

**COMPLETE DISPUTES OF LA PLACETTE ON
PREMOTION, CONCURRENCE AND SIMILAR TOPICS,
IN WHICH IS ADDED VOLUME 2 OF A TREATISE OF
MR. NAUDÉ AGAINST THE SAME.**

Note of the Translator: There is a Vol. 1 of Naudé's which I couldn't find anywhere and this is the reason why I didn't translate it and compiled it here.

The table of contents of each work has the page number of the original document, so don't rely on that.

The first 3 works and the last work are from La Placette. The fourth work is from Naudé. The works are place in chronological order.

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RESPONSE TO TWO OBJECTIONS

Which are opposed from Reason to what Faith teaches us about the Origin of Evil, and about the Mystery of the Trinity.

WITH AN ADDITION, Where it is proved that all Christians agree on what is most incomprehensible in the Mystery of Predestination.

BY JEAN LA PLACETTE; Pastor of the French Church of Copenhagen.

IN AMSTERDAM, At the expense OF ESTIENNE ROGER, Merchant Bookseller, from whom one finds a general assortment of all kinds of Music.

M. D. CCVII. [1707]

PREFACE.

IT is only too well known in the world that Mr. B., having undertaken to prove that one must not listen to Reason on matters of Faith, and that one must count as nothing all that can be most strongly opposed to revealed Truths, has collected for this purpose most of the Objections that heretics and unbelievers are accustomed to make to us, and has pushed and supported them with all his strength, maintaining that it is impossible to oppose anything to them that would satisfy the mind even slightly.

Among these Objections there are three main ones, which do not lack color. The first is taken from the Permission of Sin, and tends to prove that God could not allow man to sin without himself violating the most sacred laws of Wisdom, Goodness, and Holiness. The second is taken from the contradictions that one claims to find in the Mystery of the Trinity. And the third from the impossibility, which one wants there to be in reconciling the freedom of the Creature with the foreknowledge of the Creator, with the immutability of his Decrees, and with the insurmountable efficacy of the operations of his Grace.

Some distinguished Authors have undertaken to respond to these Objections, especially to the first, which is the most plausible. But as they have built on foundations that seem to me not at all solid, and which are not even received everywhere, it was desirable that another would enter the lists, and that he would examine these Objections by comparing them with principles more certain and less contested.

As I have always hoped that this would not fail to happen, I have not thought to undertake it. But seeing that what I expected did not appear, I believed that I was no longer permitted to remain at rest, and three considerations have strengthened me in this thought.

The first is that all that Mr. B. says on this subject is directly opposed to what I said some time ago in the last ten chapters of my Treatise on divine Faith. It is true that as far as I can judge, Mr. B. has never read this Work. I believe even that he has not heard of it, and I am not at all surprised. What I can do is too small a thing to let me believe that my Writings are able to make even a little noise in the world, especially in the learned world. But be that as it may, what I maintained in that little book, falling to the ground, if what Mr. B. claims is true, I believed that I could not dispense with examining it.

The second reason that determined me to undertake it is taken from the attentive consideration of the unfortunate consequences that the claim of Mr. B. can naturally have, if it is received. He claims that Reason can be contrary to Faith, or to say the same thing in a manner that prevents all grounds for complaint, that one can combat revealed Truths by reasons, to which it would be impossible to respond well. And I am persuaded, and I believe I have proved it in my Treatise on divine Faith, that to maintain this is, on the one hand, to ruin Faith, and to overturn all its foundations, and on the other to throw us into a state even more frightful than direct and dogmatic Atheism, I mean Pyrrhonism. Being persuaded of this, was I permitted to be silent, and could I keep silence without prevaricating!

My third reason is taken from the consideration of each of the particular proofs, which Mr. B. uses, to show that one must despise the oppositions of our Reason. The first goes no less than to undermine all the foundations of Religion in general, and of Christianity in particular. One can say nearly the same thing about the third. And as for the second, it is clear that its effect would be to ruin one of the most august of our Mysteries, which is that of the Trinity.

If the first only tended to support the hypothesis of the two Principles, one good, and the other evil, one should perhaps neglect it. This hypothesis is so absurd, and Mr. B. himself has so solidly refuted it, that there is very little reason to fear that, neither this proof, nor any other similar one, would throw into this error any of those who will know how to make some use of their Reason. But it is much more to be feared that it will give Proselytes to Atheism, and to the Philosophy of Epicurus.

What is specious about it is contained in this proposition: If the world were the work of a good Principle, of a supremely beneficent God, one would not perceive in it evil of any order, moral, or physical. That is what is dazzling in this Objection, and that is also what Mr. B. has tried to prove by several considerations, which do not lack color.

Let us suppose that this is true. It will be impossible to conclude solidly from it the hypothesis of the two Principles. This proposition could be true in the view of

Epicurus, in that of Spinoza, etc. There could be good and evil in the world, without two contrary Principles having worked together to fabricate it. That would have happened naturally without the intervention of these two Principles, if the world is eternal, if it necessarily exists, if it was formed by pure chance, etc.

Thus to rectify this argument it would be necessary to give it a disjunctive conclusion, and to conceive it in this manner: There is good and evil in the world. Therefore one must say one or the other of these three things, either that it was made by two contrary Principles, or that it was formed by the fortuitous concurrence of atoms, or that being eternal it necessarily exists as it is.

If this Objection has any force, it has it visibly being thus proposed, instead of having neither force, nor likelihood by reducing it to this Enthymeme, There is evil in the world. Therefore, a bad Principle had a hand in it.

The effect therefore of this Objection, if it has any, is the necessity of choosing, between the three hypotheses that I have indicated, that of the Manicheans, that of the Epicureans, and that of the Spinozists. Now there is very little likelihood that one would choose the first, which is so absurd, instead of it being only too possible that one would attach oneself to one of the two latter, which have incomparably more partisans.

Indeed, I do not believe that there is a single Manichean in Europe, which is perhaps the only part of the world, where one possesses the art of reasoning. But, alas! alas! how many how many Spinozists and Epicureans there are!

The most natural effect, therefore, and the most to be feared from this Objection, being that of spreading more and more Atheism, I believed that it was my duty to oppose it, and that is the third reason that prompted me to do so.

I have therefore tried to resolve this first Objection. I have added my reflections on the second, and I have not neglected the third. But as the examination that I have made of this last has led me a little far, and as there is material for a volume, I believed that I could defer its publication to another time, and that it was sufficient that I give presently to the Public what I have thought on the first two questions, that of the permission of Evil, and that of the Trinity.

But as I have noticed that if some make too much of these kinds of Objections, several do not make enough, and imagine that they are permitted to despise them, under the pretext that they are taken from Reason, which is so weak, and from natural light, which is so troubled since sin, which can only have unfortunate consequences, I believed that it was my duty to examine this pretext, and to show its vanity and falsity. That is the subject of the first Dissertation, which may pass for a preliminary Dissertation.

Although I treat this matter with some care, I do not however claim to have exhausted it. It would require for that other research, and other efforts of meditation. But besides that what I have said on this subject, in my Treatise on divine

Faith, can supplement a part of what is lacking in this Dissertation, I do not despair of one day making a complete Treatise on this subject, and it has been some time since I would have undertaken it, if I could have recovered all the books that would be necessary for me for this purpose. Not having been able to do it, whatever effort I have made in this design, I will try to see in the future, if I can succeed more happily.

In the meantime, I believed that the little I say here, could be of some use, to open the eyes of certain people, who under the specious pretext of supporting the privileges of Faith, imprudently fall into the traps, that the most dangerous adversaries of this Faith lay for them thereby.

In the second Dissertation, I examine the Objection taken from the Origin of Evil, or what amounts to the same thing from the Permission of Sin; and in the third I attach myself to one of the main difficulties, which arise from the Mystery of the Trinity.

As in the second Dissertation, I have availed myself of a certain maxim, which I regard as one of the keys to the matter of Predestination, I believed that one would not find it wrong that I indicate more distinctly its use, and that I show, as I believe I have done, that the sentiments of Christians on this matter, are much less distant from each other than one imagines.

I do not know if it is my heart, or my reason, which has extracted this Addition from me. It seems to me to see very distinctly that I owed this small effort to the clarification of a matter as obscure, and as violently agitated, as this one. But it is not impossible that my heart has even more part in it than my reason. I admit indeed, that one of my strongest passions is the desire I would have to diminish the number of disputes that tear Christianity apart, and to show that there are many things, about which one disputes only because one does not want in any way to understand each other. I have tried to show it in other Works on some questions, and I do not despair of showing it again on others. Be that as it may, I have not been able to resolve to let this occasion pass to work on this design, which I admit is close to my heart.

I will say nothing of the manner in which I have executed this project. It is for the Public, and not for me, to pronounce on it. I am only going to try to respond to two Objections that I do not doubt will be made to me on this subject.

Several will find fault that I suppose various things which are in question: for example, the existence of God, Creation, the divinity of Scripture, the truth of Christianity, etc. As all this is denied, or called into doubt, by most of those who are the true authors of these Objections, it seems that I could not suppose it, without falling into that gross sophism that the School calls a petition of principle.

But I have three responses to make to this Objection.

The first is that if I suppose these truths without proving them, it is because others have proved them, and that not being able to do it myself, without composing a very large volume, I believed that I could dispense with undertaking it. What I propose to

do is not a complete and finished Work: it is a simple supplement, it is a simple addition to several others, which have already appeared, and which notwithstanding their abundance, have left me something to say. Let one therefore join this small Treatise to the others which have established the truth of the Christian Religion. If one does it, as I wish, one will see that I suppose nothing, which has not been proved here, or elsewhere.

I respond, secondly, that even if one would want to consider this Work as separate and detached from any other, one could not reproach it with the deficiency that I have indicated. The reason is that it does not tend to convince unbelievers, or to persuade them of the truth. It tends only to repel their attacks, and to show that their Objections are not solid, and have nothing demonstrative.

Now everyone knows that there is this difference between the two sides of a dispute, that what is not permitted to the attacker, is to the responder. The attacker cannot suppose what is in question, without appearing ridiculous. But the responder can, as several have shown, particularly Petau Vol. II. of his Theological Dogmas, Book. III. chap. 9. n. 16.

That being established, one can say that when a responder produces his own thesis, his own belief, he does not fall into the sophism of which I have spoken, but he honestly warns the attacker that he himself falls into it, and that he must prove what he is content to affirm.

Besides, it is good to convince of the solidity of our proofs, those very ones who are persuaded of the truths that they establish. This is what one tries to do every day. Thus those who undertake to prove the existence of God by the inspection of the world and its parts, rarely forget to say, that it is the argument of St. Paul, Rom. I. and they make this observation, not to persuade atheists thereby, but to show the Faithful, that they are right to lean on a proof which a great Apostle was willing to use. I have been able to do the same thing, and prove my responses by the greatest principles of Religion, hoping that if these proofs do not convince atheists, they will not be useless for Christians.

The second Objection that I am sure will be made to me, is that various things, which I have put forth, are excessively abstract, and difficult to understand, especially for most Readers, who are incapable of the application and the penetration necessary to enter into these kinds of precisions.

I admit in good faith that there is some truth in this Objection. But I beg my Reader to wait to condemn me on this, until he has taken the trouble to examine if I have been able to avoid this inconvenience. Was I not obliged to follow my Adversary everywhere? Could I prescribe to him the Objections that he should make to me? Did I not have to examine them whatever they were? And when these Objections have shocked abstract and metaphysical truths have I been able to dispense with supporting them?

For example; Where is the Objection that Mr. B. most emphasizes against the Mystery of the Trinity, and which no Anti-Trinitarian has neglected, taken from? Is it not from the maxim which holds that if two subjects are identified with a third, they are necessarily so between themselves? And this maxim where is it taken from? Is it not from the foundation of Metaphysics? What is there that is more proper, more particular, to this Science than the matter of identity and distinctions? What does it have, either more abstract, or more subtle? Was it therefore possible to resolve this Objection, without making the discussion of this maxim? And could this discussion be done without touching things very delicate, and very elevated above the reach of common minds?

I say the same thing about the order of divine Decrees, which is a subject that must necessarily be explored, to give some light to the difficulties that arise from it, and above all, to be able to judge the strength and weakness of the Objections, that those who dispute on it make to each other, and in a manner more insulting than they should.

It is therefore necessary, either to say nothing on this subject, which perhaps would be the best, if it were possible, but which is absolutely impracticable in the state where things are; or to be content with skimming the matters, and saying only what is most trivial, and most superficial, which seems to me absurd and unbearable; or to try to discover the roots, and the foundations, both of the difficulties and of the proofs, which cannot be done on several matters, without saying things that not everyone will understand.

We also see that the most celebrated Authors, and the most universally approved, have not scrupled to act in this way. Let one take the trouble to read the dispute of Mr. Arnaud and Fr. Malebranche, on the nature of ideas, the Essay of Understanding of Mr. Locke, and the Use of Reason of Mr. Regis: I am much mistaken, if one does not admit to me that my Metaphysics is flat, crawling, trivial, and crude, compared to that of these excellent Writers.

But this is dwelling too much on very little. What does it matter, indeed, to know if I could have been clearer, and if not being as much as I would wish, is it my fault, or that of the matter? What interest has the Public in this question? What matters a little more, is to know if my responses are good, and satisfy what the Objections have that is most pressing. It is on this that I await the judgment of the Public, and I admit that I await it on this with less tranquility and indifference.

It is not that this itself seems very important to me. I am far from imagining that the decision of this great process depends on the manner in which I may have defended the good cause. When I would have gone about it badly, the Truth will lose nothing thereby, it not being possible that it should lack good defenders. But I admit that it would be extremely sweet for me, to have contributed something to the victory that I hope it will win, and to be counted among those who will have worked on it with success.

But the efforts of men are useless without the help and blessing of God. I pray Him from the bottom of my heart, that it would please Him to make mine succeed to the glory, and to the clarification of his Truth.

December 22, 1706.

One believes one should add here, that the Manuscript of Monsieur la Placette was in these Provinces, and that one was going to put it in the hands of the Bookseller, when one learned of the death of Mr. Bayle. This circumstance stopped the one who was in charge of it. He wanted to give notice of it to Mr. la Placette, to know if he had any new measures to take. Thus one has put the Work under the press, only after having received a new order to do so, without bringing any change to it. One believes one should also say that it is neither with the approval nor the knowledge of Mr. la Placette, that one has put at the top of the pages the title that is there. He had marked the name of Mr. Bayle in his Work, only by the first two letters, his moderation having gone so far as to not want to name him; but those who have been charged with the printing, finding the title uncomfortable for the top of the pages, have judged it appropriate to put it as it is. Here is what he wrote to them on this subject. For the article that concerns the name of Mr. Bayle in full, I would have wished that one had followed the manner that I had chosen, and which had seemed to me the most honest. It was besides very conformable to my humor. But I understand very well that one would have stood firm on this, and that one wanted it: And that being established I would have taken the part of yielding.

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RESPONSE to Two OBJECTIONS Opposed on the Part of Reason to What Faith Teaches Us about the Origin of Evil, and on the Mystery of the Trinity.

FIRST PART. Where it is shown that these Objections should not be despised under the pretext that they come from Reason.

CHAPTER I. Design of this Writing. Three Pretexts that can be alleged to color the contempt one has for these Objections. What is meant by Reason.

I undertake to clarify some of the difficulties that Reason is claimed to find in what Faith teaches us on two principal subjects: on the permission of Sin, and on the Mystery of the Trinity. It is maintained that it is impossible to resolve them other than by recognizing that Reason can be contrary to Faith, without this opposition shaking in any way the certainty and persuasion of revealed truths.

First, it is said that this Reason cannot comprehend how God allowed to fall into crime, either men or Demons, whom it would have been so easy for Him to protect from this great misfortune, and from so many others that followed it. It is maintained that this procedure, which we attribute to God, is directly contrary to all the rules of wisdom, goodness, and holiness, and that it is to rob Him of the glory that comes to Him from these high and shining perfections, to accuse Him of having thus abandoned His work.

It is claimed on the other hand that what we believe about the Mystery of the Trinity, I mean the distinction of Persons in the unity of Essence, is a manifest contradiction, a total overthrow of the most constant maxims, and a complete extinction of the lights of Reason, since if this dogma is true, as we maintain, the three divine Persons will be more distinct from each other than they are from the Essence which is common to them, which it is impossible to conceive; and moreover this overturns the general maxim on which all kinds of reasoning are founded.

I know people who will not be much troubled by these kinds of Objections. They will say that they are taken from Reason, and that this alone is enough to give us the right to despise them. They will say that in general human Reason is very little enlightened, at least in the state in which it finds itself since sin, and that nothing happens to it more often than to go astray. They will say secondly, that if it has some strength to attack, it has only weakness to defend itself; that it finds in the clearest

and most constant things difficulties that it cannot solve, witness those that arise from the divisibility of the continuum, and from the nature of movement.

They will add that besides these perpetual infirmities, which never leave it, and whose effects are noticeable in whatever order of matters it handles, it has a particular, but absolute, incapacity to understand the things of Heaven; that the most constant truths of this order appear to it as pure extravagances. "They are foolishness to him," says the holy Apostle, 1 Cor. II.

These are three Pretexts that it is good to examine with some care, especially the third, which is the most plausible, and which appears to be the most consistent with the belief of Protestants in general, and especially with that of the Reformed in particular.

But before undertaking it, it will not be useless to note that when one speaks of the weakness of Reason, and of the wanderings to which it is subject during this life, one can understand three things by this expression, I mean by that of Reason.

In the first place, one can understand absolutely, without restriction, this natural faculty, with which God has provided men, to know the truth, whatever light it follows, and to whatever order of Matters it applies itself.

In the second place, one can understand by this expression this same faculty considered, not absolutely, but only insofar as it conducts itself in its researches by what is called natural light, by which several understand certain notions that we bring with us at birth, and which are common to all men in the world. Others not admitting these notions understand by natural light, the evidence of objects that strike the mind, and carry away its consent.

Finally, by Reason is sometimes meant this natural light itself, by which the faculty that we designate by this same name, conducts itself. This is how it is ordinarily understood when speaking of a proof, or an objection taken from Reason, which one wants to distinguish thereby from proofs and objections taken from divine or human authority.

On the contrary, one understands this faculty that we call Reason, when one says that this Reason is mistaken, or that it is subject to being mistaken, that it is blind, that it is depraved. For it is obvious that this fits the faculty very well, and not at all the natural light.

This alone reveals a beginning of confusion, since one passes from one idea to another, while always retaining the same expressions, and by the Reason that one accuses of leading us astray, one sometimes means a faculty, and sometimes a light that serves as its guide.

CHAPTER II. Where the foundations of what must be said are laid, by showing to what extent Pyrrhonism deserves to be detested.

The three Pretexts that I indicated in the preceding chapter, and that I propose to examine in this one and in the following ones, have this in common, that they all lead each in its own way, to Pyrrhonism, that is to say to the total extinction of Reason. It is primarily through this that I propose to refute them. Thus, to make felt what force my proofs will have, I must begin by trying to make known Pyrrhonism, and to depict it in its true colors.

Everyone knows that a Greek Philosopher, named Pyrrho, once maintained that there is nothing about which one does not have reason to doubt, and that the certainty that one claims to have of certain truths, is only a chimera. He had Disciples, who were called indifferently Sceptics and Pyrrhonians, the first of these names marking the character of these people, which was to doubt everything, and to suspend their judgment, without ever pronouncing on anything whatsoever; and the second indicating the Author, and the Founder of the Sect.

I will not elaborate further on this subject, which so many Authors have sufficiently clarified. I will only say that to conceive a little of what this strange Philosophy is, one has only to consider that nothing is more absurd, nor less consistent, than a mitigated Pyrrhonism, which, doubting a certain number of truths of the utmost evidence, would like to preserve the persuasion of some others, which would not be more incontestable than the first.

It is certain indeed that all the dispute that exists on this subject between the Pyrrhonians, and the Dogmatists, (this latter name is given to the defenders of certainty) is finally reduced to this point, which is to know if evidence is the infallible character of truth. If it were agreed that it is, the Pyrrhonians would not deny that they are wrong; and the Dogmatists would make a similar admission without reluctance, if they were convinced that evidence can be found joined with falsehood.

That being supposed, I say that one must be a complete Pyrrhonian, and universally doubt everything, or be assured of everything that is evident. Indeed, either evidence is inseparable from truth, or it is not. If it is not, it is a deceptive mark, and one should never rely on it. If it is, one must always trust it, and it is never permissible to call into doubt what it authorizes.

To say the same thing in another way, I ask if this consequence is necessary: That is evident, Therefore it is true. If it is necessary, it is never permissible to deny it, and thus everything that is evident will be infallibly true. If it is not, it is never permissible to draw it, and in this manner evidence will never be a sufficient foundation for certainty.

From this I conclude that a frank and true Pyrrhonian must never give his consent to any proposition, however evident it may be. Whatever the nature of what is proposed to him, he must suspend his judgment, and say nothing, think nothing.

If he does not even admit the most evident propositions, one understands without difficulty that he must not receive those that are only probable. What folly would it be to receive the probable, and to reject the evident?

Finally, one understands that not only must he not pronounce on the truth of propositions, but he must also suspend his judgment on their evidence, and on their probability. For indeed on what would he base himself in saying, This proposition is evident, This proposition is probable, if not on the evidence of this evidence and of this probability? And if evidence does not convince him of anything, how can it convince him, either of probability, or of evidence itself?

He must not even say that what is proposed to him seems probable. For on what would he base himself to say it and to think it, if not on the feeling that he has of what is happening in his mind? And does this feeling have more certainty than the rest? Is it not true that the Pyrrhonians count on nothing, neither on feeling, nor on sensations, nor on evidence, nor in a word on anything whatsoever?

Thus, one must regard as a true Pyrrhonian only one who will never affirm anything whatsoever, who will deny anything whatsoever, who will eternally doubt everything, and will admit neither direct propositions, nor reflexive propositions, guarding equally against saying, That is true, That is false, That is evident, That is probable, That is doubtful, That seems doubtful, probable, evident to me: It seems to me that it is, or that it is not. For indeed to say this, is to give something to feeling, and in this manner to abjure Pyrrhonism.

A true Pyrrhonian must therefore carry his suspension that far, or abandon his hypothesis. He must consequently not act. If a rabid dog, a bear, or a tiger, throws itself upon him, he will not take a step to flee. If his house threatens ruin, if it begins to fall, if fire takes hold, he will not leave it. If he is failing from hunger or thirst; he will neither eat, nor drink. For indeed one never does, neither any of these actions, nor any other similar one, except as a consequence of some interior judgments, by which one tells oneself that there is danger, that it is good to avoid it, that to avoid it one must do such, or such a thing, etc. If one does not make them, if the mind remains suspended and undetermined, one does not act.

Nothing therefore seems more miserable to me than a true Pyrrhonian, nothing moreover more useless for Society. What can he be good for, since he cannot take the least care, either of others, or of himself, without abjuring his Pyrrhonism?

Let us imagine, for example, a Pyrrhonian Doctor. What help will he give to a sick person, he who does not know if there are sick people, if the one who calls him, is, or is not; if it is a man, a trunk, a stone, if he himself exists, if he doubts, if he is a Doctor, if there is any difference between the virtues of cassia and rhubarb, and those of arsenic and sublimate, etc.

One can say the same thing of other professions. But here is something more grievous. A true Pyrrhonian is a man without Faith and without Religion; for on what

would he find it? Would it be on the authority of the Church, like those of the Roman Communion? And how could he, he who does not know if there is presently, or if there has ever been, I will not say a Church, but a single man in the world? Would it be on Scripture, like the Protestants? And how could he, not knowing, I will not say if Scripture is the pure Word of God, but if there has ever been a Scripture?

A true Pyrrhonian is an Atheist, at least a negative Atheist, and who, if he does not positively believe that there is no God, at least does not believe that there is one. For besides the fact that recognizing that there is a God, is to recognize that there is some truth, which true Pyrrhonians will never admit, he would only recognize this, because he would believe, either to see, or to feel, that it is true. It would consequently be to recognize that there is certainty in what one sees, and in what one feels, which would overturn all of Pyrrhonism.

A true Pyrrhonian is, not only an Atheist, but the most incurable of all Atheists. Indeed one does not lack ways to bring back a Dogmatic Atheist. One has only to make him see by evident and demonstrative reasons, that God exists, which is not impossible, after which there is reason to believe that he will surrender. But what can one do to bring back a Pyrrhonian?

Will one produce for him the demonstration of St. Paul taken from the inspection of the works of Nature? Will one say to him with this Apostle, that the invisible things of God, namely both His eternal power and divinity, are seen as if to the eye, being considered in His works? He will ask, where are these works, where is this world that speaks to us of its Creator? For one knows well that he doubts if there is a world, or anything whatsoever.

Will one allege to him the demonstration of Descartes, whose beginning is, I think, therefore I exist? He will deny, or at least call into doubt, these first two propositions, and all the others that one might add to them. He doubts if he thinks: he doubts if he doubts: he doubts if from the fact that he doubts and that he thinks it follows that he exists.

All this makes me unable to be sufficiently astonished to see that as able a man as the Bishop of Avranches, has maintained that Pyrrhonism is not as opposed to the Christian Religion as is commonly imagined. He even goes so far as to say that it is quite apt to prepare the mind for it. "And thus that Philosophical Discipline which holds as uncertain and doubtful whatever we know through the aid of the Senses and reason, and which refrains from all assent, seems far less opposed to Christianity than is commonly thought. For minds thus purged of prejudices and free from opinions easily permit themselves to be governed by God and guided by divine faith." (*Demonstratio Evangelica*, preface, n. 4)

What preparation, Good God! and what advancement to the true Religion, which not only ruins, extinguishes, and annihilates all Religion, but still effectively, and invincibly prevents it from reestablishing itself, and from reentering the soul from which it has banished it!

CHAPTER III. Examination of the first Pretext, which is taken from the fact that Reason is subject to error.

Pyrrhonism being such as I have just described, it is clear that one cannot more strongly refute the three Pretexts, which I indicated in Chapter I, than by showing that they cannot be legitimate, without giving the upper hand to this dangerous adversary of truth. This, however, seems easy to me, and this Chapter will prove it on the subject of the first of these three Pretexts.

It is taken from the fact that Reason often errs, from which one concludes that there is imprudence in trusting its decisions, and consequently in allowing oneself to be dazzled by objections that derive all their apparent force from there.

