Authors of unquestionable truth, that there need little be said touching them; for they have their confessed *Epocha* within certain and known Periods. As the beginning of the *Roman* Monarchy under *Romulus*, which gives the *Epocha Urbis conditæ* in the 7<sup>th</sup> *Olympiad*; the beginning of the *Grecian* Monarchy, which hath its *Epocha* in *Alexander* about the 111<sup>th</sup> *Olympiad*; the beginning of the *Persian* Monarchy, which had its *Epocha* in *Cyrus* about the 55<sup>th</sup> *Olympiad*, though the same were not established in the beginning of *Cyrus*, but completed in *Cambyses* his Son about the 62<sup>d</sup> *Olympiad*. And the like might be observed concerning several smaller Kingdoms, whose originals are delivered over to us in Histories.

And although it is true that these Beginnings of these several Monarchies and Kingdoms do not so begin as if those Men that founded these Monarchies were the natural Fathers of all those Persons that did coalesce in *Regnum vel Monarchiam*; or as if those Monarchies were derived from the Heads or Roots that gave them this denomination, as all Men are derived from the common Parent of Mankind, or as possibly some other of the ancient Monarchies, which we shall have occasion hereafter to mention, were derived: For many times the beginning of Monarchies and Kingdoms was by the coalition of many Persons, it may be of several Nations, into an Army, as they did under *Cyrus*, or into a City, as they did under *Romulus*, or by transmigration of Persons from one Countrey to another, as the *Israelites* did.

And therefore we are not to take it that these Originations of Monarchies were the Origination of all the People that were joyned in it; for they had their existence oftentimes before, and took their denomination from the *Dux Exercitus* or the *Rector Civitatis*, under which they were as it were listed in their Civil or Military coalition.

And therefore the Argument is not thus necessarily that the *Roman* Monarchy or the *Grecian* Monarchy had not its beginning before such a time, therefore those Men that were the constituent parts thereof had no existence before that time; but that the Civil Society under the Prince, Rector or form of Government then began to be formally such in such a special Constitution.

But those Monarchies that pretend to the greatest Antiquity are principally,

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1. The Assyrian or Babylonian Monarchy.
2. The Egyptians, and their Dynasties.
3. The Grecians.
4. The Chineses.

These I shall examin in order.

1. Touching the Assyrian or Babylonian Monarchy, we do with the best authority both of Sacred and Prophane Writers suppose,

1. That it had its beginning since the Universal Deluge from Ham the youngest Son of Noah.
2. That the Reasons and Authorities against that Supposition are not of weight enough to evince the contrary.

Before I come to my Reasons for this Assertion, something I shall premise touching the Assyrian Empire, and how it stood in relation to that of the Babylonian.

It seems that Babylon was at first the Seat of the Assyrian Empire, the building whereof some attribute to Belus, some to Ninus his Son, some to Semiramis his Wife, and some to others: but afterwards the Capital Imperii of the Assyrians was Ninive, built upon the River Tigris.

It also seems, that in process of time the Assyrians either new built or repaired Babylon that had lain long neglected, and the same was peopled with those People on the South of Assyria called Caldeans: That which gives me light of it, and indeed of the whole History of the Babylonian Monarchy is *Isaiah 23. 13. Behold the land of the Caldeans, this people was not till the Assyrian founded it for them that dwell in the wilderness: They set up the towers thereof, they raised up the palaces thereof.* It seems therefore that Babylon formerly neglected, by this favour of the King of Assyria prospered into a petty Kingdom, and growing powerful did set up for themselves in the time of Ahaz the King of Judah who was contemporary with Tiglah Pileser, *2 Kings 16. 10.* And possibly the first divided King of Babylon was that Nabonassar that gave the original of the Era Nabonassar that began about the beginning of King Ahaz, in the beginning of the 8<sup>th</sup> Olympiad, about four years after the Building of Rome.

It seems that either the same Tiglah Pileser, or his next Successor Salmanassar King of Assyria that carried away the People of Israel in the ninth year of Hoseah, about four years after the death of Ahaz, *2 Kings 17. 6.* did afterwards re-take Babylon; for certainly he was possessed of it at or shortly after the deportation of Israel; for he brought Men from Babylon, from Cutha, from Ava, Hamath and Sepharvaim, to put into Samaria, *2 Kings 17. 24.*

It seems that most of these places from whence People were transported to Samaria, were places conquered by the Assyrian Monarch, who did as Victors use prudently to do, transplant the conquered into other places; and the same seems evident for some of these places at least, and as probably for Babylon also, *2 Kings 18. 24. Isaiah 10. 10.* particularly for Hamath, Sepharvaim and Avah: And accordingly he transplanted the conquered People into Gozan and other places, *2 Kings 18. 11.* which were won by Salmanassar from the Medes by Conquest. *2 Kings 19. 12.*

Senacherib succeeded Salmanassar, and came up against Hezekiah in the fourteenth year of his Reign, where he received that great blow of 185000 Men,

Men, which sent him back to Nineveh where he was slain; and Ezarhaddon his Son reigned in his stead. *2 Kings 20. 35, 36, 37.*

This gave opportunity to the new usurped Kingdom of Babylon again to break the Yoak of Assyrian Monarchy; for it evidently appears that Berodach-Baladan the Son of Baladan was King of Babylon, and sent to complement Hezekiah when there was another King of Assyria, *2 Kings 20. 12.* Hezekiah having reigned 29 years dyed, and Manasseh his Son succeeded him.

Manasseh reigned 55 years, and towards the latter end of his Reign he was carried Captive to Babylon by the King of Assyria, *2 Chron. 33. 11.* whether the King of Assyria had regained Babylon, or whether the King of Babylon had overcome the Assyrian, and so held the stile of that Monarch, appears not, though the latter seems probable by comparing the reprehension of *Isaiah, 2 Kings 20. 17.*

Ammon succeeded, and reigned 2 years.

Jesiah succeeded, and reigned 31 years.

Jehoahaz 3 months.

Jehoiachim 11 years.

Jehoiachin 3 months.

Zedekiah 11 years; the last year of whose Reign was contemporary with the 19<sup>th</sup> year of Nebuchadnezzar.

Now putting all the years together from the first of Ahaz to the last of Zedekiah are about 155 years and 6 months; out of which subtracting 19 years for the Reign of Nebuchadnezzar, there remains from the first of Ahaz to the first of Nebuchadnezzar 136 years, which comes very near to the Era Nabonassar; for according to the common Calculation the first of Nebuchadnezzar hapned in the 138<sup>th</sup> year of Nabonassar, which began about two years before the first year of Ahaz; or in the second year of the 8<sup>th</sup> Olympiad.

And that in all probability, Baladan who was the Father of Merodach-Baladan that sent to visit Hezekiah, might be that Nabonassar whose Era is so much celebrated.

After the beginning of the Reign of Nebuchadnezzar the entire Assyrian Monarchy was translated to Babylon, and Nebuchadnezzar the King thereof. Herodotus in his First Book tells us that Cyaxares the Grand-child of Dioces first attempted the taking of Niniveh, but was repulsed by the aid of the Scythians; and that afterwards he took it, and became Master of all Assyria, *Excepta Babylonica quadam portione.*

But according to the Histories of Tobit and Judith, Niniveh was taken by Assuerus and Nebuchadnezzar, and afterwards entirely possessed by Nebuchadnezzar, *Tobit 10. 17. Judith 11.* But this is obscure, because it hath been conceived that Nebuchadnezzar was a common Name used amongst the Babylonian Kings, as Pharaoh among the Egyptians; only it may not be impossible that Nebuchadnezzar who was certainly contemporary with Cyaxares the Medo, might be an assistant in the Destruction of Niniveh with Cyaxares, called it may be by Tobit, Assuerus; but how he came to be sole Possessor after in the time of Judith, is hard to unriddle.

This Nebuchadnezzar made Babylon the Seat of his Empire, and so far enlarged it that it seemed as new built, as his own arrogant and vain-

vain-glorious expression witnesseth; *Is not this great Babel that I have built?* Dan. 4. 30.

Upon all this that hath been said, it seems plain:

1. That *Babylon* or *Babel* was the first or ancient Seat of the *Assyrian* Empire.

2. That the same was first built by *Belus*, or *Ninus*, or *Semiramis*, as the Heathen Writers tell us, or by *Nimrod*, as the Holy History tells us, who possibly might be the same with *Belus*.

3. That afterward the Seat of the *Assyrian* Empire was translated to *Nineveh* the great City of that Empire.

4. That afterward *Babylon* was again either repaired or enlarged by the *Assyrian* Empire, and was the *Metropolis* of that part of *Assyria* called *Caldea*, the Inhabitants whereof were greatly addicted to the Celestial Observation, and became so famous for it, that a *Caldean* and an *Astrologer* were terms equivalent in common appellation.

5. That afterward the *Babylonians* or *Caldeans* obtained or usurped a divided Kingdom from the *Assyrian* Empire.

6. That the first King of that divided Kingdom was called *Nabonassar*, which give the original to the *Aera Nabonassaris*, beginning about the 8<sup>th</sup> *Olympiad*.

7. That about 140 years after the beginning of that Kingdom it grew so potent, that it acquired the whole *Assyrian* Monarchy, and became the Seat thereof under *Nebuchadnezzar*.

8. That *Nebuchadnezzar* again enlarged the City of *Babylon* with Buildings and Walls of incredible strength and glory.

This being premised, I now come to those Reasons that satisfy me that the *Assyrian* or *Babylonian* Monarchy was not of that great Antiquity that the *Babylonians* and the favourers of their Tradition pretended, but had its known Original or *Epocha* from whence it began.

1. The Authority of the Heathen Authors allow not above 1400 years at most for the continuance of the *Assyrian* Monarchy, and lodge the Original of it in *Belus* the Father of *Ninus*, the beginning of whose Reign is by computation to be cast in the 153<sup>d</sup> year after the Flood, according to the *Jewish* Account. *Vide probationes inde Petavii doctrina temp. l. 9. per totum.* The Account, according to *Diodorus Siculus*, runs thus; The *Assyrian* Monarchy beginning with *Ninus* lasted 1360 years unto the fall of *Sardanapalus* by *Arbaces* the *Mede*, after which that Monarchy fell in with the *Mede*: it continued there until *Pul* became the Head of the *Assyrian* Monarchy, and after him *Tiglah Pileser*, and then *Salmanassar*, and afterwards *Senacherib*: The Proof they add to this Supputation is this; That from the Fall of *Sardanapalus* to the Taking of *Babylon* by *Alexander* are accounted 543 years, which added to the former number gives 1903 years, the *Epocha* of the *Caldean* *Astrological* Calculation brought by *Calisthenes* to *Aristotle* at the Taking of *Babylon* by *Alexander*; which casts the Beginning of the *Assyrian* Monarchy under *Belus*, or at least under *Ninus* his Son; to be about the year of the World 1717, about 60 years after the Flood, according to the *Jewish* Account; though others, following also the *Jewish* Account, cast the same to be about 104 years after the Flood.

But *Africanus*, and others that follow the Account of the 70 *Interpreters*,  
tell

tell us of seven Kings of the *Caldeans*, and six Kings of the *Arabians* that were antecedent to *Belus* in that Empire, that successively reigned in *Babylon* 440 years; that *Belus* obtained by Conquest the Kingdom, and reigned 55 years; and by this Account the Beginning of the *Assyrian* Kingdom under *Ninus* was 631 years after the Flood, and one Age after the Confusion of Languages in the time of *Phaleg*: But which way soever we take, yet we find a Beginning of the *Assyrian* Empire, though they that suppose it 440 years before *Belus*, thrust the Deluge and the Creation farther back than the *Jewish* Account.

2. The Authority of the Holy Scripture by the Pen of *Moses* gives us the Original of the *Babylonian* or *Assyrian* Monarchy in *Nimrod*, which possibly may be the Name in *Hebrew* of *Belus* the first Founder of it. And here I do not take advantage of the Divine Authority of the Sacred Scripture, but make use of it only as a History, and singly upon that account hath greater evidence of its truth than any Heathen Historian whatsoever. 1. The Writer thereof was most certainly nearer the times of the first Foundation of that Monarchy by above 800 years than any other Historian that gives us the account of the *Assyrian* and *Babylonian* Monarchy; which is a great advantage in point of evidence touching the truth of any Historical Relation. Again, 2. He was not very far distant from the Place or Seat of that Monarchy, the *Wilderness* and *Palestine* being not far distant from *Assyria*. 3. He was descended from him that was the native of that Country, namely *Abraham*, who was born and lived many years in the *Caldean* Country, and doubtless did bring along with him and transmit to his Posterity a fair Tradition of that Empire, being contemporary with *Peleg*, in whose time the famous dissipation of Mankind and distinction of Languages hapned. 4. He was educated in *Egypt*, the people whereof were greatly learned, especially in Chronological Computations. 5. The coherence and synchronism of all the parts of the *Mosaical* Chronology, especially after the Flood, bears a most singular testimony to the truth of his History and Computation: for although he draws not down the lineal Descendants of *Ham* and *Japhet* down to his time, but only mentions their Children and Grand-children for two or three Generations at most; yet he draws down the lineal Pedigree from *Sem* in the Sacred Line down to his very Age, together with their Births and Ages, which are a great evidence of the probability of the rest of his Account. So that if we take the History of *Moses* upon a bare Moral account, abstracted from the Authority of Divine Revelation, he hath greater evidence of the truth of what he relates than any Historian whatsoever that takes upon him the narrative of the Antiquity of Kingdoms or Empires, the ancientest of which Historians were above 1000 years later than *Moses*. But this I shall have occasion farther to improve hereafter.

The Objections against this late Original of the *Assyrian* or *Babylonian* Monarchy (for it had its successive translation into these denominations) are principally these:

1. That it appears by the Account of ancient Historians, that the *Caldeans* (in whom the *Assyrian* Monarchy began and ended) at the Taking of *Babylon* by *Alexander* had preserved *Astronomical* Calculations for about 400000 years; thus *Diodorus Siculus*, lib. 3. cap. 8. *Quadringenta*  
*tria*



*tria annorum milia usque ad ascensum Alexandri numerant*; and Tully in his second Book *de Divinatione* mentions the number to be greater, *Quadringenta & septuaginta milia annorum, in periclitandis experiendisque Pueris quicumque essent nati, Babylonios posuisse.*

2. That it seems impossible, that if their Monarchy began but in *Nimrod*, or so short a time after the Universal Deluge, that in the time of *Ninus*, by some supposed the first, by some the second King of the *Assyrians* or *Babylonians*, the Empire could have grown so populous as to build that vast City of *Babylon*, and that of *Nineveh*, whole state and magnificence and amplitude were of incredible greatness; or that his Widow *Semiramis* could at once bring into the field against *Zoroastres* an Army of 170000 Foot-men, 50000 Horse-men, 100000 Chariots, 2000 Ships, as *Diodorus Siculus* out of *Ctesias*, l. 3. cap. 5. And therefore as well Mankind as the Empire of *Assyria* must have had a longer continuance to have set out such an Army, than the succession of an Empire for two or three Governours at most, or the successions or propagations of Mankind within so short a time as this is supposed to succeed the Universal Deluge, could afford. To the first I answer:

1. That some will have these Years to be but Months, which they suppose to be accounted Years by the ancient *Babylonians* and *Egyptians*: But as we have no certain evidence that they used to account a Month a Year, but if we had, yet that reduction will not serve; for that number of Lunar Months reduced to Solar Years will arise to above 40000 Years, which will over-reach the Creation of Mankind.

2. Therefore we may with the same Tully and *Diodorus Siculus* pronounce it to be an incredible and fabulous Account warranted by no credible evidence, but merely their own fancy or imposture; that because they held the World eternal, would gratify their people with a succession of an incredible Antiquity. And it appears to be fabulous, 1. For that in all this time they would probably have gotten the perfect Theory of the Planetary Motions and Positions, which it is plain they did not, if we believe the same Author; for they were at a loss touching the true discoveries and periods of the Eclipses, especially of the *Sun*. 2. For that *Calisthenes*, who was very curious in searching the famous Periods of the *Babylonian* or *Caldean* Celestial Observations, at the very time when they pretended so great an Antiquity, namely, at the Taking of *Babylon* by *Alexander*, upon a strict enquiry found their Astronomical Observations not to be above 1903 years old, which he accordingly reported to *Aristotle*, that employed him specially in that Enquiry, as *Simplicius* reports in his Commentaries upon the Book of *Aristotle de Cælo*. The prodigious Accounts therefore of the *Caldeans* of the Times past deserve as little credit as their Predictions of things to come, who, as the same Tully there observes, flattered both *Cæsar* and *Pompey* with long Lives and happy and peaceable Death; both which fell out in the success, to both extremely contrary.

2. I come to the second Objection, namely, That it seems altogether impossible that the General Flood should put a period to all former Governments, and indeed to the whole Race of Mankind except eight persons, and yet that from these in so short a time such vast and powerful Monarchies, especially as that of the *Babylonian* or *Syrian* should arise. To which I answer:

1. That

1. That if we should admit the Computation of the *Seventy*, now much magnified by *Vossius* and others, it would easily deliver us from that difficulty; for whereas the *Hebrew* Computation gives the Universal Flood to be but 1656 years after the Creation of Mankind, the *Septuagint* gives it to be 2262 years: and whereas the *Hebrew* Account gives us about 300 years from the Flood to the Birth of *Abraham*, and consequently about 104; and according to some only 58 years from the Flood to the beginning of *Ninus* the Son of *Belus*, the *Septuagint* gives us from the Flood to the Birth of *Abraham* 1132 years; and consequently the beginning of *Ninus* though admitted to have been about 250 years before the Birth of *Abraham*, would yet have hapned near 800 years after the Flood, which would not only give a competent time for Mankind to grow to that great multitude that is supposed, but would satisfy those preceding thirteen Kings in *Babylon* that are supposed to have worn out 440 years before the beginning of *Belus* the Father of *Ninus*.

2. But the Objection needs not that help, neither doth enforce us to desert the *Hebrew* Account to satisfy that or the like Objections. For considering the long Life of the Ancients that lived within 300 years after the Flood, and consequently their coexistence with those that descended from them; we may without the help of a miraculous fertility find that in 104 years Mankind descended from *Noah* and his three Sons and their Wives, might arise to a stupendious multitude by that Arithmetical Progression that would be found in their Generations. I shall not need to set down the process of the Computation or the product, it is excellently done to my hand by *Temporarius* in his second Book *Chronologicarum demonstrationum*, and out of him by *Petavius* his *Doctrina temporum*, lib. 10. and out of both by *Kircherus* in the first Book of his first Tome of his *Oedipus Ægyptiacus*, where he undertakes, that in the progress of 200 years after the Flood the multitude of the coexisting People might be so great, that if they were cast into a square *Battalia*, allowing to every person but one square foot of ground, the side of that Square would be 372 Astronomical miles, or 25 Heavenly degrees. And thus far touching the Original of the *Assyrian*, *Caldean*, or *Babylonian* Monarchy.

2. Touching the *Egyptians*, they maintained the Origination of Mankind, and that the same was not Eternal, as it seems by *Diodorus Siculus* in his second Book; for they supposed, in respect of the fruitfulness of their soil and the convenience of their situation, that the first Original of Mankind was among them, and that the *Egyptians* were the ancientest People in the World.

But though they admitted the Origination of Man, yet they pretended to a very great antiquity of their Nation and Government; and because they would exceed all others, they suppose their first Governours were Gods: *Diodorus* tells us, that in the 180<sup>th</sup> *Olympiad* they pretended a succession of Government of 33000 years, whereof the first 18000 years they were governed by Gods and Heroes, and the last 15000 years by Men.

*Manetho*, that wrote the History of the *Egyptians* about the beginning of the *Grecian* Monarchy under *Alexander*, with very great pretence hath carried up their Government to an incredible distance before the Creation

of Mankind, for he digested the successive Governments of the Egyptians into 32 Dynasties, and to each Dynasty a great number of Governours and Years, whereof 15 exceeded the time of the Flood, and therefore are omitted by Africanus and others that yet are fond of the credit of Manetho: the other 17 Dynasties are supposed to be extended unto the beginning of the Grecian Empire for about 1694 years after the Flood.

But 1. This Account, even of Diodorus Siculus, is very uncertain, for it appears by Censorinus, *de die Natali*, cap. 19. that the ancient Egyptian year was *bimestris*, and after that *trimestris*, and after that, in latter time, of 13 months and 5 days: And some tell us, that yet their most ancient year was but one month, namely, one revolution of the Moon through the Zodiack; which if it should be admitted, may shorten their Account of 33000 years to 3600 years or thereabout. But yet this Answer serves not, for in all probability their years continued to be 365 days ever since the time of the Jewish Exody at least, which will carry up the Account far beyond the Creation of Man, though their former years should be supposed *menstrui* or *bimestres*.

Therefore it seems either a plain Imposture of Manetho, out of an emulation of the pretended Antiquity of the Babylonian Monarchy, or at least a very plain mistake, by reckoning all these 32 Dynasties or *Principatus successivè*, when it seems they were all contemporary, and that after Mene, which is supposed the first Head of these Dynasties, the Regiment of Egypt was divided into several Principalities, and each had his Dynasty, but the particular Regiment of each several Principality, Mene being the Head to them all; which is so well evinced by Vossius in his little Tract *de Aetate Mundi*, out of Eratosthenes contemporary with Manetho, Herodotus and others, that nothing can be added to it, or reasonably objected against it; though Kircherus in the first Book of his *Egyptian Antiquities* endeavours to carry on the 17 last Dynasties in continued succession from Cham to the dissolution of the Egyptian Monarchy by Alexander; and supposeth the first 15 Dynasties to have incurred before the Flood, and the traditional memory thereof derived down by Cham to his Posterity. But of this also more hereafter.

Touching the Grecians, it is true, the Grecian Monarchy had its known Epocha in Alexander about the 114<sup>th</sup> Olympiad: but they were a People long before, though divided into smaller Kingdoms or States; but the Memorials of the Babylonians and Egyptians were far more ancient than those of Greece, which derived much of its Learning from the Egyptians. Censorinus in his golden Book *de die Natali* gives us out of Varro a threefold Period of the Grecian Histories or Monuments or Times, Cap. 21. namely, 1. *ἄγνωστον* or *incognitum*, from the first Origination of Mankind (if it had an Original) *ad cataclysmum priorem*, or the Ogygian Flood: 2. *μυθικόν* or *fabulosum*, from the Ogygian Flood to the first Olympiad: 3. *ἱστορικόν*, from the first Olympiad until his time. For the first of these times, *Sive semper fuit, sive habuit initium, certè quot annorum sit non potest comprehendì*: for the second, *Non planè quidem scitur, sed creditur esse annos circiter mille & sexcentos*, though he reduceth it by his account to a shorter time; namely, 400 years from the Ogygian Flood to Inachus, and from him to the first Olympiad according to some 400, according to others 395, 407, or 417: I shall not trouble my self with the curious enquiry

enquiry into the number, or the different Account of Chronologers touching it: But within the compass of this *tempus μυθικόν*, or *Periodus fabulosa*, hapned many of those Relations of the Greeks; namely, the Age of Prometheus, the Flood of Deucalion, shortly after the beginning of the Dynasty of the Athenians, in the time of Cretopus King of the Argives; *Incendium Idae*, Cadmus and Europa, *Ganymedis raptus*, *Phaetontis incendium*, *Hercules Amphitryonis filius*; *Expedition Argonautarum*, *Bellum Trojanum* & *Reditus Heraclidarum*, *Ionica migratio*, and many other fine Stories that have furnished some of the Poetical Historians of after Ages.

But however Censorinus makes his Computation, Inachus, who was the first King of the Argives, though he were about 375 years after the beginning of the Assyrian Monarchy, and contemporary with Isaac, yet he began his Reign about 100 years before the Ogygian Flood, which hapned in the latter end of Phoroneus the Son of Inachus and second King of the Argives. So that Inachus was about 100 years before the Ogygian Flood, and about 1070 or 1080 years before the first Olympiad upon this account.

This then being, as it seems, the state of these Periods, there seem two Nations of the Grecians that pretend to greatest Antiquity, namely, the Argivi and the Attici.

The former had their beginning with Inachus, whether before or after the Ogygian Flood it will not be much of moment, but at least within 1070 years before the first Olympiad, which is the highest time that the Grecians pretend unto.

Touching the Attici, the Grecian Memorials give us no higher Account than of Ogyges, in whose time it is supposed the Ogygian Flood hapned in that part of Greece called Attica, and takes its name from him, namely, *Diluvium Ogygium*.

Out of this Kingdom arose the Dynasty of the Athenians, about 200 years after the Ogygian Flood, wherein Cecrops was the first Governour contemporary with Moses; he first set up the Worship of Jupiter, as some report. And so we have the Original of the Government of the Argives in Inachus, of the Athenians in Cecrops.

It is true, the Egyptian Priest under the name of Timæus in Plato tells us a large Story of the Island of Atlantis far bigger than Asia, and that although now that goodly Island be lost and swallowed up in the Sea, yet the Athenians were a kind of Colony transplanted from that Island into Greece about 7000 years before Solon's time. But this is one of those Poetical Fictions wherewith Plato plays, mingling more serious things with it in the following part of his Discourse; and the Story hath no footsteps of any evidence for it, unless we shall suppose that Atlantis to be an Island that was before the Universal Deluge, and destroyed by it.

4. Concerning the Seres or Chineses, a People whose Customs and Histories were strangers to Europe till of late times, wherein some Travellers have lately given us some account of those great Periods both of their Histories and Government. Vossius in that little Book *de Aetate Mundi*, tells us by relation from others, That by their Histories and Monuments their Empire hath lasted 4505 years in the year of Christ 1658, which reacheth some Ages beyond the Flood according to the Hebrew Account, but according to the Septuagint the beginning thereof falls in the time of Phaleg, 531 years after the Flood; which he brings as an

Argument for the Authority of the *Septuagint*: But the truth is, we are still strangers to the true state of Chronology of the *Seres* or *Chineses*, what we have touching it, is by broken relation of some few Travellers, and what they had, possibly may be gathered up from the vulgar Traditions of that People, upon which little of found conclusion can be made touching their Antiquity. But be it true or not, which we have from these Relations, yet their longest Period gives them a Beginning, and reacheth not so high as the pretended *Epoch* of the *Babylonians* or *Egyptians*, much less is there any thing in them that gives any colour of Evidence of an Eternal Duration.

And thus I have gone through the Examination of those Kingdoms and Monarchies which pretend to greatest Antiquity, the *Babylonian* or *Assyrian*, the *Egyptian*, the *Grecian*, and the *Seres* or *Chineses*; upon all which we may observe,

1. That though many of them pretend to a very great Antiquity, yet there are none that give us any sufficient Evidence of an Eternal Duration; for what are those Periods of the *Egyptians* or *Babylonians* to Eternity? Nay many of these Nations that pretend to the longest continuance, as the *Egyptians* and *Grecians*, yet disclaim an Eternal Succession; pretend themselves to be *Aborigines*, and to be the first People, but yet not to be Eternal. Indeed their vast continuance, if admitted, would seem to contradict the Authenticalness and Authority of the *Mosaical* History, which contains a Relation of the Beginnings of Mankind within the compass of about 5660 Years, according to the *Hebrew* Account, and about 7240 Years, according to the *Septuagint*; but doth not so much as suppose an Eternity thereof.