I have remarked in Chapter I that by Reason one can understand three things. I. This faculty which conceives, which judges, and which reasons, to whatever matter it applies itself, and whatever light guides it. II. This same faculty guided, not by revelation, but by natural light alone. III. This natural light itself, which guides this faculty.

It is therefore necessary that one understands one or the other of these three things, when we are told that Reason is subject to error, and to deceive those whom it guides. However it is understood, what I have just said will be found true.

Let us begin with the last of these meanings, which by Reason understands natural light; let us begin, I say, by showing this.

Here I will not cite Cardinal Richelieu, who from the first Chapter of his Method, attests that natural light deceives no one; nor the Author of The Art of Thinking, who says nearly the same thing. "To consider things exactly," he says, "never what we see evidently, and by reason, or by the faithful report of the senses, is opposed to what divine Faith teaches us." Part IV. Chap. 11. As among those whom I am fighting there are some who respect this authority, there are also some who do not make much of it. Let us therefore stick to something more decisive.

I have said that by natural light two things are understood. I. common notions, that we bring with us at birth, and which teach us that the whole is greater than the part, that it is impossible for a thing to be and not to be, that one can affirm of each thing all that is visibly contained in the distinct idea that one has of it, that one must respect those who have brought us into the world, that one must render to each his own, and not do to others what we would not wish to be done to us, etc. II. One understands by this expression, the evidence of these same notions, and that of certain reasonings, which strike the mind in such a way, that it is impossible that it does not yield to them.

If by this Reason, of which we are advised to be wary, one understands the most common notions, and the most universally received, where are we? What will be certain in the world, if that is doubtful? On what can we stand firm against the

Skeptics, if we must abandon this entrenchment, which has always been regarded as the last, and the most difficult to force? Moreover, with what modesty can we oppose these notions to unbelievers, to bring them to Faith, if they have nothing but uncertainty?

But if by this Reason that one wants to discredit, one understands evidence, the victory of the Pyrrhonians will be even more complete. What could one add to it, if evidence, which the Dogmatists regard as the great, or to better say the only, character of truth, is a deceptive character, which can be found, both in the most doubtful things, and in even the most false things?

Let us move now to the other meanings of the word Reason. The second is that which by this expression understands our mind, insofar as it is guided, not by revelation, but uniquely by natural light. This meaning has the same consequences as the preceding one, or to better say it is the same thing. What difference indeed can there be between saying that the mind errs, when it is guided by natural light, and saying that natural light deceives the mind which follows it? When, moreover, there would be some difference, would not the effect always be the same? Would not Pyrrhonism be equally born from one and the other, at least in relation to all that is not of Faith?

There remains therefore only the first meaning which by Reason understands this faculty which conceives, which judges, and reasons, whatever light it follows, natural, or supernatural. If this Reason can err, and by that very fact has no certainty, where will any remain? What other faculty do we have that is susceptible to it?

Besides, this goes directly against the intention of those among the Protestants, who emphasize this Pretext the most to us. They do not want one to be guided by natural light in matters of Religion, but by Scripture. They want it to be on this that one bases one's reasonings, either by drawing consequences from the truths that it formally poses, or by seeking the true meaning of its decisions through the application of the rules of Criticism. If this meaning is accepted, Reason will be able to err in this kind of reasoning, as in others, since by Reason one understands this Faculty, which judges and discourses, whatever the light that guides it may be.

On the other hand, the reasoning that one makes goes like this. Reason, we are told, often errs. Therefore one must never trust it. If this consequence is good, what is it that will prevent me from drawing a similar one, and saying, Reason often errs, even when working on Scripture. (Into how many errors indeed has one not fallen, either in wanting to explain this sacred Book, or in drawing consequences from what it says?) Therefore one must not listen to Reason, neither when it is guided by natural light, nor when it professes to attach itself only to Scripture. Thus Pyrrhonism will be universal, and will extend as well to the things of Religion as to those of Society, to Theology as well as to the other Sciences.

CHAPTER IV. Continuation of the same subject. New proofs of the vanity of the first Pretext.

It would be much to be wished that those who make so much of this Pretext, would explain themselves a little more openly than they do. How do they understand what they say that Reason often errs? Do they claim that it can err on everything, whatever precautions it takes, and in whatever manner it proceeds? Or do they simply maintain that this misfortune can happen to it when it acts thoughtlessly, rashly, and without precaution, allowing itself to be dazzled by the first glimmer that strikes it, and by the slightest plausibility that it notices in its objects?

If it is the first, what difference can there be between such a thought and the most extreme Pyrrhonism? For if in whatever manner our Reason conducts itself, and whatever precautions it takes, it can always err, no one will ever be able to be sure that it is not in fact erring. And this being the case, when will one have certainty? Will it not be necessary to doubt universally about everything, and suspend one's judgment on everything, as the Pyrrhonians claim?

It is good indeed to note that the dispute that we have with the Pyrrhonians does not consist in knowing if our Reason is infallible, and if it never happens to stray and to be dazzled. No one, that I know of, maintains, nor has maintained the first, and denied the second. All the world agrees that the most skilled err, that they even err very often. What the Dogmatists maintain consists of two things. One is that Reason does not always err, and that as it strays sometimes, sometimes also it hits the mark. The other is that it errs when it neglects certain precautions, and that it does not err when it is exact in observing them.

These precautions are the following five. I. To count for nothing, whether suspicions, or conjectures, or probabilities, and plausibilities, but to stop uniquely at evidence, as the only certain and infallible character of truth. II. Not to regard as evident what appears such only because it is in conformity with the prejudices with which one is imbued, especially when one has been so since childhood. III. To impose silence on the passions, and not to permit them to trouble and seduce the mind, by stirring the heart. IV. To have no regard for confused ideas, and to employ only those that one will have in such a way disentangled, that they have nothing but what is very distinct. V. To avoid precipitation, and to suspend one's judgment, until evidence forces us to pronounce.

Some add a sixth one. They want one to view one's subject from all its aspects, and that if possible, one leaves none of its properties, not even one of its attributes, without trying to discover it, and without paying attention to it. I admit that this precaution is good, and I would not advise anyone to neglect it. But I do not believe it absolutely necessary. If it were, it would be necessary to despair of ever having any certainty, there being perhaps nothing, however small it may be, that does not have parts, properties, and attributes, which we are ignorant of.

I therefore reduce myself to the first five, and say with all the Dogmatists, that provided Reason observes them, it will never err. The Sceptics say the opposite. They maintain that whether Reason observes these precautions, or whether it neglects them, it will always be able to err, that it must always fear that this misfortune happens to it, that it must not assure itself of anything, but doubt everything, and suspend its judgment, not for a certain time, but forever.

That being the case, it is clear that to say that our Reason can err, whatever precautions it takes, and in whatever manner it proceeds, is to abandon Dogmatism, and give the upper hand to the Pyrrhonians.

But if one says that in truth Reason does not err, when it observes exactly the precautions that I have indicated, but that as it is quite rare that it observes them, it is also ordinary that it errs; if, I say, one reduces oneself to this, I will agree without difficulty to the fact that one poses, but I will not admit the consequence that one draws from it. I will admit that Reason errs easily when it neglects these precautions. I will further admit that it happens to it only too often to neglect them. But I will deny that this suffices to make us reject, without examination, reasonings, in which we cannot discover the slightest defect. At most it will follow from this that one can despise the reasonings in which one has neglected these precautions, but not that one must extend this contempt to those where they have been observed.

To press further those who will make this response, I will ask them, if one can know with certainty that one has done all that one ought, to not err in one's judgments, or if one cannot.

If one cannot, Pyrrhonism returns, and one cannot avoid it. For if one can err every time that one will not do what one ought to not fall into error, and if moreover it is impossible to know with certainty if one has done it, it is clear that one is never sure of not erring, and that thus the Pyrrhonians are right in everything.

If one can know it, it is at this that one must stop, and not declaim in the air against Reason. One must imitate the Merchants, who when one makes a payment to them, do not reject without distinction the coins that one presents to them, under the pretext that false ones are often found, but they examine them, and use for this the touchstone, weight, and other means that are in use for this purpose. One must proceed in the same way, and not reject a reasoning, under the pretext that there are false ones; but one must examine those that are proposed to us, and use the rules of Logic, and the other means that one can have.

To say something more general; Either one has certain marks to discern good reasonings from bad ones, or one does not have them. If one does not have them, they will never be able to give certainty, and there will always be, both injustice in the proceeding of those who will make them to bring others into their sentiment, and imprudence in the proceeding of those who will allow themselves to be persuaded by this. The shortest will be never to make any, never to listen to any, and to leave there all these vain amusements, as the most useless thing in the world.

If one has certain marks to make this discernment, one must use them on occasions; and when one is made some Objection, one must not reject it for this general reason, that it is only a reasoning, but because this reasoning does not have the marks that distinguish the good from the bad; and to be able to say this, one must have examined it, which is all that I ask.

In a word, one cannot reject an Objection on this sole foundation that it is taken from Reason, without admitting that one is wrong to listen to it on anything whatsoever.

To not fall into such extremes when one will want to reject an Objection, one must put aside all these generalities, and attach oneself to something more particular, and more precise. One must say, not, This Objection is taken from Reason, but, It has such, or such a defect, which makes bad reasonings, and which is never found in good ones.

CHAPTER V. Examination of the second Pretext that one takes from what one maintains that Reason is incapable of resolving difficulties.

The second Pretext is incomparably more plausible than the first. It consists in saying that one must not be alarmed, even though one has nothing good to respond to the difficulties that are made to us; that it is easy to oppose such strong ones to the clearest and most certain Truths, that the most skilled can say nothing to defend themselves from them, which satisfies the mind even a little; and that, finally, it is a maxim almost universally received, that when one is strongly and solidly convinced of a Truth, one can despise the difficulties that one finds in it, although one is not in a state to remove them.

Here is what Mr. B. says on this subject. Mr. Bernard begins with a very good maxim, which is that one must never reject an opinion, especially when it is generally received, under the pretext that it is subject to difficulties, or that one can make objections against it. He adds that there is nothing about which one cannot dispute, and that this very certain proposition, The three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles, could be combated by insurmountable objections, of which he indicates the sources. I have seen people who do not approve of what he says on this point; but they have not persuaded me that they were right; and I doubt not at all that one can embarrass the Mathematicians. He concludes that when an opinion is founded on clear and evident reasons, it must be regarded as sure, although it is accompanied by great difficulties, which arise from the narrow limits of our Mind, and that without this one would necessarily fall into Pyrrhonism. This conclusion seems to me very true. Rep. to the Provinc. tom. II. page 280. 281.

The same, in another place of the same Work; There are, he says, Philosophical matters, where Reason cannot agree with itself. Take whatever party pleases you among these three; That matter is composed of atoms; That it is an assembly of Mathematical points; That it is divisible to infinity. Choose among the definitions of

movement the one that will seem the best to you, you will respond nothing worthwhile to the Objections, and you will succumb to them manifestly. Page 687.

I have two things to say about all this. The first is that this thought necessarily has one or the other of these two defects; either it leads indirectly, but surely, and inevitably, to Pyrrhonism; or it is of no use on this occasion, and serves for nothing to remove the difficulty. The other is, that it is poorly proven, and that in fact there is no difficulty that one cannot solve in a manner capable of satisfying solid minds.

For the first, I would like to know of what order are these difficulties that one claims it is not possible to solve. Are they simple topical arguments, supported by probabilities and plausibilities? Or are they true demonstrations?

If it is the first, one is wrong to say that one cannot solve them. Is it not solving them to say simply that they are not demonstrations? That alone suffices; for indeed the highest degree of plausibility cannot convince the mind. There is only certainty, there is only the impossibility of the contrary, clearly and distinctly perceived, which can have this effect.

Besides, all that a topical argument can do, is to prove that what it concludes is probable. And who has ever denied that Faith attests a hundred things, which, considered in themselves and without the support that the testimony of God gives them, are very far from having plausibility? What front would one have to have to maintain that there is some in the history of Samson, in that of Jonah, in that of Nebuchadnezzar, in the Mystery of the Incarnation, in that of Redemption, etc.? Has not Aristotle himself said that there are a hundred falsehoods, which are more plausible than the opposing Truths? *Multa falsa probabiliora veris* [Many falsehoods are more probable than truths]? And would it not be easy to demonstrate it, if there were someone who contested it?

One must therefore reduce oneself to the second, to say something that is to the point. One must say that the difficulties that are opposed to us, are true demonstrations. But to say this, is it not to give the upper hand to the Pyrrhonians?

Indeed if these difficulties that are opposed to the clearest and most constant Truths, are true demonstrations, one can demonstrate the most false and most absurd things: and if that is so, one must no longer trust demonstrations. For indeed what state must one make of these kinds of proofs, which establish with the same facility, and the same evidence, the most certain Truths, and the most manifest falsehoods? Is it not exposing oneself to an eminent danger of being mistaken, to count on this?

I add that if the difficulties that are opposed to the most solidly established Truths, are true demonstrations, it could happen that the pro and the con are equally demonstrated. Let us take for example the divisibility of the continuum, which is opposed to us. It is commonly believed that this divisibility goes to infinity, and it is claimed that it is easy to demonstrate it. However, difficulties are opposed to this

pretension, which one cannot solve, and which this response erects into demonstrations. There are therefore demonstrations on both sides. There are, once again, Pares aquilas, et pila minantia pilis [Equal eagles, and javelins threatening javelins].

In this supposition can it be permitted to take sides? Can one do anything other than suspend one's judgment? And what could be more imprudent than to do what is advised to us, I mean to despise the Objections of one of the parties, by saying that they are difficulties that one cannot remove?

I would even like to know by what right one gives the disparaging name of difficulties to the reasons of the party that displeases, reserving the honorable title of solid Proofs for those of the party that one prefers, if both are true demonstrations?

Will it not happen in this manner that each of the parties will pull the maxim to its side? An Atomist will say, I am convinced by very solid reasons of the doctrine of points. I therefore want to hold to it, although I cannot respond to the difficulties that are opposed to me. A partisan of divisibility to infinity, will hold the same language, and it will be impossible to know which of the two is right.

Someone will perhaps say that in truth there can only be true demonstrations on one of the sides, but that the other can have apparent demonstrations, and moreover so well imitated, and so subtly counterfeited, that the most skilled will be deceived by them, and that no one, in a word, will be in a state to make the discernment, and to be able to say with certainty, These are the true ones, those are the false ones.

But it is easy to see that this only distances the difficulty by a step. One falls back into it as soon as one advances a little. For if apparent demonstrations have no certain and infallible character, which distinguishes them from the true ones, no one will be able to know of what order are those which persuade him. No one will be able to assure himself whether they are true, or false demonstrations, nor consequently whether he must defer to them, or be wary of them. Thus here we are plunged back into Pyrrhonism. Here we are even as deeply sunk as before.

Perhaps another will say that although there are demonstrations on both sides, one will not fail to be able to determine oneself, since one will be able to prefer the most evident to those which will be less so.

But this itself is not enough. For first, what will one do when the opposing demonstrations have the same degree of evidence? By what right will one prefer some to others?

Secondly, this being the case, it will follow that the certain character of Truth is not evidence in general, as has been believed until now, but a certain degree of evidence, which can only be unfortunate.

Thirdly, before admitting a demonstration, it will be necessary to know two rather difficult things. It will be necessary, in the first place, to know what is this precise

degree of evidence, that a Truth must have to be certain. Supposing, for example, that evidence is susceptible to eight degrees, like the qualities of the School, it will be necessary to know whether it is necessary that a proposition have all eight, or if it suffices that it have seven, six, five, etc. And who is it that will tell us this?

It will be necessary, in the second place, to be quite sure that the demonstration in question, has this precise degree that it is necessary that it have, to give birth to certainty; which seems impossible to me, until one has added to the invention of Barometers, Thermometers, and Hygrometers, that of Saphometers, or Saphenometers, that is to say measures of evidence: And I fear that it will be necessary to wait a long time for it.

All this makes me not make much of the maxim which wants that when one is solidly convinced of a Truth, one despises the difficulties that one finds in it, although one cannot solve them.

CHAPTER VI. In how many ways one can solidly respond to an Objection.

But, someone will perhaps say, can one deny the fact? Are there not various questions in which the arguments for and against appear equally convincing? What then is to be done in these occasions?

I respond that if the fact were well established, I would believe that the only course to take would be to ensure that the question is not yet sufficiently clarified; to examine it all anew, observing exactly the rules that Descartes proposes in his Method, and Father Malebranche in his Search for Truth; and while waiting to see more clearly, to suspend one's judgment, and postpone the decision to another time.

But I have difficulty believing that the fact is possible, at least with regard to people who are somewhat enlightened, and accustomed to these sorts of discussions. I am persuaded that proofs that are regarded as convincing never are so if they combat the Truth, and that there is always some good response to make.

I suppose that there are up to five principal ways to respond solidly to an Objection. I say principal, because I am persuaded that there are still more, but which it is not necessary to discuss.

The first is to show that the Objection is not in proper form, and that it sins against the rules of Logic. I admit that it is quite rare that one can extricate oneself by this route; but I do not believe the thing impossible. It is not even without example.

The second is more ordinary. It is to show that there enters into the composition of the Objection one, or several false propositions.

The third is still more common, and of a greater use than the preceding one. It is to show that there is in the Objection one, or several equivocal propositions,

susceptible to several meanings, with this particularity, that the true meaning is useless, and that which would be useful is false.

The fourth is to show that there enters into the Objection one, or several propositions, not indeed certainly false, or equivocal, but uncertain, doubtful, and of which the contrary may be true.

The fifth, which perhaps is not distinct from the preceding one, is to maintain that the terms, which compose the propositions, are obscure, and do not give clear and distinct ideas of what they designate.

No one doubts that the first three ways of responding are very good in themselves, that they are even triumphant. But I do not know if everyone will say the same thing about the fourth and the fifth. As I believe them also very good, and of great use in our question, I will pause a bit to clarify them, and to show their solidity.

I begin with the fourth. Here are the reasons that I have to believe that it suffices, without any of the others.

I. It is to destroy an Objection sufficiently, to show that one is wrong to yield to it, and to give in to it. Now this is what one shows, by demonstrating that uncertain and non-evident propositions enter into it. For as it is impossible that the conclusion of an argument has more certainty than the most uncertain of its premises, to show that one of these premises is uncertain, is to show that the conclusion is also. And to show that the conclusion of an argument is uncertain, is this not to show that one is wrong to give in to it? For what can be less reasonable than to admit as true that which is uncertain, and which by that very fact may be false?

II. To show that uncertain propositions enter into an Objection, is to show that it is not a demonstration. For nothing is more essential to these kinds of proofs, than to be composed of evident, certain, and necessary propositions. It is consequently to show that one can despise it. For in the matter of proofs one despises all that is not convincing. This is why all the new Philosophers recommend nothing with so much care, as to yield to the clearest Truths only as late as one can. Father L'Ami Ben. even goes so far as to maintain that this is the touchstone, and the only rule that is sure in the search for Truth. Phil. Letters. page 30. & 31.

III. It is to destroy an Objection sufficiently, to show that it proves only what no one denies. This is to show that it is one of those Sophisms, which in the Schools is called, Ignoratio elenchi [Ignorance of refutation]. This is nevertheless what one shows, by proving that an Objection is not demonstrative. Let it be as plausible as one wants, it will be at most a simple topical argument. Now no one denies that one cannot make topical arguments against the most certain Truths, and in particular against those of Salvation.

IV. Here is a very despicable argument, to which however one can reproach only this single defect, of being composed in part of an uncertain proposition. Every number that can be divided into two equal numbers, is an even number. The number of

Angels can be divided into two equal numbers. Therefore it is an even number. This argument is in form. The propositions in it are not at all equivocal. The major is certain and evident. One cannot maintain that the minor is false. It is only doubtful and uncertain. This argument therefore has only the fourth defect; but this defect alone makes it worthless.

I say the same thing about this other one. Every thinking Being is immortal. There are in the Planet of Jupiter thinking Beings. There are therefore in this Planet immortal Beings. One could make an infinity of similar arguments.

The fifth way does not appear to me very different from the fourth. It consists in showing that one has only troubled and confused ideas of what the terms that enter into the Objection designate. And to say that these ideas are confused, is this not to say that the propositions where they enter, have no evidence? For indeed what can be the evidence of a proposition that one understands only confusedly?

This is why the new Philosophers recommend with so much care not to stop at confused ideas, and maintain that most of our errors come only from the fact that one neglects oneself in this regard.

But what is a confused idea? According to Mr. Locke, it is any idea that does not distinguish its object from other similar ones, and that does not discover its marks and differences. Nothing appears to me more true than what he says; but it seems to me that he does not quite say enough. An idea could be confused, even when it would distinguish its object from all others, if it did not distinguish the parts and properties of this object from each other. If this idea mixed together the true with the false, if in this manner one received all or rejected all, if the true made one receive the false that is found joined to it, if the false made one reject the true that one does not have the skill to separate from it, if one regarded as similar parts that are of a completely different order, one would be mistaken, and this error would come only from the confusion of ideas.

I believe therefore that a confused idea is, first, any idea that does not distinguish its object from others, which may resemble it; that it is, secondly, any idea that does not make known distinctly the parts of which this subject is composed, and that muddles them with each other.

I believe, secondly, that in whichever of these two ways it happens that one has confused ideas of some subject, one will be able to easily be mistaken about it, and one will have neither evidence, nor certainty.

Consequently, to maintain that an argument is composed of terms that excite only confused ideas, and that one cannot disentangle, is to maintain that it is not a true demonstration; and thus this last way of responding to an argument, is no less good than the four others.

When therefore one will tell me that the clearest and most certain Truths, can be combated by Objections, to which one cannot make good responses, I will ask what

are these good responses that one means. If one tells me, that one speaks of those that show, either that the argument is not in form, or that the propositions that compose it are false, or that they are equivocal, I will admit that it is very possible that one makes such Objections to us: but I will maintain that all this should not cause us any trouble, since there will be two other orders of responses, distinct from these first ones, which will nonetheless be good.

But if one means responses of the two last orders, I will deny that one can make Objections, to which it is impossible to make such ones. I will maintain that it will always be found that these Objections will be composed of obscure, and unintelligible propositions, or of doubtful, uncertain, and non-evident propositions, very often even rash ones.

I am persuaded that the difficulties that one finds in the matters of the continuum and of movement, come from the first of these two sources. They revolve around subjects of which one has only troubled and confused ideas. Such are the infinite, space, place, time, duration, etc. which one knows so little, and of which one speaks in such an embarrassed manner. That being the case, should one be astonished that one finds in them difficulties, that one is not in a state to disentangle?

If one does not want to agree with what I say, and if one maintains to me that we have distinct ideas of all these things, one has only to take the trouble to read what Mr. Locke and Mr. Le Clerc have said about them, the one in his Essay on Understanding, and the other in his Physics. And if one doubts the power that the confusion of ideas has to prevent finding the unraveling of difficulties, one has only to consider what happens every day to the ignorant. Let one take a Soldier, a Laborer, a Workman, and propose to him the reasons that are produced on both sides on the least difficult questions; one will see the embarrassment in which he will find himself, and which will come only from the inexplicable confusion of his ideas.

I say nothing of the difficulties that concern Geometrical Truths. In my youth I did not have the happiness to find the occasion to learn Mathematics, and at a more advanced age I have not had the leisure. Thus it does not belong to me to speak of them. I will say only in general that I do not doubt at all that a skilled Geometer is in a state to respond solidly to these Objections, and that if one makes me see that I am mistaken in this, I will conclude from it that it is with very little reason that one maintains that these Sciences are those that have been the most successfully cultivated, and that one has pushed the furthest. What could these advances be, if one could not defend the very foundations, I mean the certainty of demonstrations, without which one builds only on sand, or on something still less assured?

CHAPTER VII. Examination of the third Pretext, which one takes from the fact that since sin Reason is blind for the things of Religion.

It remains for me only to examine the third Pretext which is used, to show that one can despise these Objections. As it is the most plausible of the three, I hope that it will not be found wrong that I dwell on it a little longer than on the others.

There is therefore a very great number of Protestant Theologians, both Lutheran and Reformed, who maintain that one must not be at all surprised to see that one finds inexplicable difficulties in the discussion of the Truths of Salvation. They say that all the faculties of our Soul, and particularly Reason, having been depraved, and having lost their natural righteousness through sin, this Reason has contracted thereby such an insurmountable aversion for revealed Truths, that it cannot relish them; that it even rejects them positively, as pure extravagances; that thus it is not at all strange that it favors the difficulties that combat our dogmas, and makes us find them invincible and inexplicable. From there they conclude that it is necessary, neither to consult Reason on the Truths of Faith, nor to recognize it as Judge in the disputes that one has with Unbelievers, Infidels, and Heretics.

This thought contains three things that it is good to examine distinctly, and each one apart.

The first is that depraved Reason positively rejects the Truths of Salvation.

The second, that this same depravation makes it find invincible the Objections that combat these Truths.

The third, that one must not dispute by Reason on revealed Truths.

On the first, it is important, before all things, to note that it is a question here only of corrupted Reason, and that consequently one speaks, neither of Reason in its purity, such as it was in the first Man, nor of Reason perfectly reestablished, as it is in the Blessed; but uniquely of Reason obscured, and corrupted by sin, such as it is presently in each one of us.

II. It is good even to take care that this obscured Reason, can pass through three different states. The first is that which one can call pure nature, and takes place in those who have never received any interior help, any supernatural grace. The second is that of those Sinners, who in truth are not yet regenerated, but who have received some of these Graces, which God spreads indifferently on the Elect and the Reprobate. The third is that of the Children of God, whom his Grace has enlightened, sanctified and regenerated.

One would be mistaken if one imagined that it is a question here only of the first, or even of only the first two of these three states. It is a question of all. For indeed it is a question of knowing if one can reject Objections taken from Reason, on this foundation, that this Reason is obscured, and corrupted since sin.

If one understood simply that this Reason is obscured and corrupted in Sinners whom grace has not yet regenerated, what one would say could satisfy those who are shocked by the fact that these Sinners cannot resolve these Objections; and indeed if there were only these who were embarrassed by them, this response would be solid. But as the Children of God, the most distinguished even, the most advanced among them, are no less embarrassed by them than the others, it is clear that this response would be ridiculous, if by this obscured Reason, which one must not consult on matters of Religion, it were not necessary to understand all Reason, whether regenerated, or not regenerated.