2. That notwithstanding these great pretensions of Antiquity, yet upon a true examination their great pretended Antiquity is fabulous; and the Origination of their Monarchies began some Ages after the general Deluge; and so the truth of the Holy History concerning the Inception of Mankind, and the Inception of all the Monarchies in the World after the Deluge that happened under *Noah*, 1656 Years after the Creation of Mankind, is not at all weakened by those Fabulous Antiquities of the *Babylonians*, *Egyptians*, or *Grecians*.

3. That this Inception of the Notable Empires and Kingdoms of the World, even of those that pretend greatest Antiquity, and the termination of the uttermost Extent of the Histories of the *Babylonians*, *Egyptians*, and *Grecians*, within the compass of the Extent of their pretended Monarchies, is an Evidence against the Eternity of Mankind; for had Mankind been Eternal, they had infinite Ages since arrived to all the perfection of Political Government, and to all those Means and Arts for the preserving the Memorials of things past, as they have now attained unto; there would have been no *tempus ædificandi*, or *obscurum*, among the *Grecians*, but there would have been as fair Monuments and Historical Narratives of things past, before the *Olympiads* or the *Ogygian* Flood (which was not universal) as after. I shall conclude therefore with *Lucretius*, lib. 5.

*Præterea, si nulla fuit genitalis origo  
Terræ & Cæli, semperque aterna fuerunt;*

*Cur*

*Cur supra bellum Thebanum & funera Troja  
Non aliam alii quoque res cecidere Poeta,  
Qui tot facta virum toties cecidere, neque usquam  
Æternis fama monumentis insita florent?  
Verùm ut opinor habet novitatem summa, recensque  
Natura est mundi, neque pridem exordia cepit:  
Quare etiam quedam nunc artes expoliuntur,  
Nunc etiam angescunt, &c. —*

But yet this Consideration touching the Antiquity of Monarchies, their Inception, and the Narratives and Historical Monuments of things, happening within the Periods of their Commencement and Continuances, are not of that weight that we can lay the stress of this *Hypothesis* of the Inception of Mankind upon: And therefore this Consideration must be taken with its alloy, I shall therefore fully set down those Instances that do give this Consideration its due abatement.

1. It is no Consequence, That because a Monarchy or Kingdom had its Beginning, that therefore the People that constituted the *Moles* of that Kingdom had its Beginning: Kingdoms, Monarchies, and States, often change their Governours, and the Forms of Government, and their Styles and Denominations, as the Silk-worm doth his shape, and yet the People in a continued succession the same. *Rome* took its Name from *Romulus*, but the People were a *Farrago*, collected and gathered out of the neighbouring Nations. *Greece* fell into one Monarchy under *Alexander*, yet the People (that were the Stuffing, as it were, and Materials of that Monarchy) were existing before in other Forms of Government, and under other Governours. And though it is by some supposed, That the *Assyrian* Monarchy began in *Ninus*, yet *Diodorus* out of *Ctesias* tells us, That he made up that great Structure of the *Assyrian* Monarchy by the Conquest of divers People, who thereby were added to it, as the *Egyptians*, *Phœnicians*, *Syria*, *Cælicia*, *Pamphilia*, *Lydia*, *Caria*, *Phrygia*, *Mysia*, and many more, mentioned by him, l. 3. cap. 1.

*England* began not to be a People, when *Alfred* reduced it into a Monarchy, for the Materials thereof were extant before, namely, under the *Heptarchy*. So that the finding out of the Head of a Monarchy is not like the finding out of the Head of a River in the Fountain, or the Head of a Family in one common Parent: The ancientest Monarchy might have a Beginning, and yet the People, that are the material constituent of it, might exist long before, under other Forms or Vicissitudes of Governments.

2. All Nations do not always begin their Histories, or the Matter, of the same Antiquity with the People touching which they write; but some earlier, some later, according to the variety of their Opportunities, Educations, and Disciplines.

The *Israelites* were certainly the most knowing People of the World, began early to record the Memorials of their own Times, and of those that anteceded them, delivered down by Tradition from the Patriarchs: Thus did *Moses*; and the Annals of that People are carried down to the very dissolution of their Government. The *Phœnicians* began their Historical Monuments after them, the *Grecians* after them. The *Pelægi* and *Attici* were  
a Peo-

a People long before *Homer* wrote. *England* was doubtless Inhabited before *Cæsar* came over, yet we have few Monuments of *Britain* more ancient than *Cæsar* gives us; and from him, except *Beda*, we have few Authentical Histories by any known Historian, before the Conquest by King *William*; but they have been all written since, or very near his time; and many of the things which they have put together touching the *Britains*, *Picts*, *Danes*, yea and the beginning of the *Saxons*, have been collected out of broken Monuments in Monasteries, and Tradition, and digested into series and order of times by those that have written long since the things done; by men that lived since the *Normans* came in, as *Henry* of *Huntington*, *William* of *Malsbury*, *Roger Hoveden*, *Matthew Paris*, and others.

3. A third difficulty is this: That in those elder times there were not those means of preserving the Monuments of things past, as after times afforded; for whatever antiquity the World may be supposed to be, it is plain that Arts have increased and grown: Printing is a new Invention, and although Letters and Writing were ancient among the *Phœnicians*, and from them derived to the *Greeks*; yet we must suppose they were not so perfect or so common in the elder Ages as in those that succeed them. And therefore those that contend for an Eternal succession of Men in the World, do suppose that by a kind of circulation or rotation Arts have their successive invention and perfection and tradition from one People to another; and consequently though some might be early able to deliver over Historical passages, as being better instructed in Letters and Writing, and more civilized than others, yet others attained it later: As the *Europeans* had their Learning from the *Asiatics*, so the *Americans* have it from the *Europeans*, and yet the People of *Europe*, *Asia*, and *America* may be of equal Antiquity.

Besides all this, there have been many vicissitudes and changes whereby ancient Monuments and Histories have been lost: As 1. The Variation of Languages, or at least of the Characters wherein they were written, many things written in former Ages being scarce legible in after Ages, and so neglected. 2. Wars and Desolations hapning thereby, which obliterate many ancient Monuments. If by a kind of common stipulation or pact as it were, Monasteries had not had a kind of common Protection in the vicissitudes of the Conquests of *England* by the *Picts*, *Danes*, *Saxons* and *Normans*, we had had very little extant of ancient things. 3. Transmigrations of People from one Country to another, whereby they left their ancient Monuments behind them, which were neglected by them that succeeded them. 4. Floods and Inundations, especially in the parts of *Asia*, which swept away many ancient Monuments.

These are the Allays that are to be given to this particular touching the *Epochæ* and Original of Monarchies, Kingdoms, and States, and the Monuments and Historical Relations of them or hapning in them, and to the weight of those consequences deduced or deducible from them, in order to the Argument in question touching the Origination of Mankind.

C A P.

## C A P. IV.

The Third Instance of Fact proving the Origination of Mankind, namely, the Invention of Arts.

I Come to the Third Instance of Fact, namely, the Discovery and Perfecting of Arts, and the new Discoveries that later Ages have made of things that were not formerly known.

And this Topick consists principally of these parts; 1. That there have been such Discoveries of Things and Arts not formerly known: 2. That consequently the World, especially of Mankind, is of a far later Edition than Eternity.

Touching the former of these, it is very evident both by the Tradition of the Ancients, and also by our own unquestionable Experience, that very great Discoveries have been in several Ages made of Things and Arts that were hidden and unknown unto precedent Ages. I shall not trouble my self with those large Catalogues of profitable Inventions which have been successively discovered, when before they were not known, at least for ought appears to us, as the use of Husbandry, the making of Wine and Oyl, the discovery of the Letters of the Alphabet in successive Ages, Musick, Military and Civil Discipline, Engines of War, and Navigation: These and infinite more have been by the Industry of former Writers reduced to their several *Epochæ* and Authors of their Discoveries, and some of the Authors have had therefore divine Honour given to them by the admiring Heathen. These several Inventors and Inventions are registred by *Diodorus Siculus* in his first six Books, by *Clemens Alexandrinus* in the first Book of his *Stromata*, by *Pliny* l. 7. cap. 56. and *ex professo* by *Polydore Virgil* in his eight Books *de Rerum Inventoribus*: In which and other Collections of that kind, although possibly there be many things that are fabulous, or grounded upon a very light and uncertain tradition; yet there are many things that are true or very credible, especially since the Monuments of ancient times give us an account of the most remote Ages of Men; *Rudes primùm & incuria silvestri non multùm à ferarum asperitate dissimiles*, *Macrob. in somnio Scipionis*, l. 2. cap. 10. see the elegant description of the elder Inhabitants of the World, *Lucret. l. 5.*

*Nec commune bonum peterant spectare, neque ullis  
Moribus inter se scibant neque legibus uti.*

With which description of the elder World agrees *Plato* in his *Politicks*, *Nudi enim & sine stragulis magnam partem foris & sub dio vitam colebant*; and the same *Plato* in his third Book *de Legibus* supposeth, that those relicks of Men that escaped the ancient Deluges by flight into the Mountains became perfectly ignorant in process of time of those Arts and conveniences of humane Life, which possibly their Progenitors might have been better acquainted with.

But we need not go so far for a full conviction of that admirable Discovery and Improvement of Arts and other things, especially such as are necessary for humane Life.

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In matters Astronomical we have a far greater light than what was two thousand years since; for we find the old *Hypothesis* of the Heavenly System called since in question by *Copernicus*, *Galileus*, and *Kepler*; the solidity of the Orbs detected to be untrue, by the plain discovery of *Tycho Brahe* and others; the new discoveries of Stars and Asterisms, and their figures, by the help of the Telescope, demonstratively and to the sense.

In matters Philosophical many new Discoveries have been made by Experiences, whereunto the Ancients never attained: And although the Bodies of Men, Animals and Insects have been these many thousands of years exposed to the view and search of diligent Physicians and Anatomists, yet it is a wonder to see what new Discoveries have been made in Anatomical Dissections and Observations, which seem wholly hidden to the Ancients; as those of the Circulation of the Blood by Doctor *Harvey*; the *Vena lactea* by *Afellius*; the *Repositorium Chyli* of *Pecquet*, with the method of its deduction into the *Vena cava*; the process of Generation and of the Formative actions; the curious Discoveries of the Parts and Faculties of small Insects, by the help of the Microscope, rendred by *Malpighius* and others.

Again, the great Discoveries that have been made by the means of Pyrotechny and Chymistry, which in late Ages have attained to a greater height than formerly.

Again, in matters Mechanical, although it be true that this latter Age hath not arrived to that incredible skill of *Archimedes*, yet Mechanical powers have been strangely improved, as we see in the late improvement of the late discovery of the Motion of the *Pendulum*, whereby the portions of Time are not only measured with an incredible exactness, but the use thereof translated unto Watches, Clocks, and other Engines; so we have high advancement of Dialling, Clocks, Pumps, Fountains and other Motions beyond the acquests of former Ages.

And although the Art of Navigation hath been very ancient, and the use of the Mariner's Needle, which some carry up to *Amalpes* an *Arabian* in the year of Christ 1360; others to the *Chineses*, and by them discovered to *Paulus Venetus*; others carry it up to King *David*: yet the Art of Navigation hath been since greatly improved, and many excellent Discoveries in relation to the Inclination and Variation of the Magnetick Needle. To these we may add the use of Guns, Gunpowder, and Printing, which though by some asserted to be of long use in *China*, yet in this Western part of the World the original of the Invention hath its known *Epocha*.

By these and many more Instances of the like kind it may appear, That many Inventions and Discoveries of things not only of curiosity but of use and convenience to Mankind have had their known and certain *Epocha*, or a sufficient evidence of times when they were not used or known in the World.

2. The consequence of this Supposition seems to be this; That in as much as these had their discoveries within known Periods, it is not supposable that the successions of Mankind could have been without a Beginning, but rather that they had a Beginning within a reasonable time: for it is not conceivable that in an infinite, or indeed in a very long period of Revolutions of Mankind, those or any things of this kind discoverable would have been of so late and puerile a discovery: This is  
the

the Argument of *Lucretius*, who though an Asserter of the Eternity of Matter and Motion, yet together with his Master *Epicurus* asserts a Beginning of this World which we now behold, *Lib. 5.*

*Quare etiam quaedam nunc artes expoliuntur,  
Nunc etiam augeantur; nunc addita navigiis sunt  
Multa, modo organici melicos peperere sonores;  
Denique natura hac rerum ratioque reperta  
Nuper -----*

And upon the same account *Macrobius l. 2. cap. 10. in Somnium Scipionis*; *Si enim ab initio, imò ante initium fuit mundus, ut Philosophi volunt, Cur per innumerabilem seriem seculorum non fuerat Cultus quo nunc utimur inventus? Non Literarum usus quo solo memoria fulcitur Eternitas? Cur denique multarum rerum experientia ad aliquas gentes recenti atate pervenit? ut ecce Galli vitem vel cultum olea, Roma jam adolescente, didicerunt; alia verò gentes adhuc multa nesciunt quae nobis inventa placuerunt. Haec omnia videntur aternitati rerum repugnare, dum opinari nos faciunt certo mundi principio paulatim singula quaeque capisse.*

But although this Argument at the first view may seem to have much of evidence in it of the Origination of Mankind, yet it seems too weak to lay any great weight, at least singly, upon it, as will appear by what follows; though in consort with other Instances it hath its use and weight.

The Discovery or Invention of things may seem to be upon these, or some of these Methods.

2. It seems to me that some things have been discovered unto Mankind by a more immediate interposition of the Divine Providence, or the ministrations of Angels; as for instance, the Medicinal Virtue of some Herbs, Vegetables, or Minerals, that lye not in the ordinary road of Experience, or analogical collection from Circumstances, Signatures, or Observation.

2. Some things were discovered experimentally, though perchance not intentionally, or by design in the first discovery: And thus probably the Virtues of ordinary Simples came to be discovered, for the Food of Mankind being anciently Herbs and Fruits, or at least of such of Mankind who either through choice, custom or necessity were driven to that abstemious Diet, there did doubtless occur the experience of various temperaments and operations of those Herbs, some purgative, some emetick, some sudorifick, some astringent, which gave Men opportunity of digesting them into several ranks and uses.

3. Some things were discovered *ex praxotis, & per viam rationalis discursus*: Thus probably Men by the Signatures, Tasts and Colours of Herbs, bearing analogy to other things they knew, concluded fairly touching their Nature and Use, which by Tryal and Experience they improved into more fixed and stable Theorems and Conclusions: And upon this account also many Practical Arts, especially relating to Numbers, Weight, Measure and Mechanism had their production; for the Rudiments of Proportion being lodged in the Mind, they seem to have grown intentionally and *ex industria* into those various practices of  
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Arithmetick; Geometry, and Mechanicks resulting from those principles *per media processus rationalis*; and thus those practices of the Rules of Proportion, Mechanical Motions, Staticks, Architecture, Navigation, Measuring of Distances and Quantities, and infinite more did arise.

4. Some things in their first discovery seem purely accidental, and although possibly the operation of Reason and Tryal and Experiment might or may carry on the Invention into farther Improvements and Advances, yet in the very first *primo primum* of the Discovery it may be accidental: The old, whether true or fabulous Discovery of Fire may serve to explain my conception; wherein it is supposed, that one sitting upon a Hill and tumbling down Flint stones, upon the collision thereof he observed sparks of Fire, which nevertheless he after improved by adding combustible materials to it; and doubtless upon such and the like occurrences many Chymical and other accidental Discoveries have been made, besides and beyond and without the intention of the Operator: And I well knew a Person that had not capacity enough to deduce any thing of curiosity *per processum rationalem*, yet by accidental dealing with Water and some Canes did arrive to a most admirable excellence in some Mechanical Works of that nature, though he never had the Wit to give a reason of his performance of them.

5. Some things have been found out by a kind of necessity and exigence of Humane Nature, such as Clothes, Societies, Places of Defence and Habitation, and possibly much of the plainer sort of Tillage and Husbandry; *Venter magister artis, ingenique largitor*: and commonly these were the earliest Inventions, because Nature stood early in need of them. And hence it came to pass, that they who had *Calum clementius*, that afforded them necessaries without the assistance of considerable Industry, continued longest rude and uncultivated. And therefore if the Husbandry of *Ceres* or *Triptolemus* came late into the World, it was because those Eastern Countries then inhabited abounded with plenty of Fruits, which supplied the defect of Husbandry till the World grew more dispersed and fuller of Inhabitants, and transmigrated into parts of less natural fertility.

6. Some things have been discovered not only by the Ingenuity and Industry of Mankind, but even the inferior Animals have subministr'd unto Man the invention or discovery of many things both Natural and Artificial and Medicinal; unto which they are guided, and in which they are directed by secret and untaught instincts, which would be infinite to prosecute. The Fable or History of *Glaucus* observing Fishes to leap into the Sea, upon tasting an Herb by the shore; the Weasel using Plantane as an Antidote; the wounded Stag using Dittany to draw out the Arrow, (if true) and divers others, give us some Analogical Instances.

And these are ordinarily the Methods of Discoveries. The Things or Objects discovered are principally of two kinds; *viz.* 1. Such things as are already lodged in Nature, as Natural Causes and Effects, and those various *Phaenomena* in Nature, whereof some lye more open to our Senses and daily observation; others are more occult and hidden, and though accessible in some measure to our Senses, yet not without great search and scrutiny, or some happy accident; others again are such as we cannot attain

attain to any clear sensible discovery of them, either by reason of their remoteness, distance, and unaccessibleness, as the Heavenly Bodies and things closed up in the bowels of the Earth; or by reason of their subtil and curious texture, escaping the clear and immediate access of Sense, as Spiritual Natures, the Soul and its various Faculties and Operations, and the Reasons or Methods of them, wherein for the most part our acquiescence touching them are but Opinion and Conjecture, wherein Men vary according to the variety of their Apprehensions and Phantasies, and wherein (because they want that manuduction of Sense which is our best and surest Guide in the first Instance in matters Natural) Men range into uncertain, inevident, and unstable Notions.

2. Such things as are Artificial, wherein some Discoveries are simply new, others are but accessions and additaments to things that were before mentioned: Some things are of convenience, utility or necessity to Humane Nature or the condition of Mankind; some things are of curiosity: some things are found out casually or accidentally; some things intentionally, and out of those Principles or Notions that seem to be lodged originally in the Mind.

Now upon these Considerations premised, it seems that the late Discovery of many things in Nature, and many Inventions in Art are not a sufficient Evidence of the Origination or late Origination of Mankind, at least taken singly and apart.

1. In things Natural the variety is so great, and the various combinations therein so many, that it seems possible that there should not have been a full discovery of the whole state of things Natural unto the Minds of Men, although there were supposed an eternal duration of Mankind. We may give our selves a *specimen* hereof, if we look but back upon that one Piece of Nature with which we have reason to be best acquainted, namely, our selves; which by reason of our vicinity to our selves, our daily conversation with our selves and others of the same *Species*, our daily necessities and opportunities of inquiring into our selves, and the narrowness of our own nature in comparison of the vast and various bulk of other things, seems to render us a Subject capable of being very fully discovered. And besides all this, the more inquisitive and judicious part of Mankind have industriously set themselves for many Ages to make the best discovery they could of the nature of Man. *Hippocrates* the Father of Physicians, who lived in the 82<sup>d</sup> *Olympiad*, and above 2000 years since busied himself much and profoundly in this Enquiry; and a succession of industrious, observing and learned Physicians and Naturalists have pursued the Chase with all care and vigilancy, and by the help of Anatomical Dissections have searched into those various *Meanders* of the Veins, Arteries, Nerves and Integrals of the Humane Body: Yet for all this, in this sensible and narrow part of Humane Nature, the husk and shell thereof, how much remains after all this whereof we are utterly ignorant? So that notwithstanding all the Discoveries that have been made by the Ancients, and those more curious and plentiful Discoveries by the latter Ages, there still remains so much undiscovered that leaves still room for Admiration and Industry, and gives us a powerful conviction of our Ignorance, that the things we know in this little narrow obvious part of Nature the

Body of Man is the least part of that we know not touching the same.

But when we yet consider how small a part of the Humane Nature is that which is the Corporeal part; and how little we know with any tolerable certainty touching the more noble Parts, Acts and Operations of the Humane Nature, the Principle of Life, Sense, and Intellection, we have still reason to conclude that this little, narrow, near Subject of our Knowledge is yet very difficult for us actually and fully to comprehend, and furnisheth our search with more Materials than we are possibly able to exhaust with all our Industry, Care, Study, and Observation. When I consider those difficulties that occur touching the Production of that we call the Soul, whence it is; what it is, what power it is that performs the *processus formativus* that digests, disposes, models the *prima stamina natura humane* that acts with most admirable skill, dexterity, infallible order, and in the most incomparable way of Intelligence, and yet wholly destitute of those Organs whereby we exercise the operations of Life, Sense, and Intellection. That incomparable accommodation of all parts and things fittest for use, for time, for convenience: Again, when I consider those various powers of the Sensible Nature, that Regiment that it performs and exerciseth by the Spirits, Nerves, and Muscles; the admirable powers of Sensation, of Phantasia, of Memory, in what Salvatories or Repositories the *Species* of things past are conserved: Again, when I consider the strange powers of Intellection, Ratiocination, Reminiscence, and what that Thing or Nature is that performs all those various operations: And when I consider how little, how uncertain, how contradictory those Sentiments of Mankind have been touching these things, wherein nevertheless they have searched and toyled Age after Age; I must needs conclude, That if we had no other subject of our search and enquiry besides our selves, we should have for ought I know for infinite Ages a continued stock for our discovery; and when we had learned much, yet still even in this narrow Subject there would be still somewhat to be learned; and we should never be able actually to overtake the plenary discovery of what would remain;

*Sic rota posterior currit, sed in axe secundo.*

And if this one small near piece of Nature still affords new matter for our discovery, where or when should we be ever able to search out all the vast Treasuries of Objective Knowledge that lyes within the compass of the Universe? So that the new Discoveries that have been made in Natural things is not a sufficient evidence of the newness of the existence of Mankind, because of that inexhaustible Magazin of Natural Causes and Effects which possibly will store Mankind with new Discoveries unto an everlasting continuance.

2. And the same that is said for the redundance of matters intelligible and cognoscible in things Natural, may be also applied to things Artificial. There are these things that render Artificial Inventions prodigiously fertile and various: 1. The variety of the materials of things that may be applied to Artificial ends and uses; as we have Iron, Brasses, Wood, Stones, Sounds, Light, Figuration, Tactile qualities; some things of a

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more active, some things of a more passive nature; some things diversified in degrees of heat, cold, dryness, moisture; various Elements, Meteors: and infinite variety of these Materials we have, which may be the material constituents or ingredients into Artificial Structures, Engines, Motions, or Effects. 2. The variety of the Apprehensions and Fancies of several Men in the destination and application of things to several ends and uses; and this arising in them partly by the various texture and frame of their very temper of their Brains, Blood, and Spirits; partly by variety of Education, partly by Necessity, partly by Accidental Emergency: by this means possibly the same Material is variously managed into various Artifices, according to this variety of Phantasia or Imagination. As take the same Wool, for instance, one Man felts it into a Hat, another weaves it into Cloth, another weaves it into Kersey or Serge, another weaves it into Arras; and possibly these variously subdiversified according to the phantasia of the Artificer: For it is most certain that there is not greater variety in the figures and complexions of Mens Faces and Features, and in the contemperations of their natural Humours, than there is in their Phantasias, Apprehensions and Inclinations. And hence it is that, for instance, the texture of *Zenxes* or *Apelles* inclines him to the invention or improving of Painting, *Archimedes* to Mechanical Motions, *Euclid* to Geometrical Conclusions: and hence it must necessarily come to pass, that according to the variety of Men that either casually or industriously apply themselves to Artificial Discoveries or Inventions, there will ensue variety of Inventions. That Invention that did arise from the *Genius* or temperament of the Phantasia or Imagination of *Apelles*, would probably never in the same individual Invention have been found out before him, though the World of Men had lasted millions of Years before him; because perchance in that long Period no Man had ever the same *Syntax* of Phantasia or Imagination that he had, and consequently though some Artificial Inventions are as it were of that common congruity to the general Phantasias of Men; or seem to arise upon a common suitability to the use or exigence of Mankind, as digging, planting, ploughing, sowing, making of Apparel and Houses; yet some have that particular respect or cognition to the Phantasia of this or that particular Man, that they would never have been found out till such a Man had had his being in the World; and consequently the Invention was not found sooner, because the Man to whose Phantasia this Invention was accommodate was not born nor lived sooner.

3. The variety of Application and Combination of several Materials of Artificial things in their several Artificial Complements: For it is very plain, that even where things are finite and determinate in their number; yet they arise to a strange and prodigious multitude, if not indefinitude, by their various Positions, Combinations, and Conjunctions: The Letters of the Alphabet, which arise from the several apertures and conjunctions of the Tongue, the Teeth, the Palate, the Lips, the Throat, are but 24 in number, yet various combinations of these Letters are the formal constituents of all the Words and Languages in the World: And yet all the Words and Languages in the World do not amount to the hundredth part of those other articulate Languages that might be made out of the remaining combinations of the Letters of the Alphabet, which are not

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in use in any or all the Languages of the World. The general division of Lines in Geometry is into straight and crooked, but the various combinations and positions of these two sorts of Lines would make more Figures of Superficies than all the Ages of the World could possibly collect or describe.

And from this variety of Materials, variety of Phantasies and Imaginations, and variety of Combinations or Junctures of things, we may reasonably conclude that the multitude of Artificials is inexhaustible; and that although there be many new Inventions discovered daily which were not discovered before, yet that alone is no sufficient Argument of the Novity of Mankind; for this Magazin of Artificials is so fruitful, vast, and indeterminate, that if the World should last millions of Ages there would be a store and supply for immense Ages, *Et semper aliquid ultra.*

It may be possibly objected, That although the variety of Materials are great, and possibly indefinite and indeterminate, and so also of the Fancies of Men, and consequently those various combinations of things that are constituents of new Inventions, yet they are not Infinite: For although the combinations of the 24 Letters of the Alphabet are a prodigious number, yet if instead of 24 Letters there were 24 millions, as those 24 millions are a finite number, so would all the changes and combinations thereof be finite, though perchance not easily computable by Arithmetick, in respect of the huge excess of the number; and consequently, in an infinite Period of Time, though one of these combinations should be exhibited in a million of Years, the whole number of combinations had been infinite Ages since exhausted, and no combination left to make up the material or formal constituent of a new Invention.