It is therefore not a question here of Nature destitute of all help of Grace, but equally and indifferently of Nature, with this help, and without this help.

Consequently when in order to prove the incapacity of our Reason to judge well the Truths of Faith, one will produce to us passages of Scripture, which speak only of Sinners alone without including the Righteous, one will produce nothing that is to the point. Passages are needed that speak of all men without exception.

III. This Reason, whether pure, or corrupted, can be considered in two ways, either as conducted and directed by Revelation, or as deprived of this help, and abandoned to itself. For there is no one who does not understand that it is capable of fewer things without this help than with this help.

That being the case, the question does not consist in knowing if Reason destitute of all help of Grace, is in a state to believe the Truths of Salvation. In my Treatise on Divine Faith, I have maintained three things on this question, which appear to me all three extremely strong. I. That the Grace necessary for the production of Faith, is not simply a supernatural Grace, but the regenerating, and converting Grace, which makes us become the Children of God. II. That this Grace is not only necessary to give birth to this degree of Faith, which is commonly called among us justifying Faith, but again to give us that other degree, which is simply called divine Faith. III. That it is necessary, not only to believe in this manner the whole assemblage of revealed Truths, but again to truly believe a single one, whatever it may be.

After such a declaration I hope, that I will not be accused of weakening the doctrine of our Churches on this subject.

The question is just as little about knowing if Reason destitute of the help of Revelation, can by its own lights discover the Truths of Faith. I hope that no one will contest what I am going to say on this subject.

I distinguish three orders of these Truths. The first are gathered from the attentive inspection of the visible world, whether in its constitution, or in its conduct, such as are the existence of the Divinity, its unity, its eternity, its wisdom, its goodness, its providence, etc. The second have depended on the free will of God, such as are most of those which compose the Mystery of Redemption. The last revolve around subjects of which we have no idea, such as is the Mystery of the Trinity.

It is without difficulty that the first can be discovered without the help of Revelation, as appears sufficiently from the fact that the Pagans themselves have recognized them. But, for the second, and the third, I hold for certain that it is impossible for our Reason to discover them, without the help of Revelation; and that, not because it has been corrupted, and weakened by sin, but by the nature of the thing itself: for even though Reason were as pure in us as it was in the first man, it would have no way, no means to raise itself that far.

I do not believe that one can wish for anything more whatsoever on this subject.

Thus the question reduces itself to knowing if corrupted Reason, and incapable either of believing salvifically the revealed Truths, or of guessing them, can, without the help of Grace, refrain from rejecting them positively as errors.

For me I cannot enter into this thought. One will find my reasons in the two following Chapters.

CHAPTER VIII. That corrupted Reason is not determined by its corruption to reject positively revealed Truths.

If Reason destitute of the supernatural help of Grace, could not prevent itself from rejecting positively revealed Truths, this supernatural help would be necessary to be able to fall into the most dangerous species of Atheism, which is Pyrrhonism. It would be impossible, without this help, not only to believe, but even to doubt, and to suspend one's judgment. That appears ridiculous to me, and I am persuaded that there will be few people who are not of my opinion on this.

II. If our Reason were determined by its corruption to reject positively the Truths of Salvation, we would have for knowing revealed Truths a sure, certain, and infallible rule, distinct from Scripture, and of which the use would be incomparably easier than that of this sacred Book. In this supposition when one would want to know what one must believe on each of the questions, on which one does not agree, one would only have to consult someone of those of whom one is quite sure that they are not conducted by the Spirit of God, and to ask him what he thinks of the dogma in question; and when he will have responded, one will be able to assure oneself of the contrary of what he will say; which I find so incredible, that it appears ridiculous to me.

For example, one is troubled to know if the world has been drawn from nothing, or from a preexisting matter. To know what it is, one will only have to address oneself to one of these purely natural men, and not at all spiritual, of whom I speak, and ask him what he thinks on this question. If he says that the world has been drawn from nothing, it will be necessary to believe that there is nothing to it, and that on the contrary it has been formed from a preexisting matter. And if he says that it has been drawn from a preexisting matter, it will be necessary to persuade oneself that it has been drawn from nothing, by a true creation.

It is therefore only a question of knowing if one can find persons, of whom one is quite sure that their responses will not be inspired. When I composed my Treatise on Divine Faith, where I produced this reasoning, I believed that one would find these persons in the scoundrels, whose actions show clearly that they conduct themselves by anything other than by the lights of the Holy Spirit. But a very skilled man who has taken the trouble to read my book, has made me notice that this could be contested to me. It is true, he said, that it appears sufficient that scoundrels do not act by the inspirations of sanctifying and regenerating Grace: but they can be directed by another Grace simply illuminating, and common to the good and to the wicked.

I could contest this. I could maintain that the Holy Spirit absolutely abandons these impious ones, and that far from enlightening them, he gives them an efficacy of error, so that they believe in lies, as the Apostle St. Paul assures. But as this could lead us a little far, and divert us from our principal subject, I prefer to look elsewhere for this order of Judges, of whom one has reason to assure oneself that the decisions are not at all inspired, and come only from the sad depths of Nature. I find two orders of them: some are Infidels, born and nourished in infidelity and barbarism, and the others are badly instructed Christians, and absolutely neglected on the side of Religion, and of all that has relation to the spirit.

Let one take therefore a Kaffir, a Hottentot, an Iroquois, or some other of these Savages, who have never heard speak of Jesus Christ, nor of the Gospel, and whom one cannot suspect, with the least shadow of plausibility, of being illuminated by the Holy Spirit. Let one take some of these young people, whom one finds in the countryside, in certain remote places, and whom neither their fathers, approximately as ignorant as they, nor whoever it may be, has taken any care to instruct in the Truths of Salvation, so that they know, in this regard, absolutely nothing. Everyone knows that there are only too many such in the world.

Let one interrogate them on revealed Truths, one will see if they will agree to reject them. This is what would infallibly happen, if human Reason destitute of the interior help of Grace, and of the assistance of the Holy Spirit, carried itself naturally to reject revealed Truths. But for me I am persuaded that one would find the contrary. I am persuaded that these ignorant ones would respond very diversely. Some would go to the right, others to the left. Some would say white, and the others black. One would still see the same diversity in the responses that each one in particular would make on different questions. Each one would be right on some, and would deviate from the truth on others.

This is what those who have applied themselves to examining the progress that children make in the knowledge of their Religion have been able to notice. Those of these children who had been the most neglected, have made to their questions responses so different, often even so bizarre, and so strange, that they have been surprised by them. The same thing would happen to those who would address

themselves to the Savages, or to the other idiots of whom I have spoken. They would notice in their responses, neither any conformity, nor any perpetual and continued opposition with revealed Truths, but a diversity, and an inconstancy, which would show that they follow no rule; something, consequently, very far from what would happen, if the sentiment that I am examining were true.

III. I do not doubt that if one asked the defenders of the sentiment that I refute, what is the natural, immediate, and necessary effect, of this unjust aversion that they want our Reason to have since sin for revealed Truths, they would respond that it is to make appear true what God tells us is false, and to make appear false what God tells us is true. This is indeed the only response that one can make to this question, in the hypothesis that I am examining.

But besides that, as one will see in the sequel, this is not perpetual. besides that, I say, I would like to know how far this illusion goes. Is it simply to make what God attests appear probably false, and what he denies, probably true? Or indeed is it to make us find the first certainly and evidently false, and the second certainly and evidently true?

First, one can say neither the one, nor the other, at least universally and without exception. For among the Truths that God attests to us, there are several that do not shock Reason in any manner, and that it finds neither probably, nor evidently false, as one will see in the sequel.

I add that the first is not enough. It is a question of justifying the refusal that one makes to respond directly to the Objections that combat the Truths of Salvation. It is a question of showing that although one cannot solve these Objections, one nonetheless has the right to despise them. What use is it, to support such a pretension, to say that the Truths of Salvation appear improbable to corrupted Reason? Does it follow from that, neither that these Objections are insoluble, nor even that they appear so. On the contrary, it is easy to solve them if they are only probable, nothing being insoluble except what is demonstrative, or which appears to be so. This is what one has seen in Chapter VI.

Besides this would be good to allege, if unbelievers agreed that their Objections have only plausibility and probability. But is that their thought? Do they not claim that they have evidence, and that they are true demonstrations? It is to give, or take the wrong track, to speak here of probabilities and plausibilities. It is to attach oneself to things that have nothing to do with the question. It would be soon decided, if it were a question only of that alone. One would soon be in agreement on this. We would not deny that among the Truths of Salvation there are some that are little plausible, and the unbelievers would admit to us that it would nonetheless be necessary to believe them, if there were only that alone to reproach them with. For how many things do we not persuade ourselves of, that we know are contrary to plausibility?

To say something that is to the point, it is necessary to go further, and to take the leap. It is necessary to say that the depravation of our nature by sin, makes what God says appear to us evidently false, and what he denies, evidently true, even while observing the precautions that I have indicated; for without this one gains nothing.

But in fact can one advance that far? First I am persuaded that if that were so, one would not be required to believe. The Reason is that it would be Physically and absolutely impossible to succeed in it, whatever effort one made at it, and with whatever ardor one wished it. It is no less impossible to persuade oneself of what appears evidently false, than to hate oneself, than to love evil known as evil, than to stop the course of the Sun, than to prevent oneself from dying, and from doing the rest of the things, which are contrary to general laws. All that is impossible of the same species of impossibility, and consequently all that is such, that it cannot be that God commands it, and that one sins in not doing it. As therefore it is very certain that God commands us to believe, as it is certain that one sins in not believing, and that God severely punishes this sin, it is beyond doubt that one has the physical power to believe, and that thus what one does not believe, is not evidently false.

Here is another consideration that appears quite pressing to me. Those whom Grace illuminates, triumph over this bad disposition, and strongly and sincerely persuade themselves of what God reveals. How do they do it? Is it by continuing always to find evidently false what they persuade themselves of? Or indeed is it by ceasing to find it false, and by beginning to perceive truth in it?

Nothing would be more absurd than the first. There would even be a contradiction in posing it. For indeed to see evidently that a thing is false, and to believe it true, are two incompatible, and directly opposed acts.

The Faithful therefore no longer perceive any evidence of falsity in what is proposed to them as revealed by God. Consequently if they cannot solve the Objections that one makes against what they believe, it does not come from some aversion that they have for these Truths, since if this impotence came from there, it would appear by that very fact that this aversion still subsists, which cannot be, since they believe these Truths very sincerely. But it will be necessary to examine this in the sequel, with a little more care.

CHAPTER IX. Continuation of the same Subject. Two other Proofs that establish this Truth.

IV. If Reason were as frighteningly prejudiced against the Truths of Faith, as we are made to understand, this prejudice would have for its object, either all these Truths, or only some of them. One will not say the first, since there is such a great number of these revealed Truths, of which the Jews, the Mohammedans, and even the Pagans, whom one believes neither regenerated, nor illuminated by the Holy Spirit, appear persuaded. Besides, who does not see, and who does not experience in

himself, that there are several of these Truths, which one has no repugnance to believe?

If one reduces oneself to the second, one says something which one has more right to say. But if one does it, one will throw oneself into embarrassments, from which it will not be easy to extricate oneself.

First, it will be, in this way, with revealed Truths, as with natural Truths. How many are there not among these latter, which appear absurd and incredible, and which one carries oneself naturally to reject? What trouble does one not have in believing that our Antipodes have, in walking, their feet opposite to ours? The system of Copernicus is becoming more common day by day. However what trouble does one not have in making it relished by the most delicate minds, the first time that they hear speak of it? I say the same thing of the divisibility of the continuum to infinity, for which most of the Moderns have declared themselves. In a word, if one reduces oneself to this, one will see that in wanting to separate the things, for which our Reason is blind from those which are not so unknown to it, one is wrong to put on one side those of Religion, and on another natural Truths, since one will find on both sides, both those that Reason relishes, and those that it rejects.

Secondly, it will be necessary, in this way, either to make an exact enumeration of the Truths of these two orders, or indeed to reduce them to certain general classes, separating, for example, the Truths of fact, from those of right, the speculative from the practical, or otherwise; and whatever course one takes, I am sure that one will find difficulties in it.

Thirdly, it will be necessary to seek the Reasons for this diversity. It will be necessary to say why this malign influence of sin on our Reason, which has so terribly prejudiced it against the Truths of Faith, has uniquely attached itself to some of them, and has done nothing in regard to the others. Why even it has spared those which appeared to be the most opposed to it, and has, if I dare say it, persisted in attacking some others, which had nothing that could shock it.

Creation, the Prescience of the contingent future, the Trinity, the Incarnation, Satisfaction, have nothing opposed to the inclination that sin has given us for evil: and nevertheless depraved Reason rises up against these Mysteries. Several practical Truths are very contrary to it. It would wish that one were held, neither to love God, nor to serve him, nor to obey him, nor to do good to the rest of men, nor to deprive oneself of the pleasures of the senses, nor to abstain from lying, from slander, from vengeance, etc. However Reason relishes these duties, and the most barbarous peoples recognize their necessity and justice. Is it easy to give the reason for this diversity in the hypothesis that I am combating?

It will be necessary to see, fourthly, if what will be said about it accords with experience, and if it is not found that among people whose Reason is equally corrupted, there are some who relish some of the Truths of the same order, and others who reject them, which I believe inevitable, and could only be unfortunate.

Finally it will be necessary to see if this division does not weaken the proofs that one claims to have of what is told to us, and especially the famous passage of I Cor. II. 14, which will assuredly be painful, and will increase the number of embarrassments, into which one throws oneself, in wanting to defend this sentiment.

V. The same thing will happen, if one researches what can make this effect. The aversion that one wants Reason to have for revealed Truths, must necessarily come from one of these four sources. It cannot relish them, either because they are Truths, or because these Truths have been revealed to us, or because they are opposed to the inclinations of the heart, or because finally they are contrary to our prejudices.

One will not say the first. If that were so, Reason would have as much repugnance for natural Truths, as for revealed Truths. It would find equally in both what it could not suffer. However one wants this aversion of depraved Reason to have for its object only the Truths of Salvation.

One cannot say the second, first because, as I have already remarked, there is a very great number of revealed Truths, that Reason persuades itself of easily. Besides if it were Revelation that roused, that revolted Reason against the Truths of Salvation, it would be necessary that it had some knowledge of this Revelation which would shock it. For how would it be possible that it rejected a Truth, for this alone that it is revealed, if it were ignorant that it is revealed?

But if it is necessary that it know the Revelation, in order to be carried to despising it, two rather strange things will inevitably follow, which accord little with experience. One is that when one will propose to an ignorant person a revealed Truth, without telling him that it is revealed, he will be able to receive it; but as soon as one warns him that it is revealed he will infallibly reject it. The other is that as God has revealed his Truths at various times, and one after the other, Reason will have been able to relish them before God had revealed them, and will not have been able to suffer them since he has marked them with his seal. These two consequences are necessary. However I have difficulty believing that there are many people who admit them as true.

The third could be alleged on the subject of practical Truths, which are indeed somewhat contrary to our inclinations. But besides that there is a very great number of this order that the most brutish of Pagans have recognized with enough uniformity, besides that, I say, this reason cannot be produced with the slightest shadow of plausibility, on the subject of speculative dogmas, which are those that give birth to the greatest difficulties.

There remains therefore only the fourth cause of this aversion, which is prejudice. But first, prejudice is something acquired, and which comes only with time, whereas the repugnance that one wants Reason to have for the Truths of Salvation, is natural, and as ancient as ourselves. It is therefore impossible that it comes from prejudices, what follows not being able to be the cause of what precedes.

Besides how can one attribute to prejudices the aversion that Reason has for Truths, which far from being contrary to them, are very conformable to them? Are not our most ancient prejudices, those which come from the instructions that have been given to us? And what is it that one has taught us before the Truths of Religion? Has one not applied oneself to persuading us of them from our tenderest years, and to making us imbibe them, if I dare say it, with milk. Thus prejudice must rather dispose us to Religion, than distance us from it.

One can add still more on this fourth cause of the aversion about which we speak, as on the preceding ones, that its effect is neither particular to revealed Truths, nor common to all these Truths, as it would need to be, so that one could allege it with some plausibility. On one side prejudices create an obstacle to the admission of a great number of natural Truths, and on the other there are quantities of revealed Truths, which are not contrary to any prejudice. Thus one can produce nothing on this subject that has any color.

CHAPTER X. That Reason, although depraved, can believe by human Faith the Truths of Salvation.

Here is something stronger than all that I have just said. It is so far from true that our Reason abandoned to itself, stubbornly rejects the Truths of Salvation, that there have always been since the birth of Christianity, and that there are still today, several million people, of whom one has no reason to suspect that internal Grace illuminates them, and who far from positively rejecting the Truths most exposed to the contradictions of our Reason, believe them with a human Faith, but a very strong one, and even very effective in several respects.

What are the revealed Truths, against which it is claimed that Reason declares itself most strongly? Are they not Creation, the Prescience of the contingent future, Providence, the Permission of sin and its consequences, the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Satisfaction of Jesus Christ?

It is nevertheless true, that all these Truths are believed by all Christians of all Sects, with the exception of the Socinians, by the Greeks, by the Jacobites, by the Nestorians, by the Latins, by the Protestants. Some are even believed by the Jews, and by the Mohammedans. Some still by several Sects of Pagans, and consequently by an infinity of people.

It is true that this Faith is not a divine Faith, at least in most. It is, properly speaking, only a human Faith, of the same nature as that which all those in error have for the false dogmas that they embrace. It is founded on the prejudices of childhood, those who believe in this manner having always heard that what they were taught was true, or even revealed by God, and seeing it followed, and professed by all those whom they knew, and whom they esteemed the most.

But whatever the case may be, this Faith, all natural, imperfect, and insufficient as it is to obtain salvation, does not fail to be, not only sincere, but still strong enough to often produce two very considerable effects. One is to serve as a rule in conduct: the other is to lead one to prefer to die, rather than to disavow what one believes.

Is there any Sect, any form of Religion, which does not prescribe things that are constraining, disagreeable to the flesh, and contrary to our inclinations? Is there any which does not have various Followers who practice it exactly on several occasions? Is there any which does not have its Martyrs, or at least which would not have them, if others thought to persecute it with iron and fire, as some do every day? In particular does not the Sect of the Jews give from time to time very striking examples of this?

Here then is a very firm and very vigorous human Faith, and which receives with a complete acquiescence of mind, the Truths which give the most purchase to poorly conducted Reason, and armed with sophisms and illusions. Yet it has nothing but what is natural, and one can be assured that the Holy Spirit has no part in its production. Four considerations show this very evidently, it seems to me.

The first is that such a Faith is found too irregular, and too unformed in its substance, to allow us to believe that it comes from the Holy Spirit. It reduces to this, that it is impossible that what one believes is not revealed by God, since such and such assure that it is. And what could be more rash, what more deceptive, what more poorly connected than such reasoning? Is it necessary, to be convinced of this, to pay attention to the facility with which men depart from the Truth? Is it necessary to consider that this reasoning being common to the most opposed Sects among themselves, that alone proves that it is false? The Jews strengthen themselves by it in the hatred of Christianity, and Christians in that of Judaism. The Greeks, for this motive, distance themselves from the Latins, and the Latins from the Greeks. It necessarily deceives one or the other. It is therefore worth nothing in itself, and it is to do very little honor to the Holy Spirit to make him the author of it.

The second consideration is taken from the fact that such a Faith receiving a Religion, receives at once, sometimes even by a single act, the whole assemblage of dogmas that this Religion teaches, and among which there are both true and false ones. A Mohammedan, for example, believing his Religion to be good, believes at once the personal unity of the Divinity, Creation, Prescience, Providence, the celestial origin of the Koran, the mission of this false Prophet. etc. The Faith that he has for each of these articles, not only is similar, not only is of the same nature, but still often consists of a single, and individual act, which receives several propositions at once. Thus the acquiescence that this act gives to the false articles, not being able to be the work of the Holy Spirit, it is clear that that which it gives to the true ones is just as little.

Thirdly, it is hardly believable that the Holy Spirit produces in the soul of so many Pagans, Mohammedans, Jews, Heretics, this human Faith, with regard even to what

it embraces that is true. If he did it, there is much appearance that he would not content himself with only making them know these Truths, the persuasion of which serves them for nothing to save themselves. He would apparently add to it the knowledge of the others that he lets them be ignorant of, and which would be more useful and more salutary to them. If he still did it, he would teach the same Truths to all and everywhere, not some here, and others there; some to the Mohammedans, others to the Jews; and he would teach them to them independently of education, which is not seen.

Finally one has only to pay a little attention to the power of prejudices, to persuade oneself that they are more than sufficient to give birth to this human Faith, of which we speak. What extravagances do these same prejudices not persuade, not to one or two Heretics, to one or two Mohammedans, and to as many Pagans, but to several million of each? Are the Mysteries most contradicted by the idolaters of their Reason, nearly as opposed to the most common notions of good sense, as a thousand visions with which an infinity of those in error become infatuated in so many places?

But let us not go so far. The common people, who make such a prodigious multitude, do they not make incomparably more of the testimony of the senses, than of the lights of Reason? Does Metaphysics have a demonstration that they prefer to the report of their own eyes? These eyes nevertheless, and the other organs of the senses, attest in the most express manner in the world, that there is bread and wine in the Eucharist, and cannot prevent the prejudices of childhood from persuading the contrary to several million ignorant people.

If the power of prejudices goes so far, should one doubt that it is not capable of giving to those of whom I speak, a Faith of the same nature, a purely human Faith, of the dogmas of which I have spoken, and of which one can even say that the difficulties are not at all within the reach of their mind. They do not have enough to let themselves be dazzled by them; and as a fine Spirit of the past century said; These snares are set so high, and those of whom I speak fly so low, that it would be necessary that they make an effort to be caught in them. Hardly could they even do it, whatever effort they made in this design.

I conclude that so many millions of people, of whom one has no reason to suspect that the Holy Spirit guides them, believing by human Faith the most difficult Truths of Christianity, it appears clearly, by that, that the depravation of Nature does not invincibly determine Reason to reject them; and this is what it was necessary to prove.

CHAPTER XI. Where one responds to an Objection taken from the I. Epistle to the Corinthians II. 14.

ONE opposes to all that I have just said, the authority of St. Paul, who says formally three things, each of which appears decisive. The first that the natural man does not understand, or as several translate, does not receive, the things of the Spirit of God:

the second that he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned: the third that far from understanding them, he regards them as folly. The natural man, he says, does not understand the things that are of God, for they are folly to him, and he cannot understand them, inasmuch as they are spiritually discerned. 1 Cor. II. 14.

The last of these Truths appears decisive against us. One cannot indeed oppose the first two to us with the least shadow of plausibility, since we recognize that the Sinner destitute of all supernatural help of Grace, and abandoned to his own corruption, not only will never salvifically believe the Truths of Salvation, but that he does not even have the power, that he is reduced to a true inability to add Faith to them.

As this is all that one can induce from what St. Paul says in this place, in assuring on one side that the natural man does not understand the things of the Spirit of God, and on the other, that he cannot understand them, it is clear that one cannot press these two decisions against us.

But it is not the same with the third, which states that the things of the Spirit of God are folly to the natural man. That means that this natural man, who is claimed to be the sinful man, positively rejects these Truths, and regards them, not simply as errors, but as pure extravagances; which appears directly opposed to what I have maintained, that the Sinner destitute of all help of Grace, can believe our Mysteries by human Faith, and be truly persuaded of them. It is therefore necessary to see if the Objection that one takes from these last words of St. Paul, is as strong as it appears.

First I agree that to regard the Truths of Salvation as folly, is to reject them positively. I agree further that if St. Paul attributes this to the sinful man, all that I have said is false. Let us see therefore if this Apostle says it, or makes it understood.

Everything depends on knowing what must be understood by this natural man, of whom this Apostle speaks to us. By this expression it is necessary that he designates, either mortal man, and not yet glorified, or the sinful man, and not yet converted; or man destitute of all supernatural help, and considered in *puris naturalibus* [in a purely natural state], as one says, or indeed finally some particular order of Sinners, which does not create a precedent for the others.

To attribute to St. Paul the first of these four meanings, would be, first, to make him say a thing contrary to experience, since there are in the world so many Faithful, who far from rejecting the Truths of Salvation as folly, receive them with submission, and make them all the joy and consolation of their heart.

This would still be to make him say the contrary of what he says, since he assures in so many words, that the spiritual man, who is without doubt a mortal man, discerns all things, which he would not do, if, like the natural man, he rejected the Truths of Salvation as follies.

To attribute the second meaning to him, and to make him say that every Sinner whom Grace has not yet regenerated, positively rejects the Truths of Salvation as dreams and reveries, is to make him say again a thing contrary to experience. For as has been seen, both all those who have only a temporary Faith and all those who have only a dogmatic Faith, and even those who have only a human Faith, and are Christians only by prejudice, are persuaded, each in his own way, of the Truths of Salvation.

Is it necessary therefore to stop at the third meaning, and to say that the natural man, who positively rejects the Truths of Salvation, is the Sinner destitute of all interior and supernatural help? If that is what is claimed, I have various things to oppose.

First, in reducing oneself to this one abandons a considerable part of the question. By this reckoning all that St. Paul will say, is that the Truths of Salvation are contrary to Reason destitute of all supernatural help; which will not prevent them from being very conformable to Reason helped, not only by regenerating Grace, but still by that which gives birth to temporary Faith. Thus all those who will have, either justifying Faith, or temporary Faith, will see no opposition between what they believe, and what Reason teaches, which is contradicted by experience.

2. If the natural man is one who has neither justifying Faith, nor temporary Faith, the spiritual man, who discerns all things, will be any man who has one or the other of these two species of Faith. Let one see, however, if there is much appearance that St. Paul assures that a man, who has only a temporary Faith, on one side is a spiritual man, and on the other discerns all things, and is judged by no one. Let one see if this title and this privilege can be suitable for others than for true Children of God.
3. In posing this, one rejects purely human Faith, in relation to the Truths of Salvation as absolutely impossible, and one obliges oneself to respond to what I have said on this subject in the preceding Chapter.

None of these three meanings being able to subsist, it is necessary to reduce oneself to the fourth, and to say that the natural man of whom St. Paul speaks, is neither mortal man, nor the unregenerated Sinner, nor the Sinner destitute of all interior and supernatural help, but a particular order of Sinners, which does not create a precedent for the others, and consequently proves nothing against us. For indeed we do not deny that there are various orders of Sinners, whose Reason is very opposed to the Truths of Salvation.