Answer; It is true, the combinations of things finite existing must needs be finite as well as the things themselves. But, as I have before supposed, the Invention of Arts doth not only depend upon the existence of the Materials of things Artificial, no nor singly upon the various combinations of those Materials; but upon the Phantasia, Design and Destination of Man, which is various, according to those various Temperaments that have ingredience and influence into him: yea and possibly also upon certain junctures and concourses of things that might never before befall any other. And therefore, as if upon a supposed Eternal Succession of Mankind we should find but one individual *Socrates* or *Plato*, so it is not impossible to suppose that *Socrates* or *Plato* should consist of such a Temperament and Constitution, such a Phantasia and Imagination as never any man before had exactly the like; and consequently he might be the discoverer of some such Invention as never before was discovered. Or if we should be so hardy as to suppose a Man pre-existing in all things exactly like to *Socrates*, both in his Temperament, Body and Mind, yet possibly those accidental Occurrences which excited the Imagination of *Socrates* to the discovery and composing of such an Invention might not fall in with that Man that is supposed of a perfect parity with *Socrates*.

For although perchance existing Individuals may not be actually Infinite, yet certain it is that the potential gradation of things may be potentially Infinite, and so may the junctures of Occurrences be potentially Infinite; whereby it may come to pass, that though an Eternal Succession

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of Men were admitted, yet *in ista hora* a Man might be produced that had never *parem omnibus gradibus & numeris*: And such junctures of Occurrences might happen *in ista hora* that had never an exact parity of all Circumstances, and the same exact weight and number of Occurrences in any antecedent portion of Eternity.

And hence it may very easily come to pass, that as any one Invention had not its existence in a portion of a thousand, two, ten, twenty thousand years before, so, if the Ages of Mankind were infinite, it might never have pre-existence before, though the whole Race of Mankind had been industriously addicted *ad ultimum posse* to have discovered or improved Artificial Inventions.

3. The third Allay to the conclusion of this Argument is this: That Mankind have been, and in many places are very remiss and unactive in improving their knowledge and discovery of things Natural and Artificial; and that which befalls one Man, or Age, or Place in this kind, may befall another: This may happen by laziness and sloth, by an evil custom, or by overflowing barbarousness and want of improvement by Education: And upon this account we find a great want of Arts and Inventions in the Western World, in *Africa*, and even nearer hand among the *Irish*: And if now by the accession of Planters of better Education, or by the advanced Industry of some Inhabitant of those barbarous Countries there should be derived among them the Inventions of profitable or curious Arts, we could not with any sufficient reason conclude that the World lately began in those Countries, because the Original of those Arts and Inventions was but lately begun among them. If therefore those People by reason of their Barbarous course of life might be strangers unto Arts and Inventions for the space of five hundred or a thousand Years, why not for a much longer time? why not eternally? Since the very same supineness and negligence might as well possess those Parts and Inhabitants for many Ages, as well as few; and for interminate Ages, as well as certain; and if at this day they should discover and practise new Arts and Inventions, it were no greater Argument against the Eternity of their Succession, than against their Continuance for those many thousand Years, which probably they have had in that unknown Western World.

4. The fourth Allay of this Observation seems to be this: That as in Kingdoms and Empires, so in Discoveries of Arts there seem to be very great vicissitudes and circulations, which strangely vary the Faces of Things and Countries; and this principally done, 1. By Wars and Victories: 2. By Floods, Inundations, or Epidemical Diseases and Plagues.

The Instances of the former are various. The *Romans* were a People civilized and improved into great Knowledge in Arts and Sciences, and in Civil and Military Government; and where they prevailed in Conquests and Victories, they did together with their Victories transmit Arts, Sciences, and excellent Methods of Government among even Barbarous Nations, which quite altered oftentimes the former Face of those conquered Countries, and by that means those Arts which were not known before in those Places, became in use and request in those Countries wherein before they were strangers: not as if they then began, for they

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had their Practice and Use long before among the *Romans*, though their transmission and derivation into those Countries that were conquered seemed new.

Again, some Countries were *benè morati*, well disciplined in Learning, Arts, and Knowledge, but possibly by the Irruption of numerous Armies of Barbarous People, those Countries were quickly over-grown with Barbarism and deluetude from their former Civility and Knowledge, and degenerated into the Ignorance and Barbarism of their Conquerors; so that in a reasonable Period of time much of their ancient Knowledge and Arts was forgotten, as if they never had it. This was the condition of *Greece* the Learned Part of the World after their subjugation by the *Turks*, and this possibly may be the condition of *China* in a few years after the great Irruption and Devastation by the *Tartars*; wherein possibly if an Age or two hence the state of things should be judged according to the present appearance, it would be looked upon as if it had never been the habitation of those Curious Arts which some time dwelt there: and possibly the setting on foot some of those very Arts that were once well known in those parts, would be looked upon as the *Natales* of those Arts, or the first Inchoation of them, Wars and Desolations having obliterated the Monuments of their former practices, which yet nevertheless would be in truth but the reviving of those Arts which were long before practised, though intermitted and interrupted by the vicissitudes of Wars.

And upon the same account are those alterations that have hapned in the condition and state of People by other accidents, as Inundations, Epidemical Diseases, Corruption of the Air in some Parts and Continents, either by some eruption of pernicious Vapours, or other Inclendency of the Heavens. *Plato* in his third Book *de Legibus*, in the beginning, though he suppose an interminate Beginning of Mankind, and that there were successively Cities, Laws, and Arts; yet he supposeth that upon these and the like Occurrences, those that escaped these common Calamities betook themselves to the Mountains, kept Sheep, and preserved the *Species* of Mankind; but most of those Arts and Sciences which formerly were common, became disused and forgotten among them: But after Mankind multiplying, they descended into the Vallies, and by degrees, mutual conversation, the necessity of their condition, and the due consideration of things did gradually revive those Arts which Men had formerly lost by long intermission. For such is the *indoles* of the Humane Nature, where it is not strangely over-grown with Barbarousness, that it will by a kind of Natural Sagacity discover things, especially necessary for the use of Humane Life and Society; as Husbandry, Laws, Government, Architecture, Clothing, and the like, as Bees or Ants provide for their common habitation and supply.

Upon all which it may seem that we are over-hasty when we conclude, That because Arts or Sciences do perchance discover themselves first to our view in such Places or Ages, that therefore this was their first and primitive production, or that they were never before. For it may very reasonably be, that those or the like Arts might have been either in other places, and by a kind of migration or circulation be transmitted to those new places either by Armies or Colonies deduced hither; or that even among

among the same People or Nation these Arts were sometimes flourishing, though possibly having received some intermission by great Accidents and Occurrences, they again do *repullulare* and revive upon the opportunity of Peace, Trade, Commerce and Popular Increase. Nay many times it comes to pass, as is before observed, That when People are multiplied, so that their places grow strait and narrow, and their supplies not proportionable to their number, necessity and exigence, it gives an edge to their Industry and Invention, and produceth new Discoveries of things that were either not known before, or forgotten: And even this one thing hath advanced the *Dutch* to that eminence of Manufacture, Industry and Arts, that they exceed the rest of the World therein.

We may have an Instance of this Circulation of Arts even in this Kingdom of *England* in that which is our great Manufacture, namely, Woollen Cloth: It appears very plainly by those ancient Gilds that were settled in *England* for this Manufacture, as at *Lincoln*, *Tork*, *Oxford* and divers other Cities, that in the time of *H. 2.* and *R. 1.* this Kingdom greatly flourished in that Art: but by the troublesome Wars in the time of King *John*, *H. 3.* and also in the times of *E. 1.* and *E. 2.* this Manufacture was wholly lost, and all our Trade ran out in Wools, Wool-fells, and Leather carried out *in specie*; and the Manufacture, during those Warly times, held its court in *France*, the *Netherlands*, and the *Hans Towns*; but by the Wisdom and peaceable times of *E. 3.* and his fair treating of foreign Artists, which he invited and entertained in this Kingdom, he regained that Art hither again, which for near one hundred Years had been for the most part intermitted, which hath hitherto continued to the great Wealth and Benefit of this Kingdom.

So that we are not to conclude every new appearance of any Art or Science is the first production of it, but as they say of the River *Tigris* and some others, they sink into the ground, and keep a subterranean course, it may be 40 or 50 miles, and then break out above ground again, which is not so much a new River, as the continuation and new appearance of the old: So many times it falls out with Arts and Sciences, though they have their non-appearances for some Ages, and then seem first to discover themselves where before they were not known, it is not so much the first production of the Art as a transition, or at least a restitution of what possibly was either before in another, or in the same Country or People: And thus some tell us that Guns and Printing, though but lately discovered in *Europe*, yet were of far ancients use in *China*.

So that notwithstanding this Consideration of the late Invention of Arts, or Discoveries of things Natural or Artificial, Mankind might have had an infinite succession, or at least such a continuance as surmounts all those Accounts which the most prodigal Computations have given: and that Saying of the Wise Man may be verified, *Ecclesiast. 1. 9.* *The thing that hath been is that which shall be, and that which hath been done is that which shall be done; and there is no new thing under the Sun: Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? It hath been already of old time before.*

I shall here add a farther Consideration, because it hath a cognation with the Subject of this Chapter.

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There seems to be very probable Conjectures made touching the Origination of Mankind, because there seems to be one Radical Language from which all others have their derivation, though some carry in them more, some less Memorials of their Original, as they were more or less remote in their Inception.

The Languages of the World may be aptly enough divided into the *Primo prima*, the *Primo secunda*, and the *Secundo secunda*.

The Language which I call *Primo prima* must needs be but one, if the Original of Mankind were but two common Parents of either Sex, as the Holy Scriptures teach us; and this one Language they must needs learn either from a conformation of Voices by the Angels, such might that vocal Language be between Almighty God by the ministrations of Angels, and Adam, whereof we read in the first and second Chapters of *Genesis*; or it must be an instituted Language, chosen by Adam in *Paradise*, by which he gave the several Beasts their names, and maintained discourse with GOD, and the Woman with the Serpent: For although it is as natural to Mankind to express their Desires, Passions, and Conceptions vocally, as it is for Brutes to use their natural vocal Signs, though of a more simple and imperfect kind; yet the forming of Languages into this or that particular fashion or mode, whereby Conceptions may be rendered intelligible to others, is a business of Institution, Discipline, Intention and Consent. But what this first Language of our first Parents was, is difficult for us to determine: some think it was the *Hebrew*, and from thence they derive other Languages, others think that the *Chineses* Language was the Original, because it is the most simple, consisting most of monosyllables, the most natural, fitting the apertures and flexures of the Lips and Tongue with the greatest ease, and yet having the greatest multiplicity and variety of Words; others again contend for the *Scythian* Language as the Primitive: all founded upon conjectural Reasons.

But when we consider how soon Languages are changed, and what a tract of time there was between the Creation and the Flood, and from thence to *Moses*, it may be difficult to suppose that that Language continued so long in its purity and integrity; possibly if in any Line it continued in its integrity, it might be in the Line and Family of *Noah*, and so down to the Confusion of Languages at the Tower of *Babel*.

But it is hard to determine what that Primitive Language was: the *Hebrew* or *Samaritan* bids fairest for it, 1. In respect of its Antiquity; 2. In respect of many Languages, especially of the East, that seem to be derived from it, as the *Caldee*, *Egyptian*, *Phenician*, *Syriack*, *Arabick*, which have a great cognation with it, and derivation, as it seems, from it.

And though possibly in those Elder times, as in the time of *Abraham*, these several Languages might be but as so many several Dialects of the same Language, whereby it came to pass that *Abraham*, though brought up in *Caldea* or *Assyria*, held conference with the King of *Gerar* and the Children of *Heth*, that were *Canaanites*, and as some think, used the *Hebrew* Language; his Servant also readily conferred with *Laban* the *Syrian*: *Isaac* also had conference with the *Philistims* and *Egyptians*, yet it is apparent that in process of time they grew into distinct Languages, unintelligible each to other: The Sons of *Jacob* understood not the *Egyptian* Language when they came down for Corn, *Gen. 42. 23.* neither did

did they afterward understand ordinarily the *Syrian* Language, *2 Kings 19. 26.* nor the *Caldean* Language, *Jer. 5. 15.*

But although it be commonly thought the *Hebrew* Language was the common Language of the *Canaanites*, yet it seems hard that the Holy and supposed Primitive Language should be preserved only in the Posterity of accursed *Canaan*, and from them derived to the Posterity of *Abraham* the Holy Seed.

As touching the Language of the *Seres* or *Chineses*, those that suppose it to be the Primitive Language, do suppose that *Noah's* Ark first rested upon the bordering Mountains of *China*, and that Country first peopled by the descendants of *Noah*; that they were not at the building of *Babel*. But this seems to be but a novel Conceit.

2. The Languages that were *Secundo prima*, were those that hapned upon the Confusion of Tongues, which the *Jews* suppose to be 70 or 72, from that place *Psal. 78. verl. 55. He hath divided the Nations according to the number of the Princes of Israel*, or the *Sanhedrim*; but whether they were so many, or more, or less, is not possible to determine.

Some suppose those Languages which are ordinarily called *Lingua matrices*, were some of those Languages that arose at the Confusion of Tongues, and are called *Matrices*, because divers other, especially of the *European*, seem to be much derived from them, namely, the *Greek*, *Latin*, *Teutonic*, *Slavonick*, *Scythian*, *Hungarian*, *Finnick*, *Cantabrian*, *Irish*, *British*, *Arabick*, *Frisick*, *Illyrian*, and *Farygium*.

But though these are taken to be *Lingua matrices*, yet much of their Languages seem to be borrowed from *Hebrew* and *Phenician* Language; and though they suppose those *Lingua matrices* might arise at the Confusion of Tongues, yet they were not totally estranged from that common Language which universally obtained before that Confusion, which some think as before, was the *Hebrew*; some reliques of which Primitive Language were notwithstanding that Confusion retained as Indications and Monuments thereof, as *Bochart* in his *Phaleg*, and out of him *Mr. Gale* in his Book called *The Court of the Gentiles*, endeavours largely to prove.

3. The third sort of Languages, which I call *Secundo secunda*, are those that have either been derived from those that were *Primo secunda*, or that have been compounded out of other Languages, or taken up *de novo* of later times, or by all of those ways have obtained in several parts of the World, as the *French*, *Italian*, *Spanish*, *Danish*, *English*, and divers others.

Now if it can be well deduced that there was some ancient Primitive Language that by reasonable Evidence can appear to be the common Root of all other Languages; it is reasonable to conclude, That surely there was some one common Head that was the Beginning of Mankind; for without this Supposition it is hardly possible that there should be a common Language at any time in the World, from which as from a common Root all the Languages of the World should in process of time be derived.

But this Evidence also taken singly, lies open to some Objections that weaken it upon these Considerations.

1. We have not clear Evidence enough of any single Primitive Language, nor what that Primitive Language was if such there hath been:

there might be in process of time a thousand successive Languages, and many that went before have been lost, and succeeded by others.

2. Those similitudes of Words of one Language which are found in another, give us no sufficient Demonstrations which of them was Primitive; the resemblances of words signifying the same thing in the *Hebrew* and *Greek* Language prove no more that the *Hebrew* was before the *Greek*, and lent Words to them, than that the *Greek* was before the *Hebrew*, and lent the similitude of Words to them.

3. If we consider almost any Language not before-hand or by some after means mancipated to Rules, we shall scarce find any that contain themselves in the same Articulation, Accent or Pronunciation for the space of three or four hundred Years, but are infinitely varied in process of time from what they formerly were. The *English* Language that was common and usual three or four hundred Years since, is scarce now intelligible by us; yea and the *Greek* Tongue, though a regular Language, and reduced to a Grammatical Canon, yet a good Grammatical *Grecian* can hardly understand a Native *Grecian*, nor a Native *Grecian* the other at this day: yea we are told by *Quintilian*, as I remember, that in *Rome* it self in process of time the *Latin* Language was so altered, that the Priests could not readily understand the Hymns composed for their Idol-Service by the ancient Priests of *Rome*.

4. As succession of Ages, so variety of places in the same Country and Nation gives such variety of Dialects in the same Language, that one side of a Kingdom scarce understands the other: witness the four Dialects of the *Greek* Language, and the several Pronunciations of the *French* in several parts of *France*, and the various Dialects of the *English* in the North and West that render their Expressions many times unintelligible to the other, and both scarce intelligible to the Midland: various Provinces of the same Kingdom, and that at first used the same Language, in process of time use various manners of Pronunciation, which in time also alter the structure of the Words as they are spoken or written, which in farther process of time alters the Language into several Dialects, as it did in *Greece* and other places.

5. Every Nation hath a certain humour or disposition appropriate to it, which by a kind of Natural necessity frames the very Air of Words, Speech and Accents accommodate and similar to that Natural humour or inclination;

————— *Graius dedit ore rotundo*

*Musa loqui* —————

In the very frame of the Speech of the *Spaniard*, *Italian*, *French*, *Dutch*, *Welsh*, *English* we may find a kind of Image of their Complexions and Tempers, suiting and framing their Speech, Accents, Tone, Pronunciation: Vowels conform thereunto, no less than in their Gate and Gesture; and this very Account would in a little time diversify one and the same Language in the Mouths of several Nations, so that in a little space they would not be the same.

6. Commerce and Trade with foreign Nations gives great alterations in Languages, each Country borrowing some Words, Accents, or Expressions from the other, whereby in a little time it is quite altered, and becomes

becomes a mixt confused Language, made up of the Ingredients of several Languages.

7. As in Clothes, so in Words, Phrases, and Expressions there commonly grow new Fashions, whereby it comes to pass that the same Words and Phrases that were not used, or scarce understood in former Ages, become in Fashion, Reputation and Vogue in another Age; and this obtains sometimes from the Courts of Princes, wherein a Word a little in request soon grows in fashion with the Gentry, and from them at the third hand passeth over to the Tradesman or Countryman.

8. Many times the *Literati* and *Scholares* coin new Words, and sometimes in common Speech or Writing in their Native Language, give Terminations and Idiotisms surable to their Native Language, unto Words newly invented or translated out of other Languages; which is sometimes done out of Affectation, sometimes out of Necessity, by reason of the want of sufficient significancy in their own Language; and when such Phrases or Words come abroad in printed Books, in Sermons or Orations, they become more general, and incorporate into the Native Language.

9. Many Languages of Countries are greatly altered and mingled, and sometimes totally eradicated and lost by Invasions and Victories, or by transmission of Colonies by Foreign Princes of a different Language. Thus by the chasing the *Britons* out of *England* into *Wales*, their Language was wholly exterminated from hence with them, and by the successive Incurfions and Invasions of the *Saxons*, *Danes* and *Normans*, the *English* Language grew a kind of mixture of them all, which yet in process of time hath been so much varied, that the *English* that was written in the time of *H. I.* is not now intelligible.

It is true that those Languages that are not now Native, though sometimes they were, but are preserved in Writing or Rules or Canons, have long kept their simplicity, as the *Hebrew*, *Greek* and *Latin*, which have been indeed preserved from being lost by vulgar use, but when a Language once becomes of vulgar use, it soon loseth its integrity; thus the *Latin* degenerated into the *Italian*, and the very *Hebrew* and *Greek* more barbarous by much where they are popularly used, than in the ancient Writings, wherein they have been preserved and kept to their ancient integrity.

Considering therefore the great instability of Languages, the great variations and changes to which they are subject, the great alterations that they have had, the great difficulty of finding any Language which (upon grounds barely of Reason, without Divine Revelation) we can safely call Original, and the great difficulty of deducing other Languages entirely from it: It is hard for us singly to lay any weight upon this Instance, to prove the Origination of Man upon a meer Moral Account or Topical Ratiocination thereof.

## C A P. V.

*The Fourth Instance of Fact seeming to evince the Novity of Mankind, namely, the Inceptions of the Religions and Deities of the Heathens, and the deficiency of this Instance.*

Religion seems to be as connatural to Humane Nature as Reason, and possibly a more distinguishing property of Humane Nature than it: For almost in all sensible Creatures, especially those of the more perfect kind, a certain Image or weak Adumbration of something like Reason appears, yet we find in no Creatures below Mankind any thing like Religion, or Veneration of a Deity: And those faint Conjectures touching something analogical to Religion observed in Elephants, are too weak to give any reasonable admission thereof in them.

Religion therefore seems as ancient as Humanity it self, at least of some kind of dress or fashion or other: therefore if we can arrive at the Inception of Religion, Veneration of a Deity, and those Rites, Adorations, and Services that result from thence; we have reason to conjecture that the Inception of Mankind was not long before.

And because the Inception of Mankind is not doubted by Jews or Christians, who acknowledge the Truth and Divine Authority of the Scriptures, that reveal and discover the Origination both of Mankind and the World, but the doubt only resteth among those of the Gentile World, it hath been thought a reasonable Argument to convince the Heathen World of the Origination of Mankind, by discovering the Origination not only of the Religious Worship of the Heathens, but even of those very Deities which they celebrated and venerated, and paid that Religious Worship unto.

And this Discovery of the Origination of their Heathenish Deities hath been endeavoured by two Methods: First, by following the ancient Histories of the Phenicians, Egyptians, Grecians, and Romans; by which means they have traced up most if not all their Heathenish Deities to their Original, and their first Inauguration into Deities; whereas they were in their original for the most part but Men of great Note and Merit or Power in the Ancient World, or such, who outgoing the ordinary rate of Mankind by some signal Excellence, Learning or Industry, were by the admiring inferior sort of Men translated into the Opinion and Veneration of Gods: and then there wanted not Poets and Priests to derive from them a Race and Progeny of Gods, which swelled into great Numbers, Pedigrees, and Genealogies of Gods and Heroes, *Theogonia*, which filled the superiour World as Men filled the inferiour World by successive Generations: And those Authors that have given us an account of the *Apotheoses*, the Inauguration of the Heathenish Deities and their successions, are many; especially, *Diodorus Siculus* in his first six Books; *Eusebius* in his first and second Book *De Preparatione Evangelii*, out of the Ancient Monuments of the Phenicians, Egyptians and Grecians; and *Clemens Alexandrinus* in *lib. 1. Stromat.* who gives us an account of the *Apotheoses* of *Bacchus*, *Hercules*, *Esculapins*, *Isis*, *Ceres*, *Serapis*, *Apis* and others, many of them, if not all,

all, having their being and translation into Deities after the time of *Moses*; and from the various Denominations of those Heathenish Deities, some had one Name among the Egyptians, another among the Phenicians, another among the Syrians, another among the Grecians; though possibly the Persons themselves were for the most part the same.

Secondly, By carrying up the Original of most of the Ancient Deities of the Heathens, and resolving them into *Noah*, and his Sons and Descendants, deducing by very probable Arguments that *Noah* was *Saturn*, *Chronos*, &c. that *Japhet* was *Neptune*, *Ham* *Jupiter*, *Shem* *Pluto*, *Canaan* *Mercury*, *Nimrod* *Bacchus*, *Magog* *Prometheus*: *vid. Bochart. in Phaleg. l. 1. Vossius de Idololatria origine & progressu. l. 1.* and others that have followed those Learned and Ingenious Authors.

But this Inference of the Recentness of Mankind from the Recentness of these *Apotheoses* and Origination of Gentile Deities, seems also too weak to bear up this Supposition of the *Novitas humani generis*.

1. Because although possibly some of their Heathenish Deities might have been of a late Edition, yet there might be many more that might be ancienter, who either were antiquated and forgotten, or they were translated to other Names and Successors; it faring with Idol Gods as it doth with Words or Languages,

————— *Cecidere cadentque,*  
*Quæ jam sunt in honore vocabula.* —————

The lust of Mens Fancies in Propagation of Deities was endless and unfaible. We are told out of *Varro* that there were no less than thirty thousand Heathenish Gods and Deities of all sorts, which were known in his time; and how many more there might be whose Names and Worship were long before that time antiquated, we cannot easily conjecture: only in all probability they were far more than those that survived. And therefore possibly there might be a Race and Succession of *Apotheoses* long antecedent to those whose Originals we have given us in Ancient Histories. We see how easily the *Roman* Calendar swells with new Consecrations of Saints, and to what a multitude they have grown within less than the compass of one thousand Years; and possibly had the World continued many thousand years before it is supposed to have began, there might have been an interminate succession of imaginary Deities, though many or most of their Names are now unknown, or the times of their Consecrations forgotten.

2. But yet farther, if we should suppose that this course of Idolatry began even shortly after the time of *Noah* and his three Sons, yet it is granted of all hands that the World had stood above 1600 Years before the invention of this kind of Idolatry: So that *ex confesso* this was not the first Religion in the World, neither did this Religion tread upon the Heels of the Origination of Mankind if Mankind was, and was 1600 Years before those Deities were found out; and so this Religion cannot pretend to be coeval with Mankind, nor give us any sufficient Indication of the Recentness of Mankind.

3. But yet farther, it is very apparent that this Veneration of Men Consecrated into Deities was not the ancientest Idolatry, much less the ancientest

ancientest Religion of the World: The Worshipping of the Host of Heaven, the *Sun*, *Moon*, and Stars was an Idolatry that way far more ancient than this of the Heathen Gods made of Men: and this is an Evidence of the antecedency of that Idolatry of the Stars and Heavenly Bodies, in as much as when these new consecrated Deities were made, they did as it were incorporate and affix them to that more ancient Idolatry, transferring the Names of their Gods to the Heavenly Bodies or Asterisms; as *Saturn* to the Star of *Saturn*, *Mars*, *Venus*, *Mercury*, *Jupiter* to the several Planetary Bodies; and to the *Sun* and *Moon* a prodigious number of Deities, as to the *Sun*, *Phœbus*, *Apollo*, *Osiris*, *Horus*, and many more; to the *Moon*, *Diana*, *Hecate*, *Venus*, *Astarte*, and many others: So that although we should allow the first Origination of those Heathenish Deities to have been when Historians give us an account, and not before; yet the Idolatry performed to the Heavenly or Elementary Bodies, the *Sun*, *Moon*, Stars, Fire, *Aether*, &c. might have had a long practice among Men before the Invention of these later Deities.

4. But yet farther; in as much as Truth is certainly more ancient than Error, we have reason to think that even before the ancientest Form of Idolatrous Worship in the World, even that of the Heavenly and Elementary Bodies, there was a True Worship of the True GOD, which might continue many Ages before any sort of Idolatry prevailed in the World. So that it would be too rash to conclude, That because many of the Heathenish Deities had their known Original, that therefore no other Religion anteceded it, or that that Religion soon followed the Origination of Mankind.