But what is this particular order of Sinners, that St. Paul calls natural men? I believed for a long time that he designated by this expression these proud Philosophers, these animals of glory, as Tertullian calls them, who in the time of St. Paul regarded the Gospel as a heap of reveries and extravagances, witness what this Apostle has said about them in the preceding chapter, namely that the cross of Jesus Christ is folly to the Greeks.

What made me enter into this thought, is that it appears very conformable to the intention of the Apostle, and to the whole sequence of his discourse, as it is easy to convince oneself, by reading the first two chapters of this Epistle.

Even today I would prefer this explanation to any other, if it were easy to adjust to it the two expressions that St. Paul uses, I mean that of natural man, and that of spiritual man. But I have difficulty believing that he has chosen these two terms to designate by one a proud Philosopher, and by the other a humble, and modest spirit. On one side these two terms have other meanings in the holy Books, and on the other they do not appear to me proper to express the one that one gives them. Thus I have difficulty believing that St. Paul employed them in this sense.

Estius believes that by a natural man, it is necessary to understand a badly instructed Christian, and by a spiritual man a Christian who has profited well from the instructions that have been given to him. This meaning comes rather well to the intention of the Apostle, and it has besides this advantage, that from the entry of the following chapter St. Paul employs one of these expressions precisely in this sense, and if he does not employ the other, he substitutes for it one very similar. I could not, he says to the Corinthians, speak to you as to spiritual, but as to carnal, as to Children in Christ, I have given you milk to drink, and have not given you meat.

It is clear that in this last passage these carnal, of whom St. Paul speaks, are ignorant Christians, and little advanced in the knowledge of the Truth, since they are Children in Christ, who nourish themselves only with milk, and the spiritual, well instructed Christians, and who have made considerable progress in the School of Jesus Christ. Why therefore would one not give in the other passage, of which this is the continuation, the same meaning to the term spiritual, which is found in both? And why would one not believe that he calls carnal in one, those whom he calls natural in the other?

I do not believe that one can reasonably reject this meaning: but there is a third, which pleases me still more. It is the one that Mr. Vitranga proposes in chap. XI. of the III. book of his sacred Observations. He has shown in chap. IV. of the same book, that by the words soul and spirit several Ancients, both Jews, and Pagans, have understood what one calls the inferior part, and the superior part of the Soul, on one side the senses and the passions, and on the other reason and intelligence. He has shown that it is in this sense that St. Paul has taken these two expressions, in this beautiful passage of his I. Epistle to the Thess. V. 23. Your entire spirit, and the soul, and the body, be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Thus nothing is more natural than to understand in this sense these two expressions, in the passage in question. Nothing is more natural than to believe that what St. Paul wanted to say, is that a sensual man, slave to his passions, sunk in vice and in disorder, regards as dreams and reveries the Truths opposed to his tastes, and to his inclinations, such as are most of those that the Gospel proposes; instead a man guided by the purest notions of good sense, such as is the true Faithful, judges

soundly of everything, and sees in particular that nothing is more just than what God requires of us.

I add that one must not press this second maxim too much, nor imagine that St. Paul wants to make understood that the good man never errs in his judgments. It suffices, to verify what he says, that that happens ordinarily. It is necessary to understand it in the same way as what he says elsewhere, that we do not regard visible things, but invisible ones; that those who are in Jesus Christ, do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit, etc.

It suffices still that that happens to the spiritual insofar as spiritual, and in proportion that he is spiritual, it being certain that he never acts otherwise, than because his spirituality is imperfect; which makes that the most holy conduct themselves only too often by the flesh.

CHAPTER XII. If the difficulties that one finds in responding to the Objections that one makes against our Mysteries, come from the depravation of our nature by sin.

WHAT one has just read shows clearly that the depravation of our Reason does not determine it to reject positively revealed Truths; from which it is easy to conclude that if one has difficulty resolving the Objections that combat some of these Truths, that comes not at all from some aversion that we have naturally for them. But as this makes the essential and the capital of this dispute, it will be good to dwell on it still a moment.

I. If the depravation of our nature strengthened in such a way the Objections that combat revealed Truths, that there would be found no one who could solve them, it would infallibly produce two other effects of the same nature. It would weaken in such a way the proofs of these Truths, that no one would be struck by them, and would make the Truths themselves appear so little credible, that no one would receive them, neither by divine Faith, nor by human Faith. These three consequences of the same disposition are equally natural, and one could not understand that one of the three appearing, the two others would not appear.

One does not see however the two. For how many people are there not who believe these Truths, either by divine Faith, or by human Faith, and who find the proofs of them very strong, although they cannot respond to the Objections?

Mr. B. furnishes us with an example of this. He admits that the proofs that establish the Truth of the Mysteries, are extremely strong, and that there are very certain, and very evident axioms, which authorize us to respond to them. Rep. to Provinc. tom. 2. pag. 681. However he maintains everywhere that it is impossible to respond to the Objections.

II. Let us suppose that by an effect, of which it would be difficult to indicate the cause, the efficacy of the depravation of Nature were limited to supporting, and

strengthening the Objections that one makes against our Mysteries, would it be conceivable that Grace would leave it all its force in this regard? It serves only to correct this depravation, to put all our faculties back in their primitive state, and to render easy to us what our corruption renders impossible to us. As therefore it puts us in a state to feel the force of the proofs, which establish these Truths, as it persuades us of the Truths themselves, it would also give us the light, and the other necessary sources to disentangle ourselves from these Objections.

It does not do it however. As has already been remarked, these Objections appear no less pressing to those whom this Grace has regenerated, than to those who are still engaged in their natural corruption. Does it not appear clearly by that that what these difficulties have that is embarrassing, comes from elsewhere than from this corruption, of which Grace is the only remedy?

III. But I want Grace not to absolutely prevent this effect. I want it not to entirely annihilate these difficulties, that we find in repulsing the attacks of the enemies of the Truth. Is it at least conceivable that it would not diminish them a little bit, that it would not weaken them at all, and not render victory easier for us than it was naturally? Nothing appears to me more absurd in itself, nothing more injurious to the power of this supernatural Grace, which is destined only to repair the ravages that sin has made in our souls.

The fact however is certain. Those whom Grace has regenerated have no less difficulty responding to these Objections, than those who are still engaged in the corruption of sin. Evident proof that this corruption is not what makes these difficulties.

IV. One even sees a thing that I have remarked in another place, and which accords very badly with what is told to us. One sees people in whom one remarks no vestige, no impression of Grace, and who do not fail to despise these difficulties, at the time when they cause extreme trouble to true Faithful. Is this not a strong proof of what I say? And does it not appear clearly by that, that what renders these difficulties so embarrassing, is something completely other than the corruption of Nature by sin?

V. If one found strong and pressing the Objections that Reason suggests against revealed Truths, only because one has an aversion for these Truths, it would infallibly happen that all these Objections would appear of an equal force, since they would all equally have what one wants to make this force, I mean this aversion for the Truth. This cause would always act in a uniform manner, and equally effective.

That however is not what one sees, or to better say one sees the contrary. One sees revealed Truths, to which no one opposes anything that appears even a little pressing. One sees still that the Objections that one makes against each particular Truth, are not of an equal force. There are some that cause pain, and others that do not cause any. That would not happen, if what is told to us were true.

VI. One can still apply here what I have touched on in another place. It is that if the depravation of sin gave to the Objections that one makes against our Mysteries, this apparent force which embarrasses us, it would produce, either uniquely, or principally, this effect on the Objections that combat this particular order of revealed Truths, which have a direct and immediate opposition to this depravation, such as are the practical ones. This not being the case, it is necessary to look elsewhere for the cause of this effect.

Where is it then? will undoubtedly say someone. I respond that it is the same that makes the trouble that one has in disentangling oneself from the other difficulties that one finds on all sorts of subjects. It comes in a word from the fact that one does not understand enough the matter. Everyone knows that everything embarrasses the ignorant, and that the difficulties that appear the most despicable to intelligent people, are inexplicable for those who have no opening, no light on this subject.

Now that is precisely the state where we find ourselves, both with regard to a very great number of Mysteries of Nature, and especially with regard to the things of Heaven.

There is indeed a very great difference between the lights that we have on these two sorts of subjects. The things of Nature are, for the ordinary, much more proportioned to our small capacity than those of Heaven, which are so sublime. The infinite always enters, or almost always, into these latter, this infinite which confounds us, and which absorbs us as soon as we apply ourselves to meditating on it. And besides for the things of Nature, we have the senses, which are of very great help to us, and which each day discover so many new, and very instructive things, to those who know how to consult them well; whereas the Truths of Salvation are things that the eye has not seen, that the ear has not heard, and that never mounted into the heart of man. There are even several of them of which we have no idea. Such are, for example, spiritual substances, and this thought itself that one claims makes their essence. For, as Mr. Locke has shown, it is not by idea, but by feeling, and by reflection on ourselves, that we know all this.

It is true that God has revealed to us the Truths of Faith. But it is true also that this revelation is very limited and very restricted. Ordinarily it contents itself with indicating the depth of the thing, without discovering the manner, nor the rest of the circumstances; and besides it employs, to express what it tells us, only terms, which in the use that it makes of them, have a completely different meaning than that which we give them in our ordinary language; which makes Thomas Aquinas say that most of these terms are not at all univocal, but simply analogous.

How after that could we penetrate these admirable subjects? How could we have distinct ideas of them? How not having such ideas, could we clarify the difficulties that we find in them?

That therefore before pronouncing on an Objection that attacks some of the revealed Truths, one go through its terms, to see if there is not one which does not

excite in us clear and distinct ideas of what it designates, being applied to the things of Heaven; and that one wait to pronounce on the depth, until one is well determined on this incidental question. If one observes this precaution, which is so reasonable, I am sure that one will be less importuned by these difficulties than one is.

CHAPTER XIII. If the depravation of Nature by sin, has contributed nothing to increasing the difficulties that one finds in persuading oneself of our Mysteries.

Someone will perhaps ask me if I believe that the corruption of our nature, by sin, has no part in the difficulties that we find in responding to the Objections that are made each day against the Truths of Salvation.

I have various responses to make to this question. The first is that I doubt not at all that among those who press these difficulties, there are several who do it from very bad motives, above all from that of stifling the remorse of their conscience, of stunning themselves on this subject, and of putting themselves in a state of being able in this manner to abandon themselves without scruple to the most enormous excesses, which being a particular degree of depravation, comes without difficulty from the first sin, as from its source.

But as it is a question here, not of what can be particular to some, but of what is common to all, I add, secondly, that this depravation can well be the distant cause of this effect, but that it is not the proximate and immediate cause. I believe I have proved the second part of this response in the preceding chapters, and for the first I am careful not to deny that sin has altered everything in man, and that as it has corrupted the heart, by giving it a terrible inclination towards evil, it has also spread many darknesses, and principles of error in the mind.

Such is apparently this impatience, this precipitation, with which we judge everything, without waiting to be forced to it by the evidence of the Truth; and which one regards with reason as the most fertile source of our errors.

Such is still this excessive attachment for the goods of the body, which is naturally followed by a terrible negligence for those of the soul, and particularly for the knowledge of the Truth.

I respond, thirdly, that the effects of this depravation, whatever it may be, are not limited to the difficulties that one finds in defending the Truths of Religion, but extend in proportion, over all matters even a little abstract, and thus one is wrong to claim, or even to skillfully insinuate, that what one says concerns only revealed Truths.

I respond, fourthly, that this itself is one of the matters, on which we must observe with the most scruple, the precaution that I have indicated. Indeed to be able to determine with some precision the effects of this depravation of our nature, it would be necessary to know exactly what was the state that preceded it, and how far

extended the privileges of the first man, coming from the hands of his Creator. Now that is a very little known thing, because having depended on the free will of God, to grant more or fewer graces to the first man, it is impossible to know what he did in this regard, except by the help of Revelation, which has explained itself so little on this matter, that one can say that it has almost not spoken of it.

Whatever the case may be, it is not necessary to go so far, when one can find closer what one seeks. The non-observance of the rules that Philosophers prescribe to those who apply themselves to the search for Truth, is the proximate and immediate cause, both of the errors into which we fall on the things of Religion, and of the embarrassment in which we find ourselves, when it is necessary to respond to the Objections that are made to us. Let us stop at this, which is so certain, and let us speak of the rest only with restraint.

CHAPTER XIV. If one must avoid disputing by Reason on the Truths of Faith.

THERE still remains a third question for me to examine. It is the one that consists in knowing if it is well or poorly done to dispute by Reason, whether in attacking, or in defending, when it is a question of revealed Truths. What I have said until now shows sufficiently what one must think on this subject, and I could dispense with adding anything to it. But as the matter is beautiful, and important, I beg my Reader to allow me to pause on it a moment.

I say therefore, first, that this manner of defending oneself, which consists in recusing Reason, is not nearly as advantageous as one imagines. One gets rid, I admit, of some Objections, which appear rather troublesome; but besides that, in defending oneself in this manner, one does little honor to the Truth that one sustains only by fleeing, besides that, I say, one deprives oneself by that very fact of the advantages that one had over false Religions, to whom one will no longer be able to shame for the absurdities that they spread. With what modesty could one reproach them for these, after having declared that what appears the most false in the matter of Religion, can be the most certain? Quintilian, however, of what use this can be, to prepare those in error for the reception of the true Faith?

But that is not all. Far from facilitating the conversion of Infidels, one puts new obstacles to it. One demeans Christianity in their eyes, by admitting to them that its dogmas are contrary to Reason, to this Reason whose tribunal is the only one that these people recognize. Is it not confirming them in their unbelief, to admit to them that this tribunal pronounces in their favor, and condemns us?

Besides one deprives oneself by this of the means of persuading them of the Truth. How will one be able to do it, if they know how to take advantage of their advantages, and to use appropriately what this maxim has that is proper to weaken the proofs of Religion?

Let us imagine, in the first place, that it is a question of converting an Atheist. What will one be able to oppose to him, that he will not repulse without difficulty, by this single maxim? Let one produce to him the most evident demonstrations, he will dissipate them by this single word; I agree that what you allege to me is plausible, it is even evident, if you wish; but does it follow from that that it is true? Do you not teach me that what appears the most evident, can be false? Do you not tell me that Reason is blind in the things of Religion? How then can you claim that I trust it, on the most important of its dogmas? By what right do you want me to submit to a Judge that you recuse, and that you accuse of a thousand injustices?

I say the same thing of the divinity of Scripture, which is denied to us by Atheists, by Deists, by Pagans, and by several other Unbelievers. How will we be able to prove this capital Truth to them, if it passes for constant that Reason is blind for the things of Religion? What can we produce in this design, which is not taken from natural light? The great proof that one alleges on this subject, is the one that one takes from the characters of divinity, that one believes to remark, either in Scripture itself, or in the Christian Religion, which makes it its rule, or in the Church, which receives it, and recommends it. And how can one propose it except by this Syllogism, or by some other similar one? Every Book, every Religion, every Society, which has such and such characters, is a divine Book, a divine Religion, a Society conducted by the Holy Spirit. Scripture, Christianity, the Church, has these characters. Therefore, etc.

The major is certain: one can even say that it is evident. But of what use will its evidence be to it, and what can be its certainty, if Reason is blind for the things of Religion? Is it not a matter of Religion, to know, on one side, what must be the characters, either of Religion itself, or of the Book that teaches it, or of the Society that follows it; and on the other to determine what is the subject where they are found? Thus Reason being blind in this regard, it is not for it to pronounce on this, and all the reasonings that it will be able to make on this double question, must never pass but for frivolous speculations.

Everyone knows that as we believe to remark in Scripture characters of Truth and of Divinity, Unbelievers also believe to remark in it characters of error and of falsity, contradictions, absurdities, etc. They claim that these contradictions, these absurdities, are evident, and that Reason does not hesitate on this. If one recuses it, when they oppose it, how can we oppose it to them, when we claim that it pronounces in our favor?

I say still the same thing of the disputes that divide Christians on the understanding of Scripture. What is one amusing oneself with in contesting on this, if Reason is blind on this kind of thing? How can one dispute, except by producing certain rules, solid in truth, but which draw all that they can have of certainty, only from good sense? Such are, for example, these two or three. When it is a question of explaining a term whose meaning is in dispute, it is necessary to prefer, all being equal, the meaning that it has ordinarily in the holy Books, to that which it never has there, or

which it has there only very rarely. It is necessary to prefer, all being equal, the meaning which has more relation to the circumstances of the text, to that which has less. It is necessary to prefer, all being equal, the meaning the most universally received to that which is less so, etc.

It is by these rules, and by some other similar ones, that one determines oneself in the judgment that one pronounces on the true meaning of Scripture. But what other certainty can these rules have, than that which comes from their evidence? And of what weight can this evidence be, if Reason is blind for the things of Religion? How even to apply these rules other than by Reason?

Here in particular is a rule that all the world receives. Every time that a text can equally receive two meanings, of which one is absurd and contradictory, the other is not, it is necessary to prefer the Second.

For example, what Jesus Christ says Matt. XI. v. to the Disciples of St. John, the blind see, can be understood, both in the composite sense, and in the divided sense. One can understand on one side that the blind remaining blind, do not fail to see. One can understand also, that those who were blind, and are no longer, have presently the use of their eyes. The first of these two meanings is contradictory. It is therefore necessary to take the second.

God says to Ezekiel V. v. on the subject of some hairs, that he commands him to cut, and to throw into the fire; This is the city of Jerusalem, that I have placed among the nations; which is so similar to what Jesus Christ says of the bread of the Eucharist, This is my body, which is broken for you. These words, that God addresses to the Prophet can receive two meanings, one literal, but absurd, the other figurative, rather natural, and which has nothing but what is true: that is why all the world prefers it to the other.

If Reason is blind in the things of Religion, and in particular in the understanding of Scripture, what use will one be able to make of this rule? For how will one be able to know except by Reason, if a meaning is absurd, or contradictory?

Here still are two reflections that seemed to me worthy of being well weighed.

The first is taken from the fact that Scripture assures us in various places, that when God has left on his works so many sensible marks of his perfections, his intention has been that men coming to remark them would learn by that to know him, and to serve him. See Ps. XIX. 2--5. Acts XVII. 26. 27. Rom. I. 19. 20. 21. In the last even of these passages St. Paul assures that the Pagans are inexcusable, not having profited from all these great lessons that the works of God gave them, to bring them to the knowledge of their Author.

I now ask, how can all that subsist, if one poses that Reason is blind for the things of Religion. For first, it is clear that it is only by reasoning, and by going back from the effect to the cause, that one can know God by his works. And how will one be able to make this use of one's Reason, if this Reason is blind for this kind of thing? How

above all can be true what St. Paul says, that the Gentiles are inexcusable, for not having known God by this way? What would be more legitimate than the excuse, that the blindness of their Reason would have furnished them?

It is true, they could have said, that our Reason teaches us that a Being infinitely wise, infinitely powerful, and infinitely good, has created the world. But what state must we make of the lessons of a faculty as depraved, and as deceptive as our Reason? Without doubt this excuse would be valid, if the fact from which it is taken, were true. Since therefore St. Paul rejects it, one can be assured that it is our duty to follow the conduct of our Reason, and that thus it is not such as one represents it.

The other reflection which proves the same thing, is taken from the custom of Jesus Christ and of his Apostles. When they have the design of refuting some error, or of condemning some abuse, they do not content themselves with deciding, and with saying simply what it is, they still support their decisions, sometimes by reasons taken from natural light, and sometimes by passages of the Old Testament, which they allege, and from which they draw consequences, which appear even sometimes rather distant. I do not report the examples of it: no one can ignore them.

Everyone sees that these holy Authors could only have proceeded in this manner, to give weight to what they said, and to make it relished, either by their hearers, or by their readers. But what weight were these reasonings capable of adding to it, if our Reason has only darkneses? Was there not even something pernicious in this proceeding? Did one not authorize by that the Faithful to submit Faith to Reason? Did one not confirm them in the prejudice so universally received, and at the same time so false in this hypothesis; That one must never act against Reason?

CHAPTER XV. In what sense it is true to say that the Mysteries of Faith are well above Reason, but that they are not against Reason.

I cannot resolve to leave this matter without making some further reflection on it. Nothing is more ordinary in the mouth and in the Writings of Theologians of all Sects, than this maxim, The Truths of Faith can well be above Reason, but they are never against Reason. See Bellarmine de Notis Eccles. cap. XI. Gregory of Valencia tom. III. disp. I. quest. I, punct. 4. Vasquez in 1. disp. 123. cap. I. n. 1. Mærat. de Fide, disp. 16. sect. 5.

But as I see that one does not agree on the meaning that it is necessary to give to it, it will not be inappropriate to pause a moment to explain it, to see afterwards if it is true.

I notice first that it is figurative, which according to me is a great defect. For as Aristotle has very judiciously remarked, metaphors do not agree at all with the didactic style, which demands only clarity. But as the harm is done, it is necessary

to think only of seeking a remedy for it, that is to say of reducing this metaphorical maxim to the propriety, and to the exactitude of the literal meaning.

The second part of the axiom, which says that the Truths of Faith are not against Reason, is rather clear, and everyone takes it in the same meaning. One understands that Reason never perceives clearly and evidently falsity in revealed Truths, or, which comes to the same thing, that God never attests anything that is clearly and evidently false. I understand a clarity and an evidence such as I have described in chapter IV.

But it is not the same with the first part of the axiom, which states that the Truths of Faith can be above Reason. It is here that there is obscurity, and that one does not see clearly what it is necessary to understand by that.

For me, I am persuaded that the true meaning of this first part of the axiom, is that it can happen that revealed Truths are so non-evident, that Reason destitute of the help of Revelation, and reduced to the necessity of conducting itself by natural light alone, first could not discover them, with whatever care it applied itself to it; and secondly, that even when one would propose them to it, it could not determine itself on their truth, or their falsity, but that it would be constrained to suspend its judgment on this.

This is what takes place on two sorts of subjects. The first are those which have depended on the free will of God. Such are the Mysteries of the Incarnation and of Redemption, the Creation of the world in six days, the Formation of the body of the first man and of the first woman, of which the first was drawn immediately from the earth, and the second from the side of the man, etc.

The second are those, of which, neither the senses, nor Reason itself, have any idea, and such is the Mystery of the Trinity.

Let Reason meditate as much as it pleases on all these subjects, it will never discover them: And even when one will propose them to it without making it see that God has attested them, it will guard itself equally, both from rejecting them, and from admitting them. It will well be able to say that they are little probable, and it will not be mistaken in this judgment. But it will never say, at least if it is wise, that they are certainly and evidently false. It will say just as little that they are certainly true. It will suspend its judgment, until one makes it see that God has attested them, and marked them, if I dare say it thus, with his seal.

That is the true meaning of the axiom, and it appears that this is how the Theologians who propose it understand it: That, I say, appears clearly by the use that they make of it, as can be seen in the places that I have indicated.

That appears still by various things that they say on several occasions. For example, Thomas maintains that the Objections that one makes against our Mysteries, are not demonstrations; but simple arguments that one can solve. *Manifestum est probationes, quæ contra fidem inducuntur, non esse démonstrationes, sed solubilia*

argumenta [It is manifest that proofs, which are introduced against faith, are not demonstrations, but soluble arguments]. Thom. I. quæst. 1. art. 8.

For example again, several Scholastics maintain that one can prove demonstratively not in truth that our dogmas are certain, nor even that all that one opposes to them is false, but that all the Objections that combat them, contain some non-evident proposition, and which consequently can be denied. See Cajetan in 1. quæst. 1. art. 8. Vasquez in I. disp. 11. cap. 2. & 3. Coninck de Ac- tib. sup. disp. 11. dub. 2. De Rhodes tom. I. disp. 6. quæst. 1. sect. 3. Martinon de Fide disp. 5. sect. 4.

That is therefore the true meaning of the axiom, and not the one that Mr. B. gives to it. He believes, in the first place, that when one says that the Mysteries are well above Reason, but that they are not against Reason, one does not give the same meaning to the word Reason in the two parts of the axiom. He believes that in the first one understands the Reason of man, and in the second Reason in general, such as it is in all intelligent Beings, and particularly in God.

But it is certain that he is mistaken. One understands everywhere human Reason, and it is necessary only to read the places that I have indicated, to remain convinced of it.

But, says Mr. B., if one understands in the one and in the other part of the axiom human Reason, I do not see too much the solidity of the distinction; for the most orthodox admit that we do not know the conformity of our Mysteries to the maxims of Philosophy. It seems to us therefore that they are not conformable to our Reason. Now what appears to us not to be conformable to our Reason, appears to us contrary to our Reason, just as what does not appear to us conformable to the Truth, appears to us contrary to the Truth; and thus why would one not say equally, both that the Mysteries are against our weak Reason, and that they are above our weak Reason. Rep. to the quest. of a Prov. tom. II. pag. 1000.

I respond, in the first place, that Mr. B. does not make an enumeration of the parts that is full and complete enough. Three different things can happen, not only two, as he claims. The first that a Truth is, or appears, positively conformable to Reason. The second that it appears positively contrary to Reason. The third that it appears, neither positively conformable, nor positively contrary. The latter appears by the example, that I have produced in another place. The number of Angels, is even, or odd. That is certain. But neither the one, nor the other of these two parts of the disjunctive, appears, and is indeed, neither positively conformable, nor positively contrary, to our Reason.

Let us compare together these two Truths, The whole is greater than the part. Jesus Christ has expiated our sins. One is a maxim evident to our Reason. The other is a Truth of Faith, very clearly revealed. But they have with each other, neither conformity, nor opposition. Each can be true independently of the other. That appears evident to me.

However it seems that Mr. B. does not agree with it, witness what he says, What appears to us not to be conformable to our Reason, appears to us contrary to our Reason, just as what does not appear to us conformable to the Truth, appears to us contrary to the Truth.

He does not notice that the two things that he compares as similar, are very dissimilar. There is no middle between being conformable to the Truth, and being contrary to the Truth, there being nothing of which one cannot say one or the other. Everything is true, or false. Consequently everything is conformable or contrary to the Truth.

But there is a vast middle between being conformable to Reason, and being opposed to it. This middle includes all that is non-evident, in a word all that our Reason ignores. It is, in that, with Reason as with Faith. There are a thousand things which are, neither conformable to Faith, nor contrary to Faith. For example, so many new facts that happen each day. Faith is silent on this, and Reason does the same thing on a great number of Truths that Faith receives.

How many times has it not been remarked that there are three different lights, that God has given us to lead us to the knowledge of the Truth; the Senses, Reason, and Faith? Each of these lights teaches us a hundred things, that the others leave unknown. The Senses teach us some that neither Reason, nor Faith, discover at all; for example, most facts. Reason, in its turn, perceives a great number which are unknown to the Senses, and of which Faith does not speak; such are most of the Truths that human Sciences discover. Faith finally embraces, which are unknown, both to the Senses, and to Reason; for example, that the human race has come from a single man and a single woman.

Thus each of these lights goes, in certain things, further than the two others, and in all that is particular to them they are, neither conformable, nor contrary, to each other.

Now that is what is signified by what one says that the Mysteries of Faith can well be above Reason, but that they are not against Reason. It is thus that Mr. Pascal understood it, when he said in one of his Thoughts, § 5. Faith indeed says what the Senses do not say, but never the contrary. It is above, he adds, but not against. It is true that he compares Faith only with the Senses. But the Author of the Art of Thinking says the same thing, in comparing this same Faith, both with the Senses, and with Reason. To consider, he says, things exactly, never what we see evidently and by Reason, or by the faithful report of the Senses, is opposed to what divine Faith teaches us. Part. IV. Chap. 11.

CHAPTER XVI. Reflections on a passage of the Art of Thinking.

The Author that I have just cited, says in this same place something, which appears at first rather well thought out, but which is very false, and is only suitable to dazzle

Readers who do not keep sufficiently on their guard. Here it is. It is certain that divine Faith must have more force in our mind than our own Reason, and that by Reason itself, which makes us see that it is always necessary to prefer what is more certain to what is less so, and that it is more certain that what God says is true, than what our Reason persuades us, because God is more incapable of deceiving us than our Reason of being deceived. Art of Thinking, part. IV. chap. 11.

This reasoning has several defects. First it supposes that each act of divine Faith has as much certainty as this capital Truth, that all that God says is true. It does not please this Author to consider, in the first place, that every act of divine Faith naturally reduces to this Syllogism, All that God says is true. God says such, or such a thing. Therefore such, or such a thing is true.

The major of this Syllogism has without doubt the highest degree of evidence and of certainty. For who can doubt that veracity is visibly contained in the idea of the perfect Being? What kind of God would be a God who would lie and who would deceive. If therefore, to have a conclusion that had the highest degree of evidence and of certainty, it was necessary only to draw it by an argument, of which the major had the highest degree of evidence, I admit that each act of divine Faith would possess it, it being difficult to add anything to the certainty of the maxim which serves as foundation to Faith, and which states, that all that God says is true.

But of what use is it that the major of a Syllogism has all the evidence, and all the possible certainty, if the minor has much less of it? Does one not know that the certainty of a conclusion never exceeds that of the least certain of its premises?

Now who would dare to maintain that the minor of the Syllogism which expresses the act of Faith, is as evident, and as certain as the major? Is it as certain that God has revealed such and such dogma, as it is that all that God says is true? The first of these propositions, on one side, is very evident, and on the other, is universally received. All the world agrees on it. Not only all Christian Societies, but also the Jews, the Mohammedans, the Pagans, admit it, even Atheists and Deists admit it, at least in this sense, that they believe that if there were a God, and this God spoke, he would say nothing that was not true.

But for the second, it is contested, both by Atheists, and by Deists, and by Pagans, and by Mohammedans, and by Jews, and by various Heretics. It is true that one proves it to them. But how many reasonings is it not necessary to make, how many propositions is it not necessary to establish, and to overthrow responses, before being able to succeed in it?

To reason therefore correctly, it was necessary to compare the certainty of the acts of Reason, not with that of the major of the Syllogism, which expresses the act of Faith, but with that of the minor, or of the conclusion. It was necessary to say that it is more certain that God has revealed each particular dogma, than it is that Reason does not deceive us at all in what it persuades us of most strongly. But if one had

done it, the weakness of the reasoning would have been more perceptible than one wished.

II. It was necessary, on the other hand, to explain oneself with a little more precision on the subject of Reason itself. Which acts of Reason does one put below Faith? Is it only some of them, or all without exception?

If one speaks only of some of them, one gains nothing. It will be able to be true that as there are acts of our Reason more uncertain than those of Faith, there are others which are less so. Thus it will remain to examine of which order are those that one opposes to us, and it is on this that one will find difficulties. For example, when one will dispute on Creation, an Atheist, a Deist, even a Socinian, will maintain that it is more certain that from nothing nothing is made, than it is that God has revealed that he has drawn the world from a pure nothing; and it will be difficult to convince him of the contrary.

If on the contrary one understands that every act of Faith has more certainty than any act of Reason whatsoever can have, I will ask if it has more than that which assures us that there is a God, than that which states that one can affirm of each thing all that is manifestly contained in the distinct idea that one has of it, than that which says that all that is evident, is true, than that which recognizes that it is impossible that the same thing is and is not, etc. If one says it, one will expose oneself to the ridicule of all the world: And if one denies it, one will admit that one was wrong to reason as one has done.

III. The great source of the illusion that this Author has created for himself in this place, is that he has regarded the certainty of divine Faith, and that of Reason, as two collateral certainties, and independent of each other. On this foundation he has believed that one could ask which of the two is the greater. He has not noticed that the certainty of Reason enters into that of Faith, that that of Faith is founded on that of Reason, in such a way that if Reason had none, Faith would be absolutely destitute of it, as I have shown in what precedes.

If Reason can deceive us in what it teaches us, we can have been deceived in persuading ourselves that there is a God, that he says nothing but what is true, that he has spoken to men, that his Word is contained in the Book that we call Scripture. For these are all so many acts of Reason, which must precede Faith, and if they are uncertain, Faith itself could not have any shadow of certainty.

SECOND PART. Where one responds directly to the Objection taken from the permission of sin.

CHAPTER I. This Objection contains three. What the first one consists of. That the Universalists cannot respond to it.

ONE has been able to see in the first Part that the Objection taken from the permission of sin, and from the disorders that have followed it, is not as despicable as many people imagine. I propose presently to show that it is not as embarrassing as others believe it, and that it is not at all impossible to satisfy it. This is the subject of this second Part.

One can say that this Objection, however simple it appears, contains three different ones. It is claimed that it is impossible to reconcile this permission with the idea that we all have of the Wisdom, of the Goodness, and of the Holiness, of the supremely perfect Being; which makes, as everyone sees by itself, three particular difficulties, of which the first consists in the fact that the permission of sin does not appear to accord with the rules of Wisdom; the second in the fact that it appears opposed to all the inclinations of Goodness; and the third in the fact that it seems that it is contrary to the laws of Purity and of Holiness.

These three difficulties deserve to be examined each one separately, and in the same order in which I have just arranged them. That is also what I am going to do, with the help of God.

Mr. B. does not extend himself much on the first. He proposes it only as if in passing, and he makes it a kind of accessory to the second, which is the one that he presses the most. But as it is certain that it is distinct from it, and that if the foundations that he gives it, were very solid, it would cause extreme pain, I believe that it is good to examine it separately, and with some care. This is what I propose to do in this chapter, and in some of the following ones.

Here is approximately what it reduces to. Mr. B. supposes with reason, that nothing is more opposed to Wisdom, than not to take just measures to achieve one's ends, at least when one can, and one has the means to. A man, who being able to take diverse routes to go to his goal, and knowing that some are sure and infallible, and that the others will have no effect, or will have one completely contrary to his intentions, would take the second, and would leave the first, would give by that reason to believe that far from being perfectly wise, he is not even so mediocly, or to better say, he is not so at all.

That however is what it is claimed that God will have done in the sentiment of Christians. He has created the world only to exercise goodness, and to render his Creatures happy. He had a thousand infallible means to succeed in this design. He could have set aside all that has traversed the happiness of these Creatures. He has

not done it. He has done, on the contrary, what has only served to throw these Creatures into this abyss of evils, where they have fallen. He has therefore done precisely the contrary of what Wisdom wanted him to do.

Here are three maxims that Mr. B. proposes as very conformable to Reason.

I. As the infinitely perfect Being finds in himself a glory, and a beatitude, which can never, neither diminish, nor grow, his goodness alone has determined him to create this universe.

II. An infinite goodness having directed the Creator in the production of the world, all the characters of science, of skill, of power, and of greatness, which shine forth in his work, are destined for the happiness of intelligent Creatures. He has wanted to make known his perfections, only so that this species of Creatures would find their felicity in the knowledge, in the admiration, and in the love of the Sovereign Being.

III. The benefits that he communicates to Creatures who are capable of felicity, tend only to their happiness. He does not therefore permit that they serve to render them unhappy, and if the bad use that they would make of them, was capable of losing them, he would give them sure means of always making a good use of them.

Mr. B. Response to the questions of a Provincial, tom. II. page 816.817.818.

He opposes these three maxims to what we maintain, and which he makes consist in the fact that God created a man and a woman, and granted them, among other favors, free will; so that they had the power to obey him, and to disobey him; that they disobeyed, and that from then on they were condemned, they and all their posterity, to the miseries of this life, to temporal death, and to eternal damnation, and subjected to such an inclination to sin, that they abandon themselves to it almost without end and without ceasing. In the same place page 815.

He leaves it to his Reader to conclude that nothing being more opposed than the design that he attributes to God, and the success that it has had, it appears clearly that he has not taken just measures, and that thus he has not acted wisely.

Before responding directly to this Objection, I believe that it will not be useless to consider, but succinctly, what others can oppose to it, by following the thread of their hypotheses.

I believe therefore, in the first place, that the defenders of congruous and sufficient Grace, have nothing, I will not say solid, but even a little plausible to respond. They believe that the design of God in all that he has done, whether in nature, or in grace, has been to render intelligent Creatures happy. They believe that he wishes, I will not say sincerely, that is little, but strongly and ardently, to succeed in it, as one will see in the sequel. They believe that this desire has been so strong and so violent, that to fill it he has resolved to give his own Son to death, to which it is impossible to add anything. They believe, on the other hand, that God had in his hands, and before his eyes, an infinity of means, an infinity of sure, infallible ways, to render

these Creatures happy, without excepting a single one. He has however rejected all these diverse ways, all these different means, which he could follow and put to work with the utmost facility. He has chosen others, which he knew, and which he saw were to operate the loss and eternal misery of most of these Creatures. Is that a proceeding that responds to the idea that we all have, I will not say of a perfect Wisdom, but of the most common, and the most mediocre Wisdom that one remarks among men.

I do not see what one can oppose to this Objection, unless to recur to what I have refuted, that in truth this shocks Reason, but that Reason is blind for the things of Religion. As I have clearly shown the uselessness and the inconveniences of this evasion, it is necessary to succumb under the weight of this Objection, or embrace other hypotheses.

CHAPTER II. If one can say that God has had no other intention in creating the world, than to render intelligent Creatures happy.

AS much as the Universalists are embarrassed when it is necessary to respond to this Objection, just as much the Particularists find facility in it. They deny, without hesitating, what Mr. B. poses as certain, and which serves as foundation to his proof. They deny him, not only that the sole design of God, in Creation, has been to render intelligent Creatures happy, but still that he has had this design, neither alone, nor jointly with any other.

They prove it by the very reason of Mr. B. They conclude from the event to the intention. They say that since all intelligent Creatures are not happy, it is impossible that God has had the design to render them such. How indeed would it be possible to conceive that a Being infinitely powerful, and infinitely wise, undertakes something without succeeding in it?

A Being infinitely powerful surmounts without difficulty all the obstacles that oppose themselves to his designs, or, to better say, he does not find obstacles that thwart him. A Being infinitely wise never lacks means to arrive at his goal. And even when, by an impossible supposition, God would lack means to achieve his ends, and would find obstacles that he could not overcome, it would be impossible that that would happen without his having foreseen it from eternity; and foreseeing it he would have well guarded himself from forming a design that he did not ignore that he could not execute. This is what men themselves, whose Wisdom is so limited, never do. How therefore would he who is alone wise, and infinitely wise, do it?

As therefore it is beyond doubt that all intelligent Creatures are not happy, and that it is even the incontestable certainty of this fact, which makes the difficulty, it is not possible that God has worked to procure them perfect happiness.

Indeed it is not a question here of an inefficacious will, of a simple velleity, which consists only in a slight complacency for the object considered absolutely, without

putting one's hand to the work. It is a question of one of those wills that one names efficacious, and which are followed, either by the effect itself, or at least by some effort, by some work, since it is claimed that God, in this design, has created the world, has sent his Son to earth, has made him suffer the death of the cross, etc.

In wise persons, these sorts of wills never end in events that one knows will not happen; and the least wise, who can say, I would like to be immortal, will never say, I want to be, and I am going to work to become so. Thus it is not without reason that one denies to Mr. B. what he advances, that the sole design of God in Creation, has been to render all intelligent Creatures happy.

I am therefore surprised to see that Mr. B. advances so boldly things so false, and so strongly contradicted. But I am principally so to see that he spreads them as evident by themselves, as admitted, and even dictated by Reason. For indeed when what he says would be true in itself, it would not fail to be obscure and non-evident, in such a way that Reason would be incapable of perceiving it without revelation.

We very often ignore the designs and the intentions of men, who are so similar to us. Angels even, whose mind is so penetrating, ignore them just as well as we do; for God alone is the scrutinizer of our hearts. How therefore would we know the designs of God, which are so sublime, and so prodigiously elevated above our small and weak imaginations?

For what regards Creation in particular, I perceive only two ways by which Reason can discover the designs that God has had in working on it: one is to study well the idea of the supremely perfect Being; the other is the inspection of the work itself, such as it presents itself to our eyes. Mr. B. calls somewhere the one a priori, and the other a posteriori. But neither the one, nor the other of these two ways, instructs us at all about the designs of God in Creation.

For the first, far from teaching us with what design God has made the world, it does not even teach us that he had to make it. And indeed God would not fail to be always an infinitely perfect Being, even if he had not created a world, as he was without difficulty before he had drawn this one from the bosom of nothingness.

And for the second, the inspection of the world, where one sees so many things which appear to us very useless, and so many others which are very harmful and very inconvenient to us, so many poisons, so many animals, some venomous, others ferocious, and all together enemies of man, this inspection leads us rather to any other thing, than to persuade ourselves that God has done nothing except for us.

It is not Reason, it is Faith. There is only the second that speaks on this subject. The first remains in silence, both on this subject, and on several others.

Besides Mr. B. does not explain himself clearly enough. He says that God has done nothing except for the happiness of intelligent Creatures. But first what is this happiness, of which Reason wants God to have had the design to impart to these Creatures? Is it indefinitely some degree of happiness, without saying whether it

would be, neither great, nor small? Does that respond to the idea that we have, either of supreme Wisdom, or of supreme Goodness? Is it the greatest happiness that intelligent Creatures can possess? That is absurd, and inconceivable, as one will see in the sequel. Is it finally a certain precise, and determined degree of happiness? Let one teach me by what way Reason can persuade itself that there is a precise degree of happiness that God must communicate to his Creature. Let one judge even if that is believable.

On the other hand, what are the intelligent Creatures, that Reason judges that God wanted to render happy in creating the world? Are they all possible Creatures? That would be ridiculous. Are they only those that have actually been produced, or that will be? What will Reason respond to those who ask it why it is that God has rather wanted to render happy these Creatures that he has actually produced, than so many others that he has left in nothingness? What will it respond to those who will conclude from these two ways of acting so different, and so opposed, that the design of doing good to Creatures, is not the only one that God has had on this occasion?

Let one say what one will about it. For me I am persuaded that Reason has no other course to take on all this, than to be silent; that if it speaks, it will act rashly, and consequently it will no longer be right Reason, which suffices for me, for it is of right Reason alone that it is a question.

CHAPTER III. That Mr. B. does not prove what he says that God has not created the World for his own glory.

ONE is therefore very well founded not to admit what Mr. B. poses as certain. But let us see how he proves it. He supposes that God could only have had one or the other of these two designs, either that of rendering intelligent Creatures happy, or that of working for his own glory. He maintains that one cannot attribute to him the second, which, as he claims, would do him very little honor, since one does not even approve it in men. And from that he concludes that it is necessary to reduce oneself to the first.

He is not the first who has reasoned in this manner. Besides Mr. King, and Mr. Bernard, whom he alleges, besides the late Mr. Tronchin alleged by Mr. Bernard, Mr. de la Place has said before them something similar in his *Dissertation de Ordine Desretorum*, thes. VI. *An sit Deo honorificum asserere ipsum pluris fecisse laudationem creaturarum, quàm actus virtutum suarum, Sanctissimas-que ejus actiones à cupiditate gloria, quæ proficiscatur à creaturis, imperatos fuisse, piis conscientiis considerandum relinquimus.* [Is it honorable to God to assert that he valued the praise of creatures, than his own acts of virtue, and that his most holy actions were directed by a desire for glory, which may come from creatures, we leave to pious consciences to consider.]

I could dispense with examining the reasoning which tends to prove that God has not been able to act for his own glory. But as I see that it is much relished, I believe

that there will be no harm in trying to clarify it a little, and to disentangle what it can contain of true and of false.

I say therefore, in the first place, that what one alleges about men, whom one blames when they act for their own glory, does not prove at all that it is unworthy of God to have this intention. Two sensible differences that there are, in this regard, between the proceeding of God, and that of men, show it with the utmost evidence.

The first is that men act unjustly when they seek glory. Most often they procure it for themselves by excesses that should cover them with confusion. It is thus that Conquerors, and consummate Politicians use it, of whom the first make themselves esteemed only by the ravages that they cause in the world, nor the second only by their skill in deceiving the most suspicious. Often they want to be esteemed for qualities that they do not have: other times for advantages, that they possess in truth, but which merit no esteem, such as birth, riches, good looks, etc. If there are some who claim to make themselves valued by virtue, I mean true virtue, which is piety, and which is without doubt what one must esteem the most in men, they do not fail to fall by that into another error. It always happens to them one of two things, either that the virtues, which are the foundation of their vanity, are only false virtues, which there is all the more subject to fear as they are not accompanied by humility and modesty; or if they are true virtues, one forgets that they do not come from us, but from God, and that consequently it is to God, and not to us, that all the glory for them is due.

There is therefore always injustice in the desire that men have for glory, as I have shown amply in my Treatise on pride. This glory is not due to them. But it belongs to God by a very just title. Consequently, from the fact that it is not permitted to men to seek it, it does not follow that one must say the same thing about God.

Secondly, men seek glory only by low and self-interested views, considering it as a good without which they could not be happy. It is not the same with God. He knows that exterior glory, which is the only one in question, cannot procure him any advantage, nor add anything whatsoever to the happiness that he finds in the possession of his own and inalienable treasures. If he wants to have it, it is because it is just that one render it to him, and so just, that one does not understand how it is that he could renounce it.

An insensible Creature, which would not serve to glorify God, would by that very fact be a useless Creature, and a piece out of place. An intelligent Creature, which would freely and voluntarily abstain from working on it, would be by that very fact very criminal. Finally an intelligent Creature, whom God would dispense from working on it, would be by that very fact a monster, and an assemblage of contradictions.

From that I conclude that there is this difference between God and man, that man cannot innocently seek glory, and that God cannot renounce it, at least in this sense,

that if he produces something, it is necessary by all necessity that what he produces serves in its manner to glorify him.

Thus it is not by this reason that it is necessary to refute those who say that God does everything for his glory. But there is another consideration much more plausible to oppose to them.

One can say to them that external glory, which is the only one in question, however legitimate one imagines it, did not merit that God do to attract it to himself, all that one claims that he has done in this intention. He has created the universe, and what is much more, he has made his Son descend from heaven to earth, and has made him suffer the death of the cross. Was it worth the trouble to do these great things, to attract to himself the praises and the admiration of a certain number of Creatures, who are so low below him? Does one not know that to act regularly, it is necessary that the end be more noble and more excellent than the means? And can one think that there is something more excellent in glory of God, that is to say in the thoughts and sentiments of intelligent Creatures, and in all that they can do to display them, than in the actions of God himself?

I have said that it is a question here only of this exterior glory: for as for what regards the interior, which is nothing other than the brilliance of his perfections, it is clear that it could not be the effect, or the consequence, of the actions of God. It is inseparable from his essence. It neither grows, nor diminishes, and was no less vivid before the birth of the universe than presently.

That is principally what makes me doubt what is ordinarily said, that God does everything for his glory. In particular I do not believe that one can allege this on the subject of the permission of sin, under the pretext that this permission was absolutely necessary to manifest two virtues of God, his justice which punishes, and his mercy which gives grace.

That could have some place, if it were impossible to know these two perfections by any other way, than by that of their exercise. And who would dare to maintain such an absurdity? Could these two perfections not be known in themselves, like so many others which are not at all active, like immensity, immateriality, impassibility, eternity, etc.? Could they not be so by revelation, even by a revelation accompanied by this evidence, which is called in the Schools, *evidentia in attestante* [evidence in the attester], and which consists in the fact that it is as clear that God attests a thing, as it is in human Faith that the men, who speak to us, attest to us what they say to us?

Finally this response, even if it were good, would not satisfy everything. One of the things that causes the most pain on this question, is that there are incomparably fewer Elect than Reprobate. Of what use can it be to soften all this, to say that God has done everything for his glory? Is it that his severity would not have appeared enough, even if there had been more Elect than Reprobate? Did it not even appear

enough by the death of Our Savior, and by the necessity that there had been that he expiate our sins, so that they could be remitted to us!

One opposes to us this celebrated word of the Sage, Prover. XVI. 4. God has done everything for himself, even the wicked for the bad day. But it is easy to respond that this version is not at all accurate. If one considers the Original, one will find there three reasons of Grammar which combat it. One will see there that the meaning of the Sage is that God has put correspondence, relation, proportion, in all his works, that they follow each other, and respond to each other. See the Synopsis, and the Authors who are cited there. See also Mr. Tronchin in his MS. Notes on Vendelin, book I. Chap. 4. thes. 3.

CHAPTER IV. That Mr. B. neither proves, nor can prove, what he supposes, that God could only create the world with the intention of making intelligent Creatures happy.

I do not believe therefore that to respond solidly to Mr. B. it is necessary to contest what he says, that the design of God, in Creation, was not that of attracting to himself the praises and the admiration of intelligent Creatures. The weakness of his reasoning consists, in my opinion, in the consequence that he draws from the rejection of this end, to the admission, or to the establishment of that which he substitutes for it. From the fact that God could not act for his own glory, he concludes that he had to act for the good of his Creatures. That means that he supposes that God could have had only one or the other of these two designs. If he did not suppose it, his reasoning would be ridiculous.

But is he founded to make such a supposition? Is it certain, is it evident, that God could only act in one, or in the other of these two designs? To be able to say it, it would be necessary to be quite sure, of one, or the other of these two things, either that God never has more than a single design in all that he does, or that being able to have several, that could not happen in the particular conjunction in question. However I do not see on what one can base oneself to maintain, either one, or the other of these two things.

For as for the first, far from the perfection of Wisdom leading us to say, that he who possesses it to the highest degree, can have only one design, it seems to me, on the contrary, that it leads us to say that he has several, or even that he has an infinity of them. The most common Wisdom ordinarily proposes for itself only a single goal in each of its steps. But that which goes a little further than the ordinary, makes, as one says, with one stone two, or several blows: And a man, in a word, passes for skilled in proportion to the multitude and to the greatness of the utilities that he draws from all that he does.

For example, a great Captain, who by a small march that he has his troops make, finds all at once the means to cover one of his places that the enemy was

threatening, to procure for himself provisions, of which he was beginning to lack, to remove them from his enemy, to cut for him the communication with his own places, to put himself in a state to attack those that he will want, to hide from him the knowledge of that which he can carry off, and to put him thereby in the necessity of losing some of them, or of weakening himself by trying to put them all in a state of defense; a Captain, I say, who will do all that at once, and by a single movement will distinguish himself much more, and will make himself much more admired, than if he did only a part of it. So true is it that this is the character of the most perfect Wisdom, to achieve several ends by a single means.

We follow the same maxim, when we speak of the Wisdom of God. It appears admirable to us in proportion as we believe to remark that what he has done has more utilities, and that he has looked at more things in doing it. If the Sun, for example, served only to illuminate us, it would not give us as great an idea of the Wisdom of its Author, as when we see that besides this use, which is very important, it has so many others, which are no less considerable, and without which we would have no less trouble in doing without. I say the same thing about water, wind, iron, and a hundred other Creatures, from which we draw so many utilities.

If this diversity of uses makes us principally admire the Wisdom of the Creator, who had them all in view when he produced the Beings of which I have spoken, why will we not believe that he could have had in mind much more, when he produced a work as great, and as composed, as is the universe.

Considering therefore the thing only in thesis, and in a general idea, it is natural to think that God has had, at the very least could have had various designs in Creation, and that thus it is without reason that one would suppose that he had, or could have had only a single one.

But if one claims that in truth nothing prevents him from having several on certain occasions, but that in the one in question he could not, for particular reasons, have more than one, besides that one obliges oneself thereby to indicate to us these reasons, which I believe difficult, besides that, I say this pretension appears to me rather paradoxical.

To be able to say positively that in this particular conjunction, God could act only in such, or such a design, it would be necessary first to know all the others that he could form, without excepting any. It would be necessary, secondly, to see the reasons which gave them exclusion, and which opposed themselves to God conceiving them. It would be necessary, thirdly, to be quite sure that none of these reasons had place on the subject of the particular design that one prefers to the others. Whichever of these three things that one ignores, one cannot be assured of anything. Is there however anyone who would dare to boast of knowing certainly a single one of them?

Who, for example, knows the first? Who knows all the designs that God could form? To have such a knowledge it would be necessary to have, at least in this regard, just

as much as God; it would be necessary to see all that he sees, and to be quite sure that nothing escapes our sagacity. And is there anyone who could have such imaginations?

I cannot refrain from begging my Reader to consider that if there is in God something impenetrable, it is his designs. The reason for it is that these designs depend principally on his free and absolute will: he does what he wants, and consequently, he takes such resolution as pleases him, and with such a view as pleases him. How therefore could we guess them?

Who could, for example, have suspected that of the Incarnation, if he had never explained himself about it? I have already remarked in another place, that we ignore the designs and the intentions of the rest of men, who are however so similar to us, and whose caprices and fancies have so much relation with our own; and that with stronger reason we must ignore the designs of God, who is so highly elevated above us.