5. Besides all this there seems in the World, or at least it is very possible to suppose certain vicissitudes or relations not only in Arts and Sciences, as is before observed, but even in the Religions professed, which may obtain successively both in Places and Ages according to several vicissitudes: We see that in the Country of *Palestine* shortly after the Flood Idolatry obtained among the *Canaanites* and the descendents of *Ham*; after that, the Knowledge and Worship of the True GOD among the *Israelites* for many Ages; and after that, a degeneration of the greatest part thereof to Idolatry again in the Country of the Ten Tribes, and in a great part among the other Two Tribes: after that a Reformation and Restitution of the true Worship of God, in the return from the Captivity until Christ came; then the most sound and perfect Religion, namely Christianity, obtained for some time; then the return of Paganism, under persecuting *Roman* Emperours; then the prevalence again of the Christian Religion, under *Constantine* and some that succeeded him; then Popish Superstition; after that Turcism and Mahumetanism, especially in the parts of *Greece*, *Palestine*, *Egypt* and other parts of *Asia* and *Africa*. Thus various Professions of Religion have had various Vicissitudes, Revolutions and successive Alterations in Places and Ages.

*Albertus Magnus*, as I remember, with somewhat too much curiosity, and somewhat transported with too much fancifulness towards the Influences of the Heavenly Motions and Astrological Calculations, supposeth that Religion hath had its successive Alterations and Seasons according to certain Periodical Revolutions of the Planets: to the first Ages of the World he assigns the Presidency of *Saturn* in matters of Religion,

Religion, and so downward, according to several successive assigned Periods. These are vain Conjectures, but they serve to explain what I mean, namely, That there may be successive Alterations and Changes in the professed Religion of the World in successive Ages, and successively in the same and other places of the World; whereby it will be hard to determine the *Epocha* of the Commencement of Mankind by any one Form or Shape of Religion professed in the World; for there may be some Religion antecedent to that which to us in this Age appears to have been the ancientest; but still with this probable Conclusion, That since Truth is more ancient than Error, it seems, that if there were any Religion that was Primitive in the World, it was the true Religion and true Worship of the true God, and not Idolatry, or worshipping of Men or Idols, or the Works of Nature: and consequently, that although we had no Monuments extant of any Religion antienter than Idolatry, yet we had no reason to conclude that that Idolatrous Religion was the most ancient, or coeval to the Origination of Mankind: but rather, that Mankind had an Existence in the World much antecedent to such Idolatrous Worship, wherein the true God was for many Ages and Generations truly worshipped; and that partly by the subtilty of the Enemy of Mankind, partly by the apostacy and corruption of Humane Nature, and partly by the gradual decay of that true and ancient Tradition of the true Worship of the true God, Idolatry and Superstition prevailed and obtained in the World.

So that although it be a most certain Truth that Mankind had an Origination, and was not without Beginning, yet the Evidence of the Origination of their Idolatry and Idolatrous Deities, is no sufficient Proof or Evidence of the Origination of Mankind.

## C A P. VI.

*A Fifth Consideration concerning the Decays especially of the Humane Nature, and whether there be any such Decays; and what may be collected concerning the Origination of Man upon that Supposition.*

THIS Argument hath been excellently handled by Dr. *Hakewell*, I shall therefore be the shorter in it, yet somewhat I shall say concerning it.

Some of those that have been inquisitive into the Nature of Man have observed two things, which if they were true, would certainly give us an irrefragable Argument against the Eternal Succession of Mankind, viz. 1. That the Ages of Men grow gradually shorter and shorter: 2. That the Quantity of Humane Bodies was ordinarily heretofore much larger than they are now, and by a kind of gradual decay of that Natural Vigour and Strength they decline to a smaller Stature. Thus *Plutarch inter placita Philosophorum* tells us out of *Empedocles*, *Nostra ætatis homines præcis comparatos infantium initar esse*; and yet *Empedocles* lived upon

upon the point of 2000 Years since, and *Plutarch* near 1500 Years since; and *Pliny* in the 7<sup>th</sup> Book of his Natural History, cap. 16. tells us the same, *In plenum autem, cuncto mortalium generi minorem indies fieri propemodum observatur, rarosque patribus proceriores, consumente ubertate seminum exustione, in cuius vices nunc vergat avum*; and some Instances are given there and by the Additional Notes thereupon, of the great Sceletons of Mens Bodies found in several Ages, and that, *Fam ante annos mille vates ille Homerus non cessavit minora corpora mortalium quam prisca conqueri.*

And indeed if this natural Decrease of the Ages of Mens Lives and their Bodily Statures had held such a proportion, it would not only avoid the possibility of an Eternal Succession of Mankind, but would also give us a very late *Epocha* of their first Origination: For a very ancient Original, accompanied with such a natural Decrease of Age and Stature by reason of that insensible but unintermitted decay of the strength and stature of Nature, would have long since reduced Mankind to be but *Ephemeraes* in duration, and little other than Insects in extent, or rather wholly determined, and put a Period to the whole *Species* infinite Ages past.

But it seems that these are mistaken complaints both of *Empedocles* and *Homer*; for surely in so great a Period as 2000 or 1500 Years elapsed since the death of those Men the experiment of that Decrease would have been much more obvious and observable than we find it at this day. And although the nature of Mankind and of other Creatures subject to corruption, if left to it self without the continued *Subsidium* and Influence of the Divine Providence, would soon have fallen into dissolution *per saltum*, and without the incessant and corroding invasions of so long a time, yet that same Power that first gave Being to things, hath supported their successive Generations in the same state and natural vigour that it ever had, abating those accidental occurrences that Sin, Excess, and other occurrences have brought into things.

First therefore as touching the Decays of the Age of Man's Life, we do indeed learn from the Sacred Scripture (for no Humane History reacheth so high) That the Lives of the Ancients were very long, especially before and for some time after the Flood; and this the Divine Will-dom, Providence and Goodness ordered for most excellent Ends, namely, the Peopling of the New World, and that without any other means than his own Will, or at least by means unknown to us: in *Arphaxad* the Son of *Shem* the great Age of the Ancients was cut to halves, namely to 440 Years; and in his Grand-child *Peleg* it was again cut to halves, for he lived but 242 Years; and it is also true that afterwards gradually to the days of *Moses* the Lives of Men became shorter and shorter, till they fixed in that common Period of the Life of Man of 70 or 80 Years: and although it be true that the Histories of former times give us some account of longer Lives of Men, as the Lives of *Moses*, *Aaron*, *Phinehas* and some others, and those mentioned by *Pliny*, lib. 7. cap. 48. and some in our own Experience; yet *Moses* himself states the ordinary Standard of the Life of Man to be 70, or at most 80 Years. *Psal.* 90. 10. 2 *Sam.* 19. 32, 35. And this we shall find true upon the consideration of the Chronological Account of the Years of the ancient Patriarchs and Kings that succeeded *Moses*; as likewise of the time that the *Israelites* lived in the Wilderness, all which that were twenty Years old and upwards

wards at the coming into the Wilderness when the Spies were sent into *Canaan*, which was shortly after their coming thither, all these I say, except *Joshua* and *Caleb*, dyed within the 40 Years Peregrination in the Wilderness: and at this stay the ordinary Age of Men hath been for these 4000 Years, abating those casualties either of Diseases or other Accidents that have shortned the ordinary complete Ages of Mens Life.

2. As touching the Stature of Men, it must be agreed that in former Ages there have been Giants and Men of extraordinary Stature: some Instances we have in the same *Pliny* and other Heathen Authors, and many more in the History of the Old Testament: But these were out of the ordinary and regular course of Nature.

But it seems that ordinarily in all Ages the Statures of Men have little differed from what they now are, though according to the difference of Climates and situations there hath been ordinarily and regularly a difference in the Stature of Men; many times Marsh-Countries, and those that are of a temperate heat, producing Men of a larger size than Mountainous or those Parts that are nearer the Sun, as some parts of *Spain* and *Gallicia*.

And that the ordinary Stature of Mens Bodies is much the same now as anciently in the same Places or Regions appears by undeniable Experience: 1. The Bodies of the *Egyptians* that have been exsiccated into Mummy, and lain some thousands of Years, are found to have the same Stature or very little differing from what they now have; neither could they shrink into a shorter dimension by the length of time, considering that the Bones of all parts are joyned in their extremities, and could not become shorter without putrefaction, which occurs not in those exsiccated Bodies.

2. As the first practical Rudiments of Arithmetick were taken from the Parts of the Humane Body in the *Numeri primarii* or *Digitales*, so in Geometry it is evident that the first notation of Measures was taken from the Parts of the Body of Man, and very ancient both among the *Hebrews*, *Greeks* and *Romans*, and these hold still the same proportion as they did anciently.

These Measures according to the *Jewish*, *Arabian* and *Egyptian* Account are as followeth:

6 Barley-corns make 1 *Digit*.

An *Inch* consisted of 8 Barley-corns, or which is all one, one *Digit* and  $\frac{1}{3}$  of a *Digit*.

The *Palm* consisted of 3 *Inches*, or 4 *Digits*, or 24 Barley-corns, mentioned *Exod.* 25. 25.

*Spithama*, a *Span* consisted of 9 *Inches*, or 12 *Digits*; the half of a *Cubit*, namely, the utmost extent between the extremity of the Thumb and the little Finger extended to their greatest dimension. This was the Measure of *Aarons* Breast-plate. *Exod.* 28. 16.

A *Foot* consisted of 4 *Palms*, or 12 *Inches*, or 16 *Digits*, or 96 Barley-corns.

A *Cubit*, the interval between the Elbow and the extremity of the longest Finger; this was the ordinary *Cubit*, it consisted of 6 *Palms*, which allowing 3 *Inches* to a *Palm* is 18 *Inches*, or a *Foot* and a half: *vid. Kircher in Oedipo*, Tom. 2. *Class.* 8. where writing of the *Egyptian* *Cubit*,

Cubit, *Habet autem omnis Cubitus sex Palmos, & Palmus quatuor digitos, & Digitus sex grana hordei.* This was the usual *Mosaical* Legal Cubit which they used in Measures of Building; the length of *Ehnd's* Dagger, *Judges* 3. 16. and that measure whereby the dimensions of the Ark are measured: though besides that common Cubit they had among the *Jews* and *Egyptians* two larger sorts of Cubits, one called *Cubitus Regius*, which was 3 Inches longer than the ordinary Cubit; and the other called *Cubitus Geometricus*, which was double to the common Cubit, *viz.* 3 Foot, or according to others, 6 common Cubits, *viz.* 9 Foot.

These Measures according to the *Roman* or *Latin* Account are as followeth.

4 Barley-corns breadth make 1 Digit.

An Inch [*Uncia*] consisted of 5 Barley-corns and  $\frac{1}{2}$  of a Barley-corn, or which is all one, the breadth of the Thumb, or, 1 Digit and  $\frac{1}{2}$  of a Digit.

The Palm consisted of 3 Inches, or which is all one, of 4 Digits, or 16 Barley-corns.

*Spithama*, the Span consisted of 3 Palms, or 9 Inches, or 12 Digits, or 48 Barley-corns.

*Pes*, a Foot consisted of 4 Palms, or 12 Inches, or 16 Digits, or 64 Barley-corns.

*Cubitus*, a Cubit consisted of 6 Palms, or 18 Inches, or 24 Digits, or 96 Barley-corns.

*Gressus*, a Step, two Foot and a half; in *Greek* βῆμα.

*Passus*, a Pace, consisting of 2 Steps, or of 5 Foot according to the *Roman* Account, but according to the *Greek* Account 6 *Roman* Feet and  $\frac{1}{2}$ ; so that the *Grecian* Pace was longer than the *Roman* by a Foot and quarter.

*Oryza*, or a Fathom, the distance between the extremities of the Fingers of each Hand, the Arms being extended, which very near answers the length of any person from Head to Foot; and to reduce it to a certainty, the usual estimate thereof is 6 Foot. *Vide de hac re Danielem Angelocratorem de Ponderibus & Mensuris.*

The usual Computation according to a medium or proportion of the height of a Man is 6 Foot, or a regular Fathom, or 4 Cubits: So *Vitruvius*, *Pes est sexta pars altitudinis corporis, Cubitus quarta*: with this agrees *Kircher*, *ubi supra*; *Altitudo humana è quatuor communibus Cubitis Egyptianis, unus quoque Cubitus sex Palmis, Palmus quatuor digitis.* So that the ordinary height of a Man is 96 Digits which the ancient *Egyptians* estimated to be equal to that Mystical Cubit among them stiled *Passus Ibis*, or the Trigon that the *Ibis* makes at every step, consisting of 3 latera, each 32 Digits, amounting in all to 96 Digits, the common Measure of the procerity of a Man, or 4 common Cubits.

These were the very ancient estimates of distances taken from the Parts of a Man, and their extent; namely, the Finger, the Thumb, the Span, the Cubit, the Fathom, the Foot, the Step; and these were the estimates and reduction of them to known and certain Measures, and these Proportions are still, even in our Age, in Men that are of an ordinary stature: The Fingers breadth now as anciently 6 Barley-corns breadth; the 4 Fingers or Palm about 3 Inches; the Span, the Cubit, the Foot, the Step,

Step, the Fathom of the same extent and dimension now as anciently, and the ordinary estimate of a tall Man 6 Foot now as then: Witness our Old Statute called *Compositio Ulnarum & Perticarum*; *Tria grana hordei sicca & rotunda (viz. in length) faciunt pollicem, duodecim pollices faciunt pedem, tres pedes faciunt ulnam, quinque ulna & dimidium faciunt perticam, quadraginta pertica in longitudine & quatuor in latitudine faciunt acram.* Whereby we have very plain reason to conclude that *Empedocles* and *Pliny* were mistaken touching the gradual diminution of Humane Stature, since those Measures that took their denomination and extent from the Parts of Men held anciently that extent and length that the very same Parts in Men hold in these times.