But I have not said that this reasoning is precisely that of St. Paul I. Cor. II.11. Who among men knows the things of man, if not the spirit of man that is in him? Similarly also no one has known the things of God, except the Spirit of God.

There is therefore only Revelation that can instruct us about the designs of God. However this Revelation has so little instructed us on this subject, that it has formally declared to us that we will never be so on earth, witness the exclamation of St. Paul, O depth of the riches of the Wisdom, and of the knowledge of God! How incomprehensible are his judgments, and how impossible to find his ways! Witness above all the interrogation which follows this exclamation, For who has known the thought of the Lord, or who has been his Counselor?

Does it not appear clearly by that, that we absolutely ignore the designs of God? That is also a truth so constant, that Mr. B. himself has recognized it, witness this place of his Response to the Provinc. tom. II. page 1171. You would reply better if you said that all this great number of comparisons that I have alleged to you, necessarily limp, because we ignore the rights of the infinite Being, AND THE ENDS THAT HE PROPOSES TO HIMSELF. But first you would only confirm the dogma of Mr. Bayle, that at bottom all that God does accords with sovereign Reason, although our ideas are not capable of notifying the detail of this accord, to those who would undertake to combat it. Secondly, etc.

He recognizes therefore that we ignore the ends that the infinite Being proposes to himself. Indeed if he rejects this response, that he suggests to his Provincial, he does not reject it as false, but only as insufficient. He does not say that the Provincial would be mistaken in maintaining that we ignore the rights of the infinite Being, and the ends that he proposes to himself; he says only that this response would not get him out of the affair, that it would serve only to confirm what the one whom he censures has said, and, which is much more, that in responding in this manner, he would respond BETTER, which would not be, if this response were a falsehood.

But also if that is so, how could Mr. B., in the places that I have reported, not only indicate an end that God proposed to himself in creating the world, but still maintain that the one that he indicates is the only one that he had, and give exclusion to all the others? Is it expressing oneself too strongly to say that these two places of the Book of Mr. B. are in a much more immediate, and much more sensible opposition, than the rules of Wisdom, and the permission of sin?

But that is not all. If we ignore the ends that God proposes to himself in what he does, how can one maintain that there is opposition between his designs and his actions? How can one say that there is some shock between two things, of which one admits that one is unknown to us? If it is unknown, one does not know, neither if it is conformable, nor if it is contrary to any other that it can be. Thus this admission of Mr. B. absolutely destroys his Objection.

CHAPTER V. Recapitulation of what has just been said.

ONE can see by all that I have just said, what is presently the state of this dispute. The Objection of Mr. B. that I examine, reduces in few words to this, that the proceeding that we attribute to God, in saying that he has permitted sin, is directly contrary to all the rules of Wisdom.

He proves it by this consideration that nothing is more opposed to the rules of Wisdom, than to form a design, and not to do what one can to succeed in it, at least what one can with the utmost facility. He adds that that is precisely what God has done in our hypotheses. He has created the world only to render intelligent Creatures happy. However he has disposed events in such a way, that they have fallen, for the most part, into the abyss of the last misfortune.

I have responded in a word, that Mr. B. supposes false, in supposing that according to us God has created the world only to render intelligent Creatures happy; that it is only the Universalists who admit this, and that it is for them to see how they will respond to him, but that as for us we deny that God has created the world in this design, and with stronger reason in this sole design. I have even proved directly that what Mr. B. says on this subject is impossible.

Mr. B. maintains that if we do not say it, we must say it, and proves it by this argument. God could only have had in creating the world, one or the other of these two designs, either that of rendering intelligent Creatures happy, or that of making his glory shine forth. He has not had the second. It is therefore necessary to necessarily admit that he has had only the first.

I have first denied the major, which suffices to block the dispute until Mr. B. has proved the proposition, and to finish it to my advantage if he does not undertake to prove it.

That could suffice for me, but by superabundance of right, I have shown that this proposition is not only non-evident, but rash, since it affirms a thing that it is

impossible to know. For how could one know the thoughts and the intentions of God?

I have shown that this proposition is not only rash, but improbable, there being no appearance that a Being infinitely wise, has perceived only two designs between which he could choose.

I add presently that if this proposition were true, it would be more natural to conclude from it that God has had no design in creating the world, than to conclude from it that he has had the design that Mr. B. attributes to him. What indeed could he respond to this argument? God could only have had one, or the other of these two designs, either to make his glory shine forth, or to render intelligent Creatures happy. Now he has had, neither the first, as one has seen in chap. III., nor the second, as one has seen in chap. II. Therefore he has had none.

That suffices, it seems to me, to resolve this Objection. I do not doubt however that there are several who would wish that I had done something more. They would want that rejecting, as I do, the intentions that Mr. B. attributes to God, I would indicate others, which would be more reasonable. I admit that that could be useful, if it were possible. But, as one has seen, that cannot be, the designs of God being so hidden.

I add that all that is not necessary. Without that the Objection is entirely destroyed, which suffices for us. What must one, indeed, wish more, than to see that there is nothing convincing to oppose to us?

Besides what one requires could be necessary, if we maintained that the Truths of Faith are not above our Reason. If that were our pretension, I admit that we would be required to indicate the designs of God, and to show their conformity with the rules of his Wisdom, and of his other perfections. But as we admit that these Truths are above Reason, and content ourselves with maintaining that they are not against Reason, it suffices for us to show that one does not oppose anything demonstrative to them, without undertaking to show positively the conformity that they can have with our maxims.

That could still be necessary, if we undertook to persuade an unbeliever, by making him see the relation and the correspondence that there is, either between the projects of God, and the event, or between his actions, and the perfections contained in the idea of the supreme Being. Then it would be necessary to do what is required.

CHAPTER VI. Second part of the Objection. If the permission of sin has been the overthrow of the rules of Goodness.

I WILL not pause any longer on the first part of the Objection, which tended to show that God could not permit sin and its consequences, without violating the rules of Wisdom. I pass to the second part which tends to show that this same permission has violated the maxims of Goodness.

One says that if a Being infinitely good had created the Universe, and had taken charge of governing it, he would never have permitted that, either sin, or misery, enter it, and he would have infallibly done one, or the other of these three things.

Either he would have put this world in a state similar to that of glory, where sin and misery, not only will never enter, but also will never be able to enter.

Or indeed in creating the world in a changeable state, such as was that of the first man during innocence, his Providence would have watched to prevent sin and misery from actually entering it; which he could do in several ways, that I will indicate in the sequel.

Or indeed finally he would not have created the world, but would have left all possible Beings in their nothingness.

They say that these three courses, that God could take, were entirely otherwise conformable to the laws of Goodness, than the one that Christians want him to have taken in creating the world, and in permitting that sin and misery enter it, and cause there the ravages that strike the least attentive.

They say that it is the property of Goodness, to do good to all that needs it, and above all to guarantee from evil that which is threatened by it, or even that which can fall into it, above all when one can do it with the utmost facility. As therefore God is infinitely wise, and infinitely powerful, and will never lack, either force, or means to succeed in what he will undertake, they say that having been able to prevent men and Angels from sinning, and from becoming miserable, and having had to do it only to want it, he could not dispense with it without violating the most constant rules of this Goodness, that one believes to be so essential to him.

This is what one confirms by two considerations. The first is that if God being able to prevent so easily sin and misery, had not done it, it would be easy to imagine a Goodness greater than his, namely that of preventing and forestalling all these evils. And if it is possible to imagine a Goodness greater than that which he has shown, that which he has shown will not be infinite, nor consequently worthy of the supremely perfect Being. For indeed perfect and infinite Goodness is such, that it is impossible to imagine a greater one.

The second consideration is taken from human Goodness. This one, which is so limited, and so imperfect, does each day, in incomparably less pressing occasions, what God has not done in our hypotheses. It guarantees its objects from evils which do not approach at all those where God lets us fall. Where is the Father, who seeing that his Son is going to eat of a poisoned food, does not warn him of it, or who seeing that this son frequents people who will lose him, and will make him commit crimes, which will lead him to the wheel, or to the scaffold, and being able to break this commerce, does not do it immediately? One alleges a thousand other similar examples, which it is easy to imagine.

There is the Objection proposed in all its force, and it is necessary to admit that it does not appear easy to respond well to it. It is necessary not to imagine that one can do it, by saying that if God had prevented, either Man or Angel, from violating his law and from losing himself, he would have injured their Liberty, which did not appear worthy of his Wisdom.

This response is so false, that I have difficulty understanding how skilled and intelligent people have been able to content themselves with it. It is of the utmost evidence that God could prevent, either Man, or Angel, from sinning, and from losing themselves, without injuring in the least their Liberty.

He could do for them what he has done for the faithful Angels, and for the glorified Saints, who do not fail to be free, although they are impeccable and impassible.

He could do for them what he has done for the holy humanity of his Son, which has been impeccable, and which has not failed to be free.

He could give them an efficacious help by itself, and similar to that which the Thomists, the Jansenists, and the Reformed claim that he gives to all sinners who convert, and the Lutherans to all those who receive this grace, which they call extraordinary, and of which they give as examples St. Matthew, St. Paul, and some others.

He could give them one of these graces, that one names congruent, and of which one claims that the effect is absolutely infallible, without their injuring Liberty.

He could remove the temptations. For example, he could bind the Demon, and prevent him from seducing the first woman. He could prevent the woman from seducing her husband.

He could employ external means, which would have produced the same effect. For example, in permitting that the Serpent tempt the first woman, he could command one, or several of his Angels, to present themselves at the moment of the temptation, to take for that luminous and resplendent bodies, and to refute with force and with evidence the sophisms and the illusions of the Demon. He could appear himself with all the brilliance of his Majesty, etc.

Even if he had foreseen that all that would be useless, what was easier than to leave in nothingness all the Angels, and all the men, whose fall he foresaw, and to create in their place other men, and other Angels, whose perseverance he foresaw, and whose number was infinite both in the truth of the thing, and above all supposing middle Science [i.e., knowledge of the counterfactuals].

In a word, God did not lack means to prevent sin from entering into the world, without injuring in the least Liberty. And consequently, to oppose only this to the Objection taken from the permission of this evil, and of the others that it has brought with it, is to leave it all its force, and to admit that one cannot solve it.

CHAPTER VII. Where one begins to respond to the Objection. Remarks necessary to do it more exactly.

IT is therefore not in the Liberty of the Creature that it is necessary to look for the resolution of this difficulty. It is much more natural to look for it in that of the Creator. This difficulty causes more or less pain in proportion as one represents God as more or less free in the exercise of his Goodness. It would be triumphant, if one supposed that God were determined in such a way by his Goodness, that he could not, without violating its rules, either in general refrain from doing all possible good, or in particular not grant to intelligent Creatures the supernatural help, which would have operated their perseverance. On the contrary it would have neither force, nor plausibility, if one supposed that God is so much master of his actions, and so far above all sorts of laws, that he can refuse, either this particular good, or any other, above all if one added to it, as some do, that he can make the greatest of evils be suffered, by the most innocent Creatures, without shocking any of his perfections.

This is why also, when Descartes posed to himself this Objection on the subject of our errors, he opposed to it to destroy it, only the sole Liberty of God. Here are his words. When God could have given us a knowledge so great, that we would never have been subject to erring, we have no right for that to complain about him. For although among us he who has been able to prevent an evil, and has not prevented it, is blamed for it, it is not the same with regard to God, inasmuch as the power that men have over each other, is instituted so that they prevent from doing evil those who are inferior to them, and that the omnipotence that God has over the Universe, is very absolute, and very free. This is why we must thank him for the goods that he has done to us, and not complain that he has not advantaged us with those that we know are lacking to us, and that he could perhaps have distributed to us. Princ. of Phil. part. I. art. 38.

I believe this response solid, but I do not believe it sufficiently disentangled. It does not enter into a sufficiently great detail to exhaust the difficulty. It does not determine how far this Liberty that it attributes to God goes, as it is necessary to do, to resolve entirely this Objection.

It is true that Descartes does it elsewhere, but it is in a manner that gives birth to new difficulties, as I hope to show in the sequel. However this itself does not prevent the response that I have just reported, from being good in itself, and that one could add to it all that it lacks.

This is what I am going to try to do presently. But before undertaking it, there are some remarks to make.

The first is that it is not a question here of this species of Liberty, that one calls spontaneity, and which consists only in being exempt from fear. As this species of Liberty has nothing incompatible with necessity, as appears by the manner in which, either God, or the Angel, or Man, loves himself, to say that God has this Liberty in

the exercise of his Goodness, would not be to contradict those who maintain that he could not permit evil. It would be to give them occasion to respond that it is very true that there has been no exterior Agent that has constrained him to prevent man from sinning, but that his own Goodness had to determine him to it, strongly in truth, but without any constraint.

To therefore ruin this Objection, it is necessary to maintain that God has not only the Liberty of spontaneity, but that he also has that which one names indifference, and which consists in the power to act, or not to act, as one will want. I say to act, or not to act, and not to do whichever of the two positively contrary acts that one will want, because besides that I do not believe that God has in this regard, this second species of Liberty, I am persuaded that it suffices for me that he has the first.

Nothing is more trivial than the distinction which poses a double species of Liberty, both of indifference; one that one names contrariety, and the other contradiction. The first consists in the power to choose between two contrary acts; for example, to deny or to affirm, to love or to hate, to want that a thing be or to want that it not be. The second consists in the power to perform an act, or to abstain from it; for example, to speak or to be silent, to work or to remain at rest, to walk or to stop.

To respond to the Objection, it is not at all necessary to maintain that God has the Liberty of contrariety for the exercise of his Goodness. Nothing obliges to say that he can, either positively determine to evil an innocent Creature, or render it eternally unhappy. It suffices to say that he can grant it his graces, or refuse them to it, as will please him. This alone being posed, it is clear that as he has been able to grant to man and to Angel this supernatural help, which would have prevented them from violating his laws, he could also refuse it to them. It suffices in a word, to attribute to him with all Theologians the Liberty of contradiction, without going so far as to give him that of contrariety.

There is still another remark to make on all this, to spread a little more light on it. The Liberty of indifference, both of contrariety, and of contradiction, can be double, of fact, or of right, or as others express themselves, physical, or moral.

Physical Liberty, and of fact, consists in the force necessary to perform an action, and in the removal of the obstacles which could oppose themselves to it, without examining if this action that one will do, will be criminal or innocent. It is thus that I am free to lie, or to tell the truth, because I can do one or the other, as will please me, and there is nothing that prevents me from doing in this regard what I will have resolved.

Moral Liberty, and of right, is that which puts one in a state, not simply of being able to do an action, if one wants it, but of being able to do it innocently and without crime. This is what happens every time that there is no law, either natural, or positive, which commands, or which forbids this action. It is thus that ordinarily one has the Liberty to speak and to be silent, to walk and to stop.

Those who make the Objection to which we undertake to respond, do not have so much in view the Liberty of fact as that of right. They do not claim that God lacked the physical power which was necessary to refrain from granting to man, and to Angel, the help in question. They claim only that the immutable laws of his Goodness, demanded that he give it to them; and that he could not refuse it to them, without violating these indispensable rules of his conduct.

I have said the immutable laws, and not simply the laws, because there are two sorts of laws that God follows in the exercise of his Goodness, the natural, and the arbitrary. The first are those that are born of the depth of his own essence, and do not differ at all from his Goodness itself, such as we conceive it in this instant of reason, which has preceded every free act of his will. The second are those that he has voluntarily imposed on himself, although it depended on him not to do it. Such is, for example, the one that he has prescribed to himself in resolving to give grace to those of men, who having sinned would come to repent, and to believe in his Son. This law is of the order of those that one names arbitrary. For who doubts that God could have treated men like the Demons, to whom he leaves no hope of grace after sin?

In order that the Objection that we examine, have something a little pressing, it does not suffice to say that Goodness has laws which demanded that God prevent the birth and the introduction of evil into the world. It is necessary to say that these laws are not at all arbitrary laws, but natural, and immutable laws, that God cannot refrain from following without denying himself.

For indeed one understands without difficulty, that arbitrary laws cannot make any difficulty. To put oneself in a state to press these sorts of laws, it would be necessary first to prove that God had made some one of this order, which obliged him to help, either Angel, or man, in the case where they found themselves, when they lost their innocence; which would be difficult, not to say impossible, this sort of facts being able to be proved only by Revelation, and Revelation having nothing that supports this; and having, on the contrary, various things which destroy it.

Besides even when one would have proved that God had voluntarily obliged himself to proceed thus, it would be necessary, secondly, to show that he had obliged himself to it without reserving for himself the liberty to act otherwise. It would be necessary to prove that this law is of another order than the one which states that all men must die, and which has not prevented Enoch and Elijah from being dispensed from it.

To give some force and some color to the Objection, it is necessary to say, not simply that the laws of Goodness wanted God to prevent men and Angels from sinning, but that they were the natural, immutable, and indispensable laws of this virtue, which demanded it in this way, without which it is clear that one proves nothing.

Let us see therefore if one can say it, and above all if one can prove it.

CHAPTER VIII. If it is freely, or necessarily, that God does good to his Creatures. Given that he does it freely, he can do it in eight manners.

ONE could take three diverse courses on this question, two extreme, and one middle. One could say first that God does necessarily all possible good. One could, on the other hand, and throwing oneself into the opposite extremity, say that God can not only refuse the goods that he grants, but still make all sorts of evils be suffered by the most innocent. One could finally divide the difference, and say that there are in the distribution of goods and evils, certain things that God can do, others that he cannot.

I know no one who defends the first of these sentiments. I know well that Spinoza claims that what it pleases him to call God, and which is nothing other than Nature, acts necessarily, so that it does all that it can, and can do only what it does. But first this impious one does not admit the distinction of good and evil, on which our question revolves uniquely: And besides what he says on this subject is pure Atheism, which it is indeed important to refute, strongly, but which one could not refute here without making a diversion.

Whatever the case may be, all those who recognize a God distinct from the world, and master of the world, all those in a word who have some Religion, recognize that what they adore is a free Being, as appears from the fact that they invoke it, and that they promise themselves to obtain in this manner what they would not obtain otherwise. In particular Mr. B. recognizes this truth in various places of his books, as one will be able to see in the sequel.

The second sentiment is followed by a rather large number of Theologians ancient and modern, particularly by Okam, Biel, Gerson, Bartholomew of Medina; and among our own, by Twisse, Maccovius, Sydlovius, etc. Besides there is reason to believe that this was the thought of Descartes; for he maintains that the will of God has been from all eternity indifferent to all the things that have been done, or that will ever be done, and that there is no idea that represents the good, or the true, what it is necessary to believe, what it is necessary to do, or what it is necessary to omit, that one can imagine having been the object of the divine understanding, before his nature has been constituted such by the determination of his will. Rep. to the sixth Objections.

This sentiment would be very convenient for us to respond to the Objection, which makes the matter of this Writing. For in posing it, one would have no difficulty understanding that God, who could precipitate all the Angels, and all men to the bottom of hell, without shocking any of his perfections, has been able to let a great number of them fall into sin and into misery, without affecting his Goodness.

But, in the first place, this sentiment is so opposed to all the notions of Nature, of Reason, and of Piety, that it would be to give great advantages to our adversaries, to have recourse to it to repulse their Objections.

Secondly, I am persuaded that this hypothesis absolutely annihilates the idea that we all have naturally of the immense Goodness of God. For indeed to what would it reduce itself, or to better say, what would remain of it to God, if he could do what I have just indicated?

Finally I ask, if God being no less essentially good than truthful, it would not be as easy for him to act in a manner opposed to his truthfulness, as to act in a manner opposed to his Goodness. I see no difference in it. However if one poses that he can act in a manner opposed to his truthfulness, besides that one contradicts St. Paul, who declares that God can, neither lie, nor deny himself, one overturns all the foundations of Faith, which is supported only on the impossibility that there is that God lie. One still overturns the foundations of the Philosophy of Descartes; for according to him one cannot count on evidence, except by supposing that God does not deceive us. He holds that God could have made us such, that the most false things would have appeared to us evidently true, and the most true evidently false, but that this is something to which his truthfulness could not consent.

I have therefore no intention of resorting to this response, no more than of admitting the sentiment which is directly opposed to it. I have no intention of believing, neither that God is free in no regard, nor that he is so for everything, without exception. I hold that the safest is to distance oneself from these two extremities, which appear to me almost equally vicious, and to take a middle which distances itself from them.

But what is this middle? One can assign it very diversely, and I remark up to eight different courses that one can take on this subject.

One can say I. with most of the modern Scholastics, on one side that God has all sorts of Liberty on the subject of the good that he can do, that he can grant it, or refuse it, as it will please him; which makes the Liberty that one calls contradiction; but also, on the other side, that he does not have this other species of Liberty that one calls contrariety; I mean that although he can exercise, or not exercise his Goodness, as it will please him, he cannot act in a manner positively and directly opposed to this virtue.

One can say II. that in truth Goodness did not demand that God do any particular good to some determined object whatsoever; but that it demanded indefinitely, and indeterminately that he do some good, leaving to his Liberty to make it such as it would please him, to whom it would please him, and for such time as it would please him.

One can say III. that Goodness did not demand that God create, either the entire world, or any of its parts, nor consequently that he do any good to whatsoever; but that given that he would voluntarily carry himself to giving being to something, his Goodness wanted him to conserve it to it, and that he preserve his work from a total annihilation.

One can say IV. that whether Goodness demanded that God conserve being to all that he would have produced, or whether it did not demand it, it required at least that he do two things in favor of the intelligent Creatures, that he would have produced, and conserved. The first is that he instruct them in their duty, giving them laws that would teach them what they would have to do, and to avoid. The second, that he give them all that could be physically and absolutely necessary for them, to fulfill the duties that he would prescribe to them.

One can say V. that Goodness demanded that God grant to these same intelligent Creatures, besides what I have just indicated, all that could be truly useful to them, and that they would ask him with humility and with respect.

One can say VI. that this Goodness demanded that he actually do to these intelligent Creatures all the good that he would not have good reasons to refuse them, whether they asked for it, or whether they did not ask for it.

One can say VII. that Goodness demanded that he grant to these Creatures, all that could be necessary for them to have reason to be satisfied, so that it would depend only on them to be so, and that they would be wrong not to be so.

Finally one can say VIII. that Goodness demanded that he do two things for these Creatures. One is that not only he grant them all that would be necessary for them to be content, but also that he render them such in effect, preventing them from being unjust enough not to satisfy themselves with what he would have done for them. The other is that not only he grant them all that would be absolutely necessary to them to prevent themselves from falling into crime and into misery, but also all that could prevent them from throwing themselves into it voluntarily.

CHAPTER IX. That our belief does not give to God the Liberty of contrariety, with respect to the exercise of his Goodness.

One has seen in the preceding chapter, up to eight different divisions, that one can make of necessity and of Liberty between the functions of infinite Goodness. The first seven have this in common, that whichever one admits, the Objection falls, and does not have the least difficulty. However among these seven, there is not one that our Adversaries can reasonably reject, since most, far from giving too much to Liberty, do not even give it enough, and restrict it more than it is permitted to do. This is what I am going to show, by going through them all succinctly, with the exception of the first and the sixth, which demand that one pause on them a little more.

The first is that of most of the Scholastics, who recognizing that God does not have the Liberty of contrariety, with respect to the exercise of his Goodness maintain that he has that of contradiction, and has it even in all its extent. That means that in truth he cannot do anything that would be positively contrary to the immutable laws of Goodness, but that he is absolutely free to grant, or to refuse his graces.

One knows that contrariety is a particular species of opposition, which is found only between positive Beings, in which it differs from contradiction and from privation, which take place only between a positive being, and a negation. Consequently, to have something contrary to Goodness, something positive is needed. It is necessary, not a simple suspension of action, but an action opposed to the rules of Goodness. Here are three, which can pass for such. The first to do evil by a pure spirit of malignity, and uniquely to harm the one to whom one does it. The second to do it without having any reason for it. The third to do it for reasons that are not strong enough to authorize it.

Indeed Goodness itself consents sometimes that one do evil. It prevents, neither a good Judge from punishing the criminals, nor a good Father from chastising his child when he has failed, nor a good Surgeon from making incisions, and other very sensible operations, on a wounded person that he undertakes to heal. But it consents that one do it, neither out of pure malignity, nor without having good Reasons for it.

That is also what one cannot say that God has done. Of what does one complain? It is of the fact that he has permitted sin. But to permit sin is that an action positively contrary to the rules of Goodness? And how could one claim it, since it is not even an action, but a simple suspension, a simple negation of action? To permit something, in the language of all men, is uniquely not to prevent it when one could, if one wanted to. That is all that God has done. And that being the case, how can one say that he has acted in a manner opposed to the rules of Goodness, since it is not even true that he has acted?

Perhaps it would not be the same, if one posed with the Thomists that he has positively and invincibly determined men and Demons to the actions by which they have fallen. But if one rejects this sentiment, as we reject it, it is clear that this accusation has no foundation.

All that one can say, is that God has not given to these men, and to these Demons the grace, of persevering. But not to give a grace, is that a thing that concerns the Liberty of contrariety? Is it not one of the rights of the Liberty of contradiction, of which we are not yet speaking? That being the case, is it not clear that one cannot oppose it to us?

I am persuaded that Mr. B. will say that whether the refusal of the gift of perseverance, is contrary to Goodness, or is not, it is certain at least that the gift of Liberty has been: for God knew the use that men and Demons would make of it: he knew that they would use it only to sin and to lose themselves. Knowing this, and

not failing to make them a present which had to be so fatal to them, he has acted in a manner positively contrary to Goodness.

That is, in the depth, the thought of Mr. B. when he says in his Response to the questions of a Provincial, tom. II. page. 818. that a malicious Being is very capable of heaping magnificent gifts on his enemies, when he knows that they will make a use of them that will lose them. It cannot therefore, he adds, be fitting to the infinitely good Being, to give to Creatures a free will, of which he would know very certainly that they would make a use that would render them unhappy. Therefore if he gives them free will, he joins to it the art of using it always appropriately, and does not permit at all that they neglect the practice of this art on any occasion; and if there were no sure means of fixing the good use of this free will, he would rather remove this faculty from them, than to suffer that it be the cause of their unhappiness.

What he says that a malicious Being can make rich presents to his enemies, when he knows that they will make a use of them that will lose them, is very true, and I am careful not to deny it. But I do not admit the consequence that he draws from it. It cannot therefore be fitting to the infinitely good Being, to give to Creatures a free will of which he would know very certainly that they would make a use that would render them unhappy.