And truly if we look upon the progressive Growth and Periods in Humane Nature, as also in all other perfect Animals, they hold regularly the same state and order as they held in the most remote Ages whereof we have any Memorial in Ancient Writings or Histories. The same time for the Formative process of the Humane Embryo now as is recorded to have been usual in the times of *Aristotle* and *Hippocrates*, *viz.* ordinarily in the beginning of the tenth Month, *Aristot. Hist. Animal. cap. 3. & 4. Hippocrat. de Carnibus, in fine.*

The proportion of Stature the same now as anciently; they bred Teeth at 7 Months, *Aristot. Hist. Animalium, l. 2. cap. 10.* shedding and new breeding of Teeth at 7 Years; *Censorinus de Die Natali, cap. 14.* and again breeding of the *novissimi maxillares* or *genuini dentes* at 20. *Arist. Hist. Animal, l. 2. cap. 4.* At 5 Years of age in an ordinary growth the procerity is half of that which will be attained at full age, *Aristot. de Generatione Animalium, l. 1. cap. 18.* though *Pliny l. 7. cap. 16.* assigns that proportion to *trimatos* or 3 Years of age, but mistakenly, as it seems.

The ordinary Period of the Humane Procreative Faculty in Males 65, or at most 70; in Females 45, or at most 50. *Arist. Hist. Animal, l. 5. cap. 14.*

The several Periods of the Ages of the Life of Man according to *Hippocrates* divided into 7, *viz.* at 7, at 14, at 22, at 35, at 42, at 61, and from thence to the end of Life, which at most is 81 or 84, upon the greatest ordinary Account. *Vide Rhodogin. l. 19. cap. 21.*

So that although the Humane Nature, as to that part of it that is Corporeal, is subject to changes and corruptions, and not of so firm and stable a consistence as the Heavenly Bodies, and consequently not so capable of a permanent and fixed constancy and continuation as they; yet by the constant and unintermitted Influx of the Divine Providence this corruptible and mutable Nature of Mankind, yea and of the other perfect Animals, is admirably preserved in the same measure of extent, regular procedure, and length of duration, as it hath been many Thousands of Years since. Indeed it may be possibly true, that Accidents, accidental Occurrences, Intemperance, ill and noxious Effluvia from the Earth, Waters, and intemperature of the Air, and other Accidents may in these latter Ages of the World produce some such Diseases and accidental Disorders as may possibly more infect Mankind, and occasion more Mortality than in former Ages. But as to the regular and ordinary course of Natural procedure and state of things with Mankind, yea and other Animals, there seems to be little or no decay or variation from what hath been formerly

formerly (abating that Concussion which the Perfection of the Humane Nature suffered by the first Fall, and the shortning of Mens Lives, which is of another Consideration.)

And therefore I am not so apt to attribute that firm Consistency of the Heavenly Bodies, their constant uninterrupted and invaried Motion, and those other Indications of Permanency and Perpetuity, barely or singly to the singular and indissoluble Texture of their Nature or Composition, as to that incessant Influx and uninterrupted Causality of the Divine Power and Providence, which I so plainly see preserves almost an equal regularity in the Motions, Processes, Succession, and Condition of poor, frail, Sublunary Bodies, which in their little Period belonging to their specifical and individual Nature, have the same regularities and orders now as formerly, and in the whole Systeme of their specifical Nature preserved in the successive Individuals for many thousands of years, obtain the same regularity, order, and method of Existence, without decay, as it hath always held.

This Supposition therefore of the gradual decay of the state of Humane Nature, though *in hypothesis* it would strongly infer a late Origination of Man, yet it is false *in thesis*, and so concludes nothing touching the Argument in hand, namely, the Origination of Mankind in some determinate Point of Finite Duration.

An Ingenious Person, in a new Essay of Natural Philosophy, Entituled, *New Principles of Philosophy, Part. 2. Cap. 22.* tells us: That the Sun or Fiery Region gains gradually upon the Inferior Elements, so that the greatest Declination of the Sun in the time of *Hipparchus* and *Ptolemy* was observed to be 23 deg. 52 min. but is since found to be reduced to 23 deg. 30 min. or 28 min. which is a necessary Consequent of the Suns gradual approximation towards the Earth: And if that should be so, it were a necessary Argument of the Origination of the World, and with it of Mankind, within a certain Period of Time. But we must not be over hasty in allowing of that Position, for every Day gives us Instances how difficult it is exactly to find out the Distances of the Heavenly Bodies, Lines, and Motions, especially when we come to measure them by Minutes, or Parts of Minutes, which cannot be effected but by Mathematical Instruments, which can never reach to a perfect exactness in this nature.

### C A P. VII.

*The Sixth Evidence of Fact proving Novitatem generis humani, namely, The History of the Patres familiarum, and the Original Plantation of the Continents and Islands of the World.*

**I**N Profane Authors and Historians we may find the Roots and Founders of many Kingdoms, Monarchies, and States, either by Victories, or by Emigrations, or by Intestine Commotions, or by common Consent of the People or Inhabitants: Thus we find the Foundation of the later States or Monarchies in that Constitution at least wherein they now stand,

or

or in some former Ages stood: As the Foundation of the *English* Monarchy in the *Norman* Conquest, and before that, the Foundations of the *Saxon* and *Danish* Monarchies in this Kingdom, in the old Histories of *Hoveden*, *William of Malmsbury*, and others. The like might be found for the Foundation of the *French*, *Spanish*, and *Danish* Kingdoms, the Empire of *Germany*, of the *Grand Seigneur*, and others. And ancienter Histories give us an account of the Foundation of the *Roman* Empire in *Romulus*, of the *Grecian* in *Alexander*, of the *Persian* in *Cyrus*, of the *Babylonian* in *Nabonassar*, of the *Assyrian* in *Belus*, *Ninus*, *Semiramis*. But yet, as is formerly observed, the Discovery of these Originations of Civil Coalitions into Kingdoms and Empires, do not lead us up to the Origination of Mankind, in the material Constituents of these Kingdoms and Empires, for the Men that made up these Civil Bodies, or at least their Ancestors, had a Being before, though perchance under a different form of Civil Government, or under some other Names or Governour: As the several States of *Greece*, before their coalition into one Kingdom under *Alexander*, or *Philip* his Father, subsisted in several smaller Principalities or Commonwealths. For these kind of Histories, though they afford us the Inception of new Governors or Governments, the *Capita Regiminum*, yet they give us not the *Capita Familiarum*: For though *Romulus*, for Instance, laid the Foundation of the City and Monarchy of *Rome*, and became as it were the Parent of that City and State, yet he was not the Parent of the Men that were the material Constituents of it, for they were a *Farrago*, or Collection of many people that had their Existence long before in themselves or their natural Progenitors. And upon the same account it is, that although many Histories, as *Diodorus Siculus*, *Thucydides*, *Herodotus*, and others, do give us some true and some fabulous Derivations of the Names of Places or Countries, from the Men that seemed to be the Heads or Roots of those Denominations, yet though they should be all admitted to have truly given those Denominations to those Countries, it doth by no means follow, that they were the Parents of the Inhabitants thereof; but they were such, as either by War, or Power, or Election of the People, presided in those places, and gave them thereupon their denomination. Thus they tell us, That *Helen* gave the denomination to that part of *Greece* which was called *Helenica*, and those *Grecians* were called *Helenista*. *Pelasgus* was he that gave the denomination to the *Pelasgi*, another part of *Greece*. *Latinus*, to *Latium* and the *Latins*. *Danaus*, to another Cept of the *Grecians*. *Tenes*, the Son of *Cygnus*, to *Tenedos*. *Cretus*, to *Creta* and the *Cretians*. *Italus*, as some say, to *Italia* and the *Italians*. *Romulus*, to *Rome* and the *Romans*. And infinite more such Allusions of Denominations of Countries and People, from the Name of him that presided either in the Army, or Colony, or Countrey unto which such Denominations were after given: And yet *Latinus*, nor *Pelasgus*, nor *Cretus*, nor *Helen*, were any more the Natural Parents of all those persons that were called *Pelasgi*, or *Cretenses*, or *Helenista*, or *Latini*; than *Romulus* was the Natural Parent of all those people that were the first Inhabitants of *Rome*, or of those that were after Incorporated and Infranchised into that Name, City, or Government. Indeed these were such persons, as perchance were the Captains of those Armies or Colonies that were commanded by them,

or



or were such as were the Heads or Founders of the Monarchies or Kingdoms that they thus founded; or such as did *sustinere nomen & personam totius communitatis*, and thereby had the Power and Privilege to give a Denomination to those Countries or People they governed, calling them after their own Names: But they were not the Natural Roots, or common Natural Parents of all them that bore their Denomination, though it may be very likely they had some Children of their own which might participate in that common Denomination.

This therefore singly considered, namely, the Denomination of People from some one Person, is not sufficient to assure us that all those Persons that bore that Denomination were derived by Natural Propagation from him whose Name they so bear; but though it may be true that such a Denomination may be communicated to such only, as descended by Natural Propagation from him, as I shall hereafter instance, yet it may be otherwise: Therefore I have no reason to conclude, That wheresoever I find a Society of Men bearing the Denomination of one Man, that that Man was the Natural Parent of those that bear that Denomination, unless I have some better Evidence than Allusion of Names, since it is apparent in these Histories that it is otherwise.

Upon this Reason it seems plain, that it will not be possible from any Prophane History to find the Original Parents of any one Kingdom, much less of Mankind. It is very evident indeed, that by help of a continuation of Prophane Histories or other common Monuments well kept together, the Genealogies and Ramifications of some single Families even to a vast and numerous extension may be preserved. But that will not do the business that I intend. For it is rare, and beyond Example in any Author that I know, that the entire and complete Pedigree of the whole Descendants of any particular Family is deduced down through the space of a thousand Years last past; whereas such Instances as must serve my turn must be such as are at least five thousand Years old, or otherwise I shall fail in the application of this Topick now in hand to the Matter in question.

It remains therefore that for Instances of such Antiquity useful to my purpose I must resort to the ancientest History, namely, the History of *Moses*, which as it is a History of the ancientest Times and Occurrences in the World, so it is a History that was written at the greatest distance from this Time, and nearest to the Times and Things whereof he writes; no History in the World being so ancient as this by near eight hundred Years, for so long lived *Moses* the Author of this Book before *Homer* the first Prophane Historian that is extant.

And if any Man shall object against the competency of this Instance, 1. Because the same *Moses* whom I use in this Topick is the person that asserts the thing *de quo ambigitur*, namely the first Production of Mankind, and therefore that he is incompetent in this Case: 2. Because all that urge the Testimony of *Moses* urge him as infallible, divinely inspired, and so whatsoever he saith must not be contradicted; and upon such a Supposition there were a compendious way of evincing the Question in hand of the Inception of Mankind, by telling us that *Moses* who wrote by an infallible Spirit and Inspiration, tells us that Mankind was Created by GOD about 6669 Years since according to the *Seventy*; and

and so there needs no farther Reason, nor can be any farther Controversie touching it.

To this I shall say these things: That although it is certain that *Moses* was Inspired by an Infallible Spirit in what he wrote, and that he doth in plain terms tell us that Man was at first Created by Almighty God, and therefore to me or any else that is satisfied of the Infallible Authority of the Holy Scripture, this is sufficient to satisfy that the truth is as *Moses* hath informed us, and there needs no other Argument to support my Faith of the truth hereof: yet because I am writing of those Natural and Moral Evidences of this Truth that may be of strength enough to evince the truth of this Assertion, upon the apparent Moral Evidences of the credibility of the Writings of *Moses*, I shall here urge the Authority of *Moses* for the Proof of the Matters of Fact in question as I would urge *Herodotus* or *Livy* to prove a Matter of Fact alledged by them; and at this time and in this Dispute shall only use his Testimony as a Moral Evidence of the Truth he asserts, as an Evidence of Credibility. And as I shall not exact a Subscription to the Truths he delivers upon the account of his Infallibility, so it is not reason to deny that Credibility of what he relates, which would be allowed to a Prophane Author; especially when it carries with it singly, without the contribution of the Supposition of a Divine Authority, as great an evidence of truth as any History in World besides.

And as to that which is said, That the Supposition of the truth of what *Moses* asserts, is to supple the thing controverted, because *Moses* asserts the Creation of Mankind: I say, 1. That I shall not at all instance in that Assertion as to determin the Question, but only so far forth as it is a Moral Evidence of the truth of it; namely, That this was a thing believed near 4000 Years since by Wise Men, such as *Moses* was, and by them that were much nearer to the time wherein the Origination of Mankind and those other Matters of Fact that are contributory to the Proof thereof was transacted; and therefore in common Reason must needs have a clearer Tradition and Evidence of the truth in this matter than the Ages so many thousand Years after; but this I shall reserve to its proper place. 2. In this place I shall not at all insist upon the Tradition of *Moses* touching the Creation of Man, but only upon those Historical Narratives delivered by *Moses* relating to such Matters of Fact that were nearer his time, and such as he might very reasonably know and deliver as an Historiographer; namely, the Propagation of Mankind after the Flood, and the Reduction of most of the considerable Nations of the World to their several Roots or Parents by Natural Propagation, and the credibility of his Relation touching it: Though even the credibility of this Relation of his gives a great Evidence and Attestation, even upon a Moral account, to what he writes touching the Creation of Man, and those parts of the History antecedent to the Flood.

The Sum therefore of the *Mosaical* History that I shall in this place make use of, is this:

1. That a Universal Flood was brought upon the Earth in the Year 1656 after the supposed Creation of Man according to the *Jewish* Account, although the *Septuagint* allows a longer Period between the Creation and the Flood,

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2. That