This is more or less the same as if one said; A timid General, and of little heart, can not stand firm, but take the course of retreating before an enemy more powerful than himself. Therefore a General who has valor will always fight, strong, or weak. A miser can refuse alms to an able-bodied beggar. Therefore a charitable man will always give to those even who deserve it the least.

To be able to draw this consequence it was necessary to conceive thus the antecedent: There is only a malicious Being who can heap magnificent gifts on his enemies, when he knows that they will make a use of them that will lose them. In this manner the consequence would have been just. But also the antecedent would have been false. For it is very possible that without any malignity one gives a good of which one knows that he who receives it, is going to make a bad use. There could well be some other defect in the proceeding of the one who grants this good with such a knowledge: but he could be exempt from malignity.

For example, an indulgent Father, who knows with certainty that his son will consume in debauchery the money that he will give him, and who notwithstanding this knowledge will not fail to give him some, sometimes even with profusion, can do it by an excess of indulgence, and without any malignity. It is even rather rare that one sees the contrary.

It is still very possible that one do it innocently, and one will have no difficulty giving examples of it. A Prince, who having many troops during the war, gives various military employments, does not doubt that these employments must cost the life of several of those to whom he gives them. He gives them to them however without

malignity. He gives them to them even very innocently, when the war that he is going to make is just.

A debtor knows that his creditor presses him to pay him what he owes him only to corrupt a woman, of whom he is passionately enamored. He pays him however without malignity, if he does it, either because he has obliged himself to it in making the loan, or because his creditor forces him to it by all that one calls rigors of Justice, seizure of goods, imprisonment, etc.

A charitable man, knows that a certain beggar is lost, who no sooner has a penny, than he employs it to buy something with which to get drunk. This miserable one asks him for alms in circumstances, where this charitable man sees clearly that he will scandalize various people, if he refuses it to him. He even knows that the beggar will take from his refusal the occasion to carry himself to some excess more enormous than drunkenness. To prevent these two evils, he gives to him. Will one accuse him for that of malignity?

It is therefore clear, it seems to me, that knowing what will happen in making a gift that must harm the one who receives it, is not a certain proof of malignity, as Mr. B. must suppose it, to conclude that God would have fallen into this failing, if he had given to man free will, in foreseeing the bad usage that the latter has made of it. This is one of those signs, that one names equivocal, and which deceive so often those who count too much on them.

The essence of malignity consists, neither in doing goods of which those who receive them can abuse, nor even in positively doing evil. One can do one and the other by diverse motives, some good, others bad, but where, whatever the case may be, malignity will have no part. One can do it by interest, by zeal for the public, by love even for the one to whom one gives it, at least when the evil that one causes is not extreme, and can have good effects.

Malignity consists much less in the qualities of what one does, than in those of the intention with which one does it. When one has as goal only to harm by what one does, of whatever nature that what one does is, when the chagrin or the shame, or the prejudice that one causes to someone, is the sole, or the principal motive that carries one to do it, it is without doubt a true malignity. But if one has other intentions, good or bad, one is not accustomed to call such a proceeding malignant.

To therefore show that the one that we attribute to God, in saying that he has permitted sin, would be a malignant proceeding, it does not suffice to say that he has given to man free will although he knew very well that this man would abuse it, and would use it only to lose himself. It would be necessary to prove that he gave it to him, either according to us, or in effect, only in this design; which one will never prove, and which we are careful, neither to say, nor to think.

We believe that if God has permitted sin, it has been with very good intentions, and for very wise, and very solid reasons. It is true that we do not undertake to guess

them. But we are persuaded that, neither these reasons, nor these intentions, are no less worthy of him, for being unknown to minds as weak, and as humble as ours. We are careful not to believe that it is, I will not say certain, but possible, that he has done it in the design of losing whomever it may be.

CHAPTER X. That God possesses this species of Liberty, that one calls contradiction.

ONE cannot therefore accuse us of making God act in a manner positively contrary to the rules of Goodness. All that one can say, is that we attribute to him the Liberty of contradiction, I mean the power to grant, or to refuse his graces as it will please him.

But first, even if we attributed to him this Liberty in all its extent, without limits, and without exceptions, we would say nothing that would not be very conformable to the clearest decisions of Scripture, which gives him an absolute right over his own graces. Witness what Jesus Christ makes his Father say, in making it said by the Father of the family, under the image of which he represents him. Is it not permitted to me to do with my goods what pleases me? Matt. XX. 15. And witness still what St. Paul says Rom. IX. 18. He has compassion on whom he wants, and he hardens whom he wants.

Secondly, we attribute to him nothing that is not conformable to the common sentiment of Christians, who hold that as he has been able to create the world, he has also been able not to create it, and consequently never do any good to whatsoever; which carries a Liberty without limits.

They hold even that during all this eternity that has preceded creation, God has taken advantage, if I dare say it, of this Liberty, and has actually done no good to whatsoever.

They hold still that even when he has created the world, he has given being only to a certain number of possible Creatures, and has left in nothingness an infinity of others just as possible, and just as little unworthy of this grace, as those that he has produced.

They believe even that he could give other perfections, other advantages, to those that he has produced, and consequently, by that very fact that he has not granted them what he could give them, it appears that he has, in this regard, a full and entire Liberty to do what pleases him.

Thirdly, we will say nothing that is not very conformable to analogy. Indeed Goodness is, neither the sole perfection that God possesses, nor the sole of those that he possesses that we conceive as the principle and the rule of his actions. He has others of which we make for ourselves a similar idea. However, in their regard he has the Liberty of contradiction, although he does not have that of contrariety.

Such is, for example, his truthfulness. God can exercise it, and not exercise it, being able to attest, or not attest the Truths that he knows. Thus, in this regard, he has the Liberty of contradiction. But he does not have that of contrariety, since, as his Apostle says, he cannot lie, nor attest anything that is not true.

He can exercise, or not exercise his Wisdom, in producing external works, and distinct from his own essence. But given that he acts, it is necessary by necessity that he act wisely, and it is absolutely impossible that he do imprudent things.

He can exercise, or not exercise his power, but he cannot act weakly, as he would do if he employed less force than would be necessary to do what he has positively resolved.

Above all, that is visible with regard to his mercy, which has so much resemblance with Goodness, and which it appears that God exercises very freely, since making grace to men, he does not do it at all to Demons.

Why therefore will one not believe the same thing about his Goodness? Why will one not believe that he can exercise it, or not exercise it, as it will please him, although he cannot do anything that would be opposed to this virtue? Why will one imagine that this one is of a particular order, and that it has nothing in common with the others?

Fourthly, we will say nothing that is not conformable to the idea that we must have of the infinite and incomprehensible elevation of God, and to that of the baseness, or to better say, of the nothingness of the Creature. However innocent this latter may be, it is always very unworthy of the favors of God, and has nothing that can give it any right, any shadow of right, to claim them.

One could still prove more directly this Truth. But that would be to anticipate on the following chapters, where one will be able to do it more appropriately. Here I content myself with saying that one could not prove the contrary. For indeed we are in the right to maintain that God has a complete Liberty to grant or to refuse his graces, until one proves to us that he does not have it. However if he has this Liberty, the Objection falls. For how could one not refuse a particular grace he who can refuse them all and do absolutely nothing for whomever it may be.

CHAPTER XI. Reflections on the four following hypotheses.

I COULD therefore hold to this first hypothesis, and I would not fear that one would overturn it. But as Truth does not need to manage all its advantages, I depart voluntarily from this one, and I consent that one say that God is not so absolutely and so universally free in the distribution of his graces, that his Goodness did not demand that he do indefinitely, and indeterminately, some good, leaving to his Liberty the choice of this good, and the termination of its quantity, that of the objects to which he would do it, and that of the time for which he would do it to them.

I believe this sentiment false, and sufficiently destroyed by all that I have remarked in the preceding chapter. I am persuaded that God could absolutely do nothing, and I do not believe it possible to conceive that he could have remained during a whole eternity without doing any good, if the immutable laws of his Goodness had demanded the contrary.

Let us suppose however that they demanded it. Has he not fully and abundantly satisfied them, in creating the world, and in dividing in such an advantageous manner, either the other Beings, or in particular intelligent Beings? What goods has he not done to this man, and to these Demons, of whom one speaks? Thus this second hypothesis, although precarious, advanced without proof, and giving too little to the Liberty of God, does not reestablish the Objection, and does not give any advantage to our Adversaries.

I say the same thing of the third. If one admits it, God has been able to produce absolutely nothing. But given that he voluntarily produced something, his Goodness wanted him to conserve to it the being that he would have given to it, and prevent it from falling back into nothingness. I have two reasons not to admit this hypothesis.

The first is, that giving being for a time, is without difficulty doing more good than not giving it at all. Thus God having been able to do the second, as this hypothesis itself admits, nothing is more natural than to believe that he has been able to do the first.

Besides we see that God lets animals die. Is that not the same thing as if he plunged them back into nothingness? I am persuaded that if the Creatures of this species had reason, death would appear to them as frightful as a total destruction.

I believe therefore that this hypothesis is not true. Let us not contest it however. Let us receive it as if it were certain. What advantage will one draw from it against us? Has not God conserved men and Demons before their sin? Does he not conserve them even after their sin?

The fourth hypothesis is not more contrary to us. In supposing it, Goodness demanded that God give to intelligent Creatures, on one side laws that would instruct them in their duty, and on the other sufficient forces to observe them. This is what one could contest. Indeed, it is very probable that the necessity that there was that God do these things, came from elsewhere than from his Goodness. That of the first flowed much more naturally from his Holiness, and even from his Wisdom, and that of the second from his Equity. But let us pose that they came only from his Goodness, have they not been fulfilled by the gift of one and the other of these two things?

Following the fifth hypothesis, Goodness wanted God to grant to intelligent Creatures that which would be useful to them, and that they would ask him with humility, and with respect. This is what I believe one could deny. It was not at all impossible that God charge himself with providing for the necessities of the

Creature, in the manner that he would judge appropriate, without permitting it to ask anything on this subject, and Reason abandoned to itself would perhaps carry itself sooner to presume it in this way, than to believe that man must meddle in asking, and that God must hear him.

But let us suppose the contrary. Let us imagine that Goodness wants God to hear the prayers of his Creatures. Does it follow from this that he had to grant perseverance to man and to Demons? Is one in a state to prove that they have asked for it? Thus this hypothesis, no more than the preceding ones, does not favor at all the Objection.

CHAPTER XII. Particular reflections on the sixth hypothesis. A word on the seventh.

THE sixth hypothesis deserves to be considered separately. For besides that it is very suitable to give light to our subject, one can say that it is the key to another rather important matter, which is that of Predestination. It is, if I dare say it, its Non plus ultra. It is the fixed point, to which are reunited willingly, or by force, those who set themselves most eagerly to dispute on this obscure and impenetrable question, as I hope to show in the sequel.

This hypothesis carries two things. The first is that Goodness demands that God positively do good, unless some good reason opposes itself to it. The second is that given that there are such reasons, Goodness consents that he do none of it.

These two propositions suppose a third, namely that it is by Reasons that God determines himself to do and to want what he does; but they suppose it, not as a thing that we ask, and which is necessary to us, but simply as a thing that we grant. For, as one has already seen, the sentiment opposed to this supposition would be the most convenient for us. It would settle the question, and would fully remove the difficulty. But as that is only a paradox, that almost no one admits, and that Mr. B. in particular rejects, it is necessary to reduce oneself to what I have said, and on which it is necessary not to fear that one will quibble with us.

I say more or less the same thing of the first part of the hypothesis, which states that Goodness demands that God positively do good, unless some good Reason opposes itself to it. I do not press, nor even affirm this. I simply let it pass. I grant it to my Adversaries. Thus I do not need to prove it.

Everything therefore reduces itself to the second part of the sixth hypothesis, which states that Goodness does not demand that God do good, when good Reasons oppose themselves to it. This one appears to me certain and incontestable.

For first if good Reasons did not suffice to prevent God from doing good to his Creatures, it would be necessary that he be in a state to act against Reason, which appears to me impious and blasphemous. This itself is all the more true, as to act

against Reason, is to act against Wisdom. And could one put into one's mind that Goodness demands that God not act wisely?

If God could not prevent himself from doing good, however strong the reasons that would divert him from it, he would have no Liberty in this regard, and it would be necessary by necessity that he do all possible good; which, as one has seen, is absurd, and insufferable.

God does only a part of the good that he could do. From where comes it that he does not do more of it? There are only two responses to make, one that he does not do more of it, because it pleases him to do only what he does: the other that it is because he has good reasons to proceed thus. Let one turn in all directions, one will not find any other response to this question, and to all the other similar ones, than these two. Thus Mr. B. not being careful to use the first, it is necessary necessarily to reduce oneself to the second, and to admit that if God grants, or does not grant certain graces, it is because he has good reasons to do precisely what he does, and that thus to know what it is that he will do, or will not do in each encounter, it would be necessary to know what are the reasons that demand that he take, or not take each of the courses that present themselves.

After all that I have just said, I believe that the sixth hypothesis can be received. Thus there remains only to apply it to our subject. I do it by the following propositions.

I. If good reasons can stop the exercise of Goodness, and prevent God from doing certain goods to his Creatures, that he would otherwise be carried to do to them, one cannot say that God has violated the eternal Laws of Goodness, in permitting sin, except by supposing that no good reason demanded the contrary. This proposition is a necessary consequence of what I have just said. For if Goodness demands that God do good to his Creatures, only on condition that there not be good Reasons that oppose themselves to it, it is clear that every time that there will be such reasons that oppose themselves to God doing some good, he will not act against the rules of this virtue, in deferring to these reasons, and in abstaining from doing this good.

II. It is not impossible that God has had good reasons not to prevent sin and its consequences. The principal foundation of this proposition is that one does not see from where this impossibility could come. One could only find its source in Goodness, and one can maintain that Goodness makes this impossibility, only by supposing what is in question. Whatever the case may be, I do not see that one has yet proved it. When one will have done it, I will see if it is in a solid manner.

I add that God has indeed found reasons not to create millions of Angels, whose perseverance he foresaw, in case he produced them. He has not done it, and consequently he has had good reasons not to do it. Why could he not have had similar ones, to permit the fall of men and of Demons?

Finally, why would it be impossible that there be good reasons to stop the exercise of Goodness, since there have been found efficacious ones to stop the exercise of Mercy and of Justice, which made opposed demands on the Subject of Sinners, one wanting that their sins remain unpunished, and the other that they be punished in the person itself of the guilty?

III. If it is not impossible that God has had good reasons to permit sin and its consequences, it is not certain that he has not had any. This proposition appears to me of the utmost evidence. For nothing is certain but what cannot be otherwise. If therefore God has been able to have the reasons in question, it is not at all certain that he has not had them.

IV. If it is not certain that God has not had good reasons to permit sin, it is not certain that in permitting it, he has violated the eternal laws of Goodness. This again appears evident to me. For how could it be certain that God, in permitting sin, has violated the eternal laws of Goodness, if it is not certain that these laws demanded that he prevent this great evil, and that he prevent it from entering into the world? And how could it be certain that they demanded it, if it is certain, neither that he had no good reasons to permit it, nor that notwithstanding these reasons he had to prevent it?

V. If it is not certain that God, in permitting sin, has violated the eternal laws of Goodness, the Objection that one takes from there, and which supposes it, cannot be a true demonstration, and will be at most only a simple probable argument. The Reason for it is that nothing is more essential to demonstrations, than to be composed of certain and evident, or demonstrated propositions, so that if there enters into it a single uncertain proposition, it is no longer a true demonstration. If the propositions, says the Art of Thinking, are ever so little uncertain, it is clear that they cannot be the foundation of a completely certain conclusion. Part. IV. Chap. 5. And chap. 7. A true demonstration demands two things, one that in the matter, there is nothing but what is certain and indubitable, the other, etc.

VI. If the Objection that one takes from the permission of sin, is not a demonstration, but a simple probable argument, it does not touch our question at all. For, as one has seen from the entry of this Writing, the question does not consist in knowing if Reason which is founded only on simple plausibilities can be contrary to Faith, but uniquely if it can be so in conducting itself only by evidence; or to say the same thing in another way, the question does not consist in knowing if one can make probable arguments against revealed Truths, but if one can combat them by true demonstrations.

Let us pose therefore that the Objection that we examine is only a simple probable argument. It will have nothing that must cause us the least pain, and one will prove by that only what we grant.

It appears, from all that I have just said, that the sixth hypothesis has nothing that favors our Adversaries. I say the same thing of the seventh. If one admits it, Goodness demanded that God give to intelligent Creatures all that was necessary to

them to have reason to be content. And can one doubt that he has done it? Let this hypothesis therefore be true or let it not be, what we say has no difficulty. Thus we can pass to the consideration of the eighth hypothesis, which is that of Mr. B.

CHAPTER XIII. In few words the sentiment of Mr. B. on this subject.

Here in few words is the sentiment of Mr. B. on this subject. He supposes that Goodness has two principal functions, one of delivering, or of preserving from evil, the other of positively doing good. With regard to the first, he distinguishes, with Mr. King, three diverse sorts of evil, an evil of imperfection, an evil of suffering, and a moral evil, which is nothing other than sin. He admits that Goodness did not demand that God preserve, or free the Creature from the first of these three evils. But for what regards the two latter, not only does he believe that Goodness does not suffer that God subject the Creature to them, but he claims that it wants him to prevent it from attracting them to itself voluntarily, and by its own imprudence.

With regard to good he believes, on one side, that Goodness wants God to grant to his Creatures all that is necessary to them to be content, and on the other that he put them in a state to content themselves with it, preventing them from being unjust enough to grieve about their condition, whatever it may be. Beyond that he consents that God do with his goods what will please him. See the II. volume of his Response to the questions of a Provincial. pag. 88.988. 1158.1318. 1319.

That is the sentiment of Mr. B. and I admit that if it were well proven, his Objection would not lack force. But also if he does not prove it at all, or, which comes to the same thing, if he proves it badly, and if the reasons that he gives for it have, neither force, nor solidity, it is clear that there would be imprudence in yielding to it, and that the best is to despise them. Let us see therefore what is the state that one must make of them. There are two principal reasons to which all reduces itself.

The first is taken from the immense extent of the Goodness of the supreme Being. He says that if God had permitted sin, and its consequences, it would be easy to imagine a Goodness greater than that which he has shown, namely the Goodness which would add to his other graces that of preventing sin, and of preventing it from making so many criminals and unhappy people. That alone shows, according to Mr. B., that the Goodness that we attribute to God, is not infinite, and consequently is not worthy of the supremely perfect Being.

The second is taken from the consideration of human Goodness. He proves by a thousand examples, that a man who would have had only a very mediocre Goodness, would have granted without hesitating the helps that God has refused to men and to Demons, provided only that it had been as easy for him to give them, as it was for God, from which he concludes that if God has permitted sin, he has less Goodness than men, who have so little of it.

Before examining in particular each of these two reasons, it will be good to make a general reflection on them. It is that if they are good and solid they prove much more than Mr. B. claims. They prove what he positively rejects in various places, particularly in those that I have just indicated, and which in effect is absurd and insufferable, namely that the immutable laws of Goodness demanded that God do to his Creatures all the good that he could do to them. This is what his reasons prove, if they prove anything.

If God, says the first, has permitted sin, one will be able to imagine a Good greater than that which he has done, and consequently a Goodness, which will surpass his. So be it. But could one not say the same thing, if he has not done all possible good? Let us take for example the last of the Angels, and the least privileged of the glorified Saints. Has God done for them all that he has done for the most sublime of the Seraphim, and for the Blessed Virgin? Could he not even do double, a hundred times, a thousand times more, for these two august persons? It is necessary therefore, either to renounce this reason, or to pose that Goodness wants God to do all possible good.

The second Reason still has the same defect. It is taken from the consideration of human Goodness, which in similar occasions would give without difficulty the helps that God has refused. I want this Reason to be solid. If it is, can one prevent oneself from admitting that God must do all possible good? For who doubts that human Goodness does it, at least when it can do it easily and conveniently? Where is the Father who being able to give to his child double, triple, etc. of health, of strength, of skill, of mind, of memory, of judgment, of merit, and of happiness, that he has, would refuse, or neglect to do it?

It is therefore certain that these two reasons prove too much, which suffices to assure oneself, either that they are not good, in themselves, or at least that they are not well applied, and that he who produces them, has not examined them enough before using them.

But to say only this, is to respond only imperfectly. This manner of defending oneself has never satisfied me. It can cause pain to an Adversary; it can embarrass him; but it does not at all enlighten the mind of the Reader, or of the Auditor, and does not discover at all the Truth, which is the principal goal that an honest man must propose to himself. Let us see therefore if the reasons of Mr. B. are good and solid in themselves. This is what merits principally to be researched.

CHAPTER XIV. Examination of the first Reason of Mr. B. taken from the fact that if God had permitted sin, his benefactions for man and for the Angel would not be worthy of him.

Mr. B. takes his first Reason from the fact that it seems to him that if it were true that God had permitted sin, and its consequences, one could say that the Goodness

that he would have had for man and for the Angel, would not be infinite, nor consequently worthy of the supremely perfect Being. It would be easy to imagine a greater one, namely that which would have prevented and hindered this great evil, and which would have added this new grace to all the others that he had granted to these Creatures.

Here are the terms that he uses to propose this proof. The Goodness of the infinitely perfect Being, is infinite, and would not be infinite if one could conceive a Goodness greater than his. This character of infinity belongs to all his other perfections, to the love of virtue and to the hatred of vice, etc. They must be the greatest that one can conceive. Rep. to the Provinc. tom. 2. pag. 817.

In this same place he puts this note in the margin, See Mr. Jurieu in the first three sections of the Judgment on the Methods, where he reasons continually on this principle, as on a first notion. See also in Mr. Wittichius de Providentiâ Dei, n. 12. these words. Augustinus lib. 1. de Doct. Christ. cap. 7. Cum cogitatur Deus, ita cogitatur, ut aliquid quo nihil melius sit atque sublimius, &c. [When God is thought of, he is thought of, as something than which nothing is better or more sublime, etc.]

This Reason does not appear to me very pressing. The Goodness of God does not fail to be infinite, although it does only finite good. According to Mr. B. it never does any other. All the benefactions, he says, that Creatures can receive from him (from God) are necessarily finite, since they [the Creatures] are a finite Being. Rep. to the Prov. chap. 157. Consequently, if it were necessary to judge of the Goodness of God by his benefactions, it would be necessary to conclude that it is limited, since even, according to Mr. B., the goods that it does are all limited.

Let us pose even that God had done for all men, and for all Angels, what he has done for a great number of these immortal Spirits, as Mr. B. would wish. In this supposition even could one not imagine benefactions greater than those that he would have granted? Could he not give to these blessed Spirits more knowledge, more glory, more happiness than they have? Would it be necessary therefore to say, in this supposition, that the Goodness that God would have had for them, would not be worthy of him, under the pretext that it would be easy to imagine a greater one?

It is with the Goodness of God more or less the same as with his power. This latter has done nothing that is not limited, and however it does not fail to be infinite. When instead of this world, which is limited itself, he would have produced only a mite, he would not have failed to deploy in this small work, a power without limits, there being only a power without limits, which is in a state to draw the smallest thing from nothingness.

One can say more or less the same thing about Goodness. Its most limited benefactions do not fail to be indications of an infinite Goodness. The reason for it is that it does not take a lesser one to not be arrested by the unworthiness of the one who receives them. For indeed the more the one who receives a good is unworthy of receiving it, the more the one who does it shows that he is good and

beneficent. Now who can doubt that the unworthiness of the Creature, in relation to the benefactions of God, is infinite?

Unworthiness, can come from simple baseness, and no one will deny that a beggar has the right to expect certain extremely vile services from another beggar, that it would be ridiculous to expect from a great Monarch. And if a Monarch rendered them to him voluntarily, he would show thereby more Goodness than if he were only a beggar. As therefore God is infinitely more elevated above the most sublime of Creatures, than this Monarch is above this beggar, it is clear that the unworthiness of Creatures, in relation to his benefactions, is infinite, and that thus it is not necessary that his benefactions be infinite in themselves, to make them come from an immense, and unlimited Goodness.

Let us pose even the contrary. Let us imagine that benefactions of an infinite price, were needed, to prove the immensity of the Goodness which is their principle. This itself would not be lacking, provided that one did not claim that God ever spreads only those of this order, which would be without difficulty very unjust.

There are two benefactions of God which appear to me of an infinite price. One is the gift that he has made to us of his Son. The other is the gift of the glorious and immortal life, that we hope to possess one day in Heaven. This life must consist in the possession of God himself, who has nothing but what is infinite. It will be besides eternal, and will never end. Thus there are two regards, in which it is of an infinite price. If one cannot say the same thing about his other graces, it is not necessary to find it strange, that not being necessary to have reason to be assured that his Goodness exceeds imagination.

CHAPTER XV. Examination of the second reason, taken from what human Goodness does each day.

WHAT I have just said shows clearly that the first reason of Mr. B. is very weak, and responds little to the penetration of this Author. I do not say completely the same thing about the second. If it is not more solid, than the first, it is at least very specious, and has something that dazzles. Also it returns an infinity of times in his books, and one can say that it is his pillow sword, which never fails him in need.

He takes it from the fact that human Goodness would have very certainly done for men and for Angels, in circumstances similar to those where they found themselves, what God has not found appropriate to do. One proves it by a great number of examples taken from diverse conjunctures much less pressing and less favorable than the one where God has refused to innocent man, and to the Angels who have apostatized, the help that would have prevented them from falling into crime and into misery. I do not report these examples: they are in too great a number to undertake it, and besides everyone can imagine an infinity of them.

This reason revolves on two suppositions, one that divine Goodness is of the same order as human, and that thus one can attribute to the first all that one remarks in the second; the other that human Goodness would have granted, in the same circumstances, the helps that the divine has refused. I believe the first certainly false, and the second rash, and whatever the case may be, doubtful and uncertain. This is what it is necessary to try to prove.

I admit at first that as Scripture, and the common usage of Christians employ the same expressions in speaking of God, and in speaking of men, it is rather natural to imagine that these expressions have the same meanings on these two sorts of subjects. Nothing however is more false, nothing more deceptive than this prejudice. All that one could reasonably presume, is that the terms that apply in this manner to divine things, and to human things, have similar and approaching significations in these two sorts of occasions, but not that they have completely the same signification.

There are abysses of difference between divine things and human ones. This is what it is not necessary to justify. Who is it who can doubt it? However when God has revealed the first, he has not invented new terms. He has used those that were in usage among men, applying to each subject those of which the signification approached the most what he wanted to make understood.

He has wanted, for example, to give us some knowledge of the Mystery of the Trinity, and for this effect he has spoken to us of a Father, of a Son, and of a Holy Spirit. He has said that the Father begets the Son, that the Son is born of the Father, and is begotten by the Father, etc. But is it necessary to understand these terms absolutely in the same sense where we take them in speaking of men? Will we believe that it is permitted to us to assure of divine generation all that we remark in the human? Into what absurdities, into what extravagances, would we not fall, for as little as we would want to follow this thought?

It is the same with our subject. Under pretext that we employ the word Goodness to designate what God does in our favor, when he grants us some benefaction, we imagine that it is necessary that there be in him something completely similar, to what we remark in what carries men to do more or less the same thing for each other. From there come so many reasonings that one finds in the works of Mr. B. and which are all founded on this false supposition. A Father, a Mother, a Friend, would do such, or such a thing on this occasion. It is necessary therefore to believe that God does at the very least as much.

But before reasoning in this way, was it not necessary to examine if divine Goodness resembles in everything human, if there is not some difference, and if this difference is not great enough to make that one can not do what the other does? Was it not necessary to research what these two species of Goodness have in common, and what they have that is particular, in what they agree, and in what they differ, to

reason only on what they have in common, and not at all on what human can have that is particular?

It is certain that Mr. B. has at the very least glimpsed this, witness what he says in pages 1185. and 1186. of his Rep. to the Provinc. If the Origenist responds that the virtues of God are transcendental, that they cannot at all be enclosed in the same category as those of Man, that there is nothing univocal between our virtues, and those of God, and that consequently we cannot judge of these latter according to the ideas that we have of virtue in general, he will stop his adversary abruptly, and he will put himself out of court and trial, or else he will make the dispute fall on the question, if one must judge of the virtues of God by ours. This will be to draw the Manichean out of his fort.

There is a beautiful opening. It was necessary to follow it, and to mark distinctly the attributes of human Goodness, those of divine Goodness, and finally those of transcendental, abstract, generic Goodness, or of such other name as one will want to designate it; and to remember afterwards that it is permitted to reason only on the first attributes, or on the second. This is what Mr. B. had to do, but this is what he has not done. He has always reasoned on human Goodness, as if it were the rule of what we must believe of the divine, or as if these two species of Goodness were absolutely similar, instead of it being very certain that there are great differences which distinguish them. I am going to mark four or five of these differences, which will suffice to prove what I claim.

I. One of the most constant laws of human Goodness, is the one which wants that one do good to the greatest number of subjects that it will be possible. That a man, for example, finds the occasion to assist a hundred poor people, or to deliver a hundred slaves detained at Algiers, or at Tripoli; that he has the means of it, and that he can do it with the utmost facility, that however he assists, or delivers only half of them; he will sin without doubt against the most inviolable laws of Goodness.

It is however beyond doubt that divine Goodness is not subjected to this law. God could give being and well-being, perfect happiness, to a greater number of intelligent Creatures, either Angels, or men, than he has produced. Who can doubt it? He has however not done it. Is this not an invincible proof which justifies that his Goodness did not demand that he do it? For if it had demanded it, it is beyond doubt that he would have done it.

II. Another law of human Goodness, just as immutable as the preceding one, is that it do all the possible good to those to whom it does some, so that being able with an equal facility to do two, one greater than the other, it will always prefer the greater. Who can revoke in doubt the necessity of this law? And have I not proven it above, by the example of a Father, who would assuredly sin against the rules of this virtue, if being able to give to his son more health, more virtue, etc. than he has, he refused to do it?

It is however not less certain that divine Goodness does not recognize this rule. There is absolutely no Creature that God could not have rendered, both more perfect, and happier than it is. There therefore is a second law of Goodness, particular to human Goodness, and to which divine Goodness is not subject.

III. Nothing is more contrary to human Goodness, than to do no good to whomever it may be, at least when one can, and one has the means and the occasions for it, above all when one can without inconveniencing oneself. This however has nothing opposed to divine Goodness, since, as one has already seen, it has been able not to create the Universe.

IV. Human Goodness must manage the shortest moments to do good. It will never wait to do tomorrow what it can do just as easily, and just as conveniently today, witness the maxim, *Bis dat qui cito dat* [He gives twice who gives quickly]. But is that a rule that divine Goodness has followed? Could it not create the world a hundred thousand years sooner than it has done?

V. Human Goodness must pardon outrages, and it is there without doubt one of the most indispensable of its duties. But if God does the same thing, he does it with a complete liberty to act otherwise. It is certain even that he does not do it always, witness the severity with which he has treated the Demons.

There therefore are at least up to five different laws of human Goodness, that the divine does not observe. Let one examine, after that, if there is much safety in judging of one on the footing of the other.

CHAPTER XVI. Continuation of the same subject. Precautions that one must take before drawing consequences from human Goodness to divine Goodness.

WHAT I have just said appears certain to me, but a bit vague. Let us see therefore if we could not discover something more precise, and which touches more closely on our subject. This is what does not appear impossible to me.

I am persuaded that there are very few human virtues, which do not observe two sorts of laws, the natural, and the positive. They do certain things, and avoid others, because God wants it in this way. They do and avoid others, because it is just that one do it. This is what most Christians agree on, and it is not necessary to prove it. Thus one can be assured that among the laws which regulate the duties of human Goodness, there are some of those of the second order, I mean arbitrary and positive ones.

Who can doubt, for example, that the law which absolutely condemns particular vengeance, and which wants that instead of punishing those who have outraged us, we do them all the good that depends on us, is not of this order? Who can doubt that God could not have permitted us to repulse force by force, and to punish

ourselves the injuries that one does to us, as he permits it to Sovereigns, and as he practices it himself?

Is it however necessary to warn my Reader, that there would be an extreme injustice to claim that God had to observe the positive laws of Goodness? Is it not enough that one subject him to the natural laws of this virtue. I would fear abusing my leisure if I consumed it proving things so evident.

That therefore before concluding from the fact that human Goodness wants something, that the divine must want it, one examines if it is by a positive law, by a natural law that the first wants it, and that one take care not to pronounce on the first of these questions until one is quite sure that one sees clearly in the second. If one observes exactly this precaution, one will not go nearly as quickly as I see that one does. Here are some of the steps that it will be necessary to make.

It will be necessary first to examine the great question, if among the laws that God has imposed on men on whatever matter it may be, there are natural ones, and if those to which we give this name, are not effects of the free and independent will of God. Everyone knows what Mr. Descartes, Mr. Regis, and a quantity of Theologians ancient and modern, have said on this. It will be necessary to examine with care what they have said about it. For if, by chance, these great men were right, our question would be terminated, and the Objection would no longer have the least difficulty.

Let us pose nevertheless that one rejects the thought of these spirits of the first order, and that one holds for certain, not only that there are natural laws, prescribed to men, but also that there are some of this order among those of Goodness, which is not without difficulty, it will remain to research what they are. It will be necessary to discern them from the positive laws, that God has found appropriate to impose on us.

This however is it very easy. Who does not know that this research is one of the most embarrassing of Theology, to whatever subject one applies it? If one doubts it, one has only to take the trouble to read the works of those who have attached themselves to these discussions, such as are Grotius, Selden, Pufendorf, Sharrock, Cumberland, Thomasius, etc. One will see into what embarrassments they find themselves, and with what conjectures they are constrained to content themselves, and to pay their Readers.

For what regards Goodness in particular, if one counts on the rule of Grotius, who wants one to be assured that a law is natural, when one sees that the most polished and most enlightened peoples observe it, one will hold for certain that a Father does nothing that is not opposed to nature, when he puts to death a child who is badly made, or who causes him pain by the cares that it would be necessary to take to nourish it and to raise it. For as Mr. B. amply proves it in the second volume of his Responses to the Provincial, chap. 104. all that there has been of most enlightened

in ancient and modern Paganism, the Persians, the Greeks, the Romans, the Chinese, and the Japanese, have practiced it in this way.

If one follows the rule of Selden, who wants one to report to the sentiment of the Jews, there will be no barbarism that one could not have exercised against the Gentiles. One will have been able to refuse to show them the way when they were getting lost, to teach them where it was that they could find water to quench their thirst, etc. Witness these two verses of Juvenal in his 14th Satire,

Non monstrare vias eadem nisi sacra colenti. Quæsitum ad fontem solos deducere verpos. [Not to show the ways except to those who worship the same sacred things. Only to lead the circumcised (Jews) to the spring they seek.]

If one prefers to follow the ordinary rule of our Theologians, who, from the fact that God has dispensed with a law, conclude that it is not of natural right, the one that forbids us to exterminate entire peoples who have done us no harm, and to massacre the old people, the women, and the children, will not be found of this order, since God has ordered to proceed thus on diverse occasions.

Was it a law very conformable to the ordinary rules of Goodness, that the one that one finds in Chapter XIII. of Deuteronomy? When your brother, son of your mother, or your son, or your daughter, or your beloved wife, or your intimate friend, who is like your soul, will incite you in secret, saying, Let us go, and serve other Gods... Do not indulge him, and do not listen to him. Let your eye also not spare him, do not use mercy. You will not fail to put him to death. Your hand will be the first against him to put him to death, and then after that the hand of all the people. You will beat him to death with stones, and he will die.

In particular the law which wants fathers to take care of their children, and which forbids them to take the life of those that they have brought into the world, above all when these latter have done nothing that merits this treatment, must be a positive law, since God has not only permitted, but ordered, Abraham to immolate Isaac to him.

One commonly holds that the blessed who know the damnation of their fathers and of their children, not only do not afflict themselves about it, but rejoice about it. See Thomas Aquinas Supplem. quæst. 94. art. 3. What is there more opposed to the ordinary laws of Goodness?

There are therefore many discussions to do before assuring oneself that the law which could have obliged a man to prevent sin and its consequences, is a natural law, and it would be desirable that Mr. B. had undertaken to prove it well.

But let us suppose that he had done it. After all that there would be much lacking that he had done all that would be necessary to give force to his Objection.

Indeed, from the fact that a law is natural with respect to man, it does not follow at all that it is so with respect to God. How many are there not, from which men could not be dispensed, and from which God does not fail to be exempt? Witness those

which prescribe repentance, Faith, humility, hope, obedience, recognition, etc. The reason for it is that these duties suppose imperfections, common in truth to all men, but that one cannot reproach God with.

One can say the same thing about most of the duties that are most essential to Goodness. Human Goodness is rarely pure. There always enters into its composition a little Justice. It is a species of commerce, and an observation of this general law, which wants that we do for others what we want that others do for us. We must bear with our neighbors, because we need our neighbors to bear with us. We owe them great helps, because we cannot do without theirs. As this reason which is so strong for men, cannot be alleged on the subject of God, that alone shows that the Goodness of God is of a completely different order than that of men.

On the other hand, we can be worthy of the benefactions of our neighbors. We can even merit them; instead it is impossible that we merit whatsoever before God. His favors are always purely gratuitous, and one can maintain, as one has seen in one of the preceding chapters, that our unworthiness, that even that of the most innocent Creatures, is infinite.

There is much more. It is very possible that divine Goodness, and human Goodness have the same functions, and grant the same graces, and that the human does it necessarily, and in consequence of an indispensable obligation; and that the divine does it very freely, and in consequence of an arbitrary law that God has voluntarily imposed on himself. This is what appears by these two examples.

God and man pardon the outrages that one does to them. But man does it necessarily, and God freely, by this sole reason that he has resolved to do it in this way. For if he had wanted it, he could have treated men like the Demons, closing to them forever the access to his grace and to his Goodness.

Divine Goodness, and human Goodness have this in common, that they both grant what one asks of them. But there is this difference that man does it only because he must, and God because it pleases him. For God would do no wrong to man, even if he rejected his requests, instead man would sin against the laws of humanity, if he were deaf to all the prayers that one would do to him.

All that shows the danger of being mistaken, to which one exposes oneself, when one regards what human Goodness must do, as a principle, from which one can conclude what divine Goodness will do in similar occasions.

CHAPTER XVII. If even supposing that it is with the Goodness of God as with that of men, one can be assured that he did not have to permit Sin.

ALL that I have just said shows clearly that there is no consequence to draw from human Goodness to divine Goodness, and that it is reasoning very badly to conclude

that God must do something, from the fact that men should do it in certain occasions.

Let us suppose however the contrary. Let us imagine that these two species of Goodness always follow constantly the same rules and the same laws. In this supposition, of which one has just seen the falsity, I maintain that one has no reason to be assured that the Goodness of God had to prevent him from permitting sin and its consequences.

My reason is that human Goodness itself, this Goodness so constrained by a very great number of laws, either positive, or natural, has enough liberty not to give to its objects, in certain occasions, helps that could be necessary to them. There can be good and solid reasons that prevent it: And these reasons are not always taken from impotence, or from ignorance. They can come from elsewhere, such as from sincerity, from fidelity, from justice, from the love of order, and other similar motives.

For example, I have only to lie to save the life of an innocent, who is in danger of losing it, I have all the physical power that can be necessary to me to render this good service to him. I am master of my tongue and of my words. I have however reason to refuse him this help, and this reason is taken from elsewhere than from my impotence, namely from the fear of God, and from the attentive consideration of my duty.

It is therefore certain that even human Goodness can sometimes dispense with doing good, provided that it has good reasons to do it. That is, consequently, at most what one will be able to say of that of God, even when one will be quite sure that it is with this Goodness the same as with ours. At most it will have to do good to its objects, when it will not have good reasons to dispense with it.

Now I have already shown in another place, that this alone removes the difficulty, because to be able to say that God violates the rules of Goodness, when he does not do to his Creature some good that would be useful and advantageous to it, it would be necessary to be quite sure that he does not have good reasons to dispense with it, and that it is impossible to be so, given the ignorance where we are of what makes him act.

One can still take the thing in another manner. The Objection is taken from the fact that a simple man, who would find himself in the same circumstances, where God has found himself with respect to our salvation, would do for another man what God has not done for us.

But first, is there not something ridiculous in saying this? For is it possible that a man ever finds himself in the same circumstances where God found himself when he formed his decrees? That there be one, two, three of these circumstances which have some conformity and some relation. That is the most that one can claim. Will there not be necessarily a hundred others very dissimilar? And who does not know

that a single circumstance more or less often changes the whole case, and puts one in the necessity of acting otherwise?

Besides, do we know well all the circumstances where God found himself, when he decided our fate? Do we know all that he has seen and of which the consideration has determined him to do what he has done? How many things are there not in that which are absolutely unknown to us? And consequently what rashness is there not in speaking about it? Above all to do it in a manner even a little firm, and otherwise than by saying, not what one thinks, or what one knows, but what one suspects?

CHAPTER XVIII. Whether the Permission of Sin is Contrary to Holiness.

It remains only to examine the third part of the Objection. This is the one taken from the consideration of God's Holiness, to which it is claimed that the permission of crime was contrary. It will not occupy us for very long, as the principles we have established in examining the second part of the Objection are more than sufficient to show the weakness of the third.

We are told that the permission of Sin was not only contrary to the most inviolable rules of Wisdom and Goodness, but also to those of Holiness. We are told that this latter virtue required that God effectively prevent men and Demons from sinning, and that for this purpose he should employ some of the means at his disposal, which could so easily succeed.

Here are the terms M.B. used to propose this part of his Objection: "The greatest love that this Master (of others) can show for virtue, is to ensure, if he can, that it is always practiced without any mixture of vices. If it is easy for him to procure this advantage for his Subjects, and nevertheless he permits vice to raise its head, except to punish it after having tolerated it for a long time, his affection for virtue is not the greatest that can be conceived. It is therefore not infinite. The greatest hatred that one can show for vice is not to let it reign for a very long time, and then punish it, but to crush it before its birth, that is to say, to prevent it from appearing anywhere. A King, for example, who would put such good order in his finances that no misconduct would ever occur, would show more hatred for the injustice of tax collectors than if, after having allowed them to fatten themselves on the blood of the people, he had them hanged." Reply to the Provincial, vol. II. pages 820-821.

I answer in a word that this idea that M.B. has of God's Holiness is as exaggerated, and consequently as false, as the one he has of his Goodness. Here is our conception, which is moreover very conformable, on one hand to what Scripture teaches us about it, and on the other, to what we observe in the structure and government of the world.

God is incapable of three things. The first is to do anything himself where one might notice the slightest obliquity, the slightest spot, the slightest stain, anything, in a

word, that deserves to be blamed. The second is to push, either as a physical cause or as a moral cause, any of his Creatures to do anything criminal. The third is to approve it, praise it, reward it, and rejoice in it when they do it. This is what is negative in God's Holiness. But there is also something positive, and this consists partly in what precedes the sin of Creatures, and partly in what follows it.

Before sin, God forbids it, and arms his prohibitions with terrible threats in case they are violated, and magnificent promises in case they are observed. After the sin is committed, he disapproves of it, abhors it, and punishes it with just severity. It is in this that we make God's Holiness consist, and it is not denied that all this is part of it.

It is claimed only that this is not all, and that there is something else to add, namely, to effectively prevent sin from being committed; and this is proven by the same reasons used with regard to Goodness. The first is taken from the consideration of the infinite. The horror, they say, that God has for vice would not be infinite if he contented himself with punishing it after having let it reign for some time, and it would be easy to imagine a greater one. Moreover, human Holiness, which does not approach that of God, should do what we do not believe he has done.

But I have already shown the falsity of these two reasons. What is infinite in divine perfections does not consist in the immensity of their effects. They are such in themselves, as they were before the birth of the Universe, although they were not exercised. And besides, there is no consequence to draw from the duties of men to what one should expect from God, as I have shown at length on the subject of Goodness, without it being necessary to prove the same thing about Holiness.

It will perhaps be said that God does something more than what I have indicated, as appears from the care he takes of his dear children, preserving them from temptations, or giving them the strength to overcome them. This I am careful not to deny. I maintain only that he does it freely, or at most according to certain laws that he has voluntarily established. This appears clearly from the fact that, acting in this manner with regard to some, he does not do it with regard to others. He does not even always do it with regard to those who are the objects of this particular Providence; which proves sufficiently that what he does, he does with complete and absolute freedom.

THIRD PART. Which contains the Answer to an Objection made against the Mystery of the Trinity.

CHAPTER I. Where this Objection is proposed. Whether one can dispense with answering it, on the pretext that the Mystery of the Trinity is incomprehensible.

Few people are unaware that one of the most specious Objections made against the Mystery of the Trinity is the one taken from the opposition believed to be found between this dogma and a maxim of Aristotle, which appears of the utmost evidence, and which states that if two subjects are not distinct from a third, they cannot be distinct from each other, which the School expresses succinctly in these terms: "Quae sunt eadem uni tertio, sunt eadem inter se" [Those things which are identical to a third thing are identical to each other].

It seems that nothing could be more opposed to this maxim than what we believe on the subject of the Trinity. We believe that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are the same thing as the infinite Essence, and yet they are distinguished from one another, that is to say that being the same thing with a certain subject, they nevertheless remain distinguished among themselves, despite the maxim that treats this as impossible.

Hence there are very few Anti-Trinitarians, and even few of those who, admitting the Trinity, declare themselves against Reason, who have not pressed this Objection as one of the strongest that can be made on this subject. In particular, M.B. has not forgotten it at all, as can be seen both in his Critical Dictionary in the article on Pyrrho, and in his Response to the Questions of a Provincial, Vol. II, page 1005 and following.

On the other hand, most of those who have undertaken to respond to it claim that it is the most perplexing of all the difficulties found in Theology, and they almost confess that it is impossible to remove it. Some have also believed they could dispense with undertaking it, either for the general reasons that I have weighed in the first Part, or in particular because they claim that this Mystery is absolutely incomprehensible, and that it would be rash to promise to clarify it.

If what they say about the incomprehensibility of the Mystery were true absolutely and in all respects, one would undoubtedly be blameworthy to make the slightest effort to try to answer this Objection, and all others similar to it, which are ordinarily made against this dogma. But as what they advance is mixed with truth and falsehood, it will do no harm to pause a moment to untangle it, which does not seem difficult to me.

Everything comes down to knowing what can be understood by saying that this Mystery is incomprehensible. I see only four meanings that this proposition can receive.

The first is that we do not have a comprehensive knowledge of this Mystery, that it contains various Truths most of which are unknown to us, and thus we know it only imperfectly, Inadequately.

The second meaning is that we understand absolutely nothing of it, and that the terms which Scripture and the Church use to express it give us no idea, either confused or distinct, of what they designate, roughly as would happen if it were explained to us in a completely unknown language.

The third is that, in truth, these terms excite in us some idea, but that all those that they give birth to are so confused that they mix the true with the false, from which it always happens either that the true makes one receive the false, which one does not have the skill to separate from it, or that the false makes one reject the true, which is joined to it.

The fourth is that the ideas that these terms excite are confused ideas in another sense. In truth, they do not mix the true with the false, but they represent only the most general attributes of their subjects, without descending to specific and individual properties. Indeed, it is understood that on these occasions, the knowledge one has of things is very defective, as if, for example, one knew nothing else about a lion than this alone, that it is a living body, or an animal.

Of these four meanings, the first and the last are very true, but very useless for the decision of our question. The other two would decide it, if they were recognized as true; but they are also very false, and one can even say that their falsity is palpable.

I have said that the first is very true. Not only do we not perceive all the Truths that enter into the composition of the dogma of the Trinity as it is in itself, or even as it is in the mind of the Angels; but we know only a very small part of it, and what we know of it does not approach what we ignore of it.

But is this particular either to this Mystery or to the others that Faith embraces? Is it not common to them with all other subjects, whatever they may be, natural or supernatural? Do we know all the attributes, all the properties, all the parts, and all the relationships of the smallest things? Would one dare boast of knowing in this manner an ant or a gnat?

Everything is therefore incomprehensible in this first sense, and consequently if this incomprehensibility can excuse us from answering the Objections made against the Trinity, it will also excuse us from answering those made against natural Truths, and thus it will be necessary to dispute nothing, and each one can say what pleases him, without troubling himself about what can be opposed to him, to show its falsity and absurdity.

The truth is that this kind of incomprehensibility can indeed excuse us from answering questions that might be asked about the Truths we are ignorant of. But it does not excuse us from answering Objections made against what we claim to know.

I do not know what is either the particular configuration or the texture of the smallest parts that make up the body of a mite: But I know very well that its heart is smaller than its body. If someone maintained the contrary to me, and if when I showed him the absurdity of his thesis by the maxim which says that the whole is greater than the part, he imagined to escape by asserting what I have just confessed, that there are many things in this small animal that we do not know, I would be careful not to accept such a vain evasion.

I would represent to him that it is indeed permissible to be ignorant of various things on all sorts of subjects, but that it is not permissible on any to contradict oneself, that in truth one does not know all the properties of the least things, but that he is not entitled for that to attribute to them opposed and incompatible ones.

This is what applies in our subject. Those who make Objections against the Trinity do not complain that we are not in a position to display to them all the Truths that this Mystery contains, but that among the things we say about it, there are some that appear opposed to one another, for example, the unity of the Essence and the distinction of Persons. This is what must be answered, and this can only be done by showing that there is no real opposition between the propositions that we make enter into the composition of this dogma.

This first meaning is therefore useless. I say roughly the same thing about the fourth. It holds that not only do we not know all the attributes of the subjects designated by the terms used to explain this Mystery, but also that those we know are only the most general, those consequently which give us the least distinct knowledge.

All that is still very true. But first, is all that particular to the Mysteries? Is it not common to them with everything that is most familiar to us? Do we know the number, the precise size, the configuration, and the texture of the smallest parts of a drop of water, of a certain quantity of air, of a stone, etc.? See Mr. Locke in his Essay on Understanding. Book IV. chap. 3.

Consequently, if this consideration exempts us from the obligation to defend our Mysteries, it will exempt us from the necessity of defending our opinions on other subjects, whatever they may be, it not being possible that it has more force for some than for others.

We know only the most general attributes of the divine Persons, of their unity, and of their distinction. That is certain. But can these general attributes be more contradictory than particular attributes? We are told that the first are. This is what must be answered, without amusing ourselves by saying that they are general attributes, which, visibly, does nothing for the question.

CHAPTER II. That there are various things in the Mystery of the Trinity that can be understood.

The first two meanings are therefore useless although otherwise true. On the contrary, the other two would be useful if they were true, but they are not at all. The first of these two is that we have no knowledge of the Mystery of the Trinity, and that the terms used to explain it give rise to as few ideas as if it were explained to us in Chinese or Japanese.

I say that this meaning is false. If it were true, we would have no explicit Faith in this Mystery. Everything would be reduced to believing that there is some truth on this subject, but that we do not know what it is, nor in what it consists. At most we would believe that what Scripture says is true, without knowing how it is that we must understand what it says about it.

It will perhaps be said that this is not as strange as it first appears. It will be maintained that we have no idea of the Mystery of the Trinity. Indeed, this idea could only come from one of these three sources: from the senses, from natural light, or from Revelation. It is clear that it comes neither from the first nor from the second of these three sources: And as for the third, it is true that Scripture speaks to us of this Mystery, but it does so in terms of which it is impossible to know the meaning.

When the Holy Spirit inspired the Prophets and Apostles, he did not forge new terms to make us understand what it is. He employed those that were in use among men, but which in their language had a meaning somewhat approaching that which he gave them, but which was not quite the same.

Who does not know, for example, what St. Augustine said of the word Persons? "When," he says, "one asks what are the Three, the mind of man falls short, and has no expression that it can employ. We have nevertheless said that there are Three Persons, not to make understood what it is, but not to be compelled to remain silent." *De Trin. Lib. V. cap. 9.* And elsewhere: "When we are asked what the Three are, we apply ourselves to seeking some general or particular term to designate these Three, and we find none, because the excellence of divine things exceeds the power of our expressions. For there is more truth in what one thinks of God than in what one says of him, and more in what it is than in what one thinks of it." *De Trin. Lib. VII. cap. 4.*

To designate the manner in which the first Person communicates his essence to the second, Scripture tells us that he begets him, and on this basis, it gives to the first of these Persons the name of Father, and to the second that of Son. This is undoubtedly because there is some conformity between this ineffable communication and human generation. But is this conformity perfect? Is there not an infinite difference between the two subjects that this expression designates? And that being so, is the expression sufficient to make us conceive what it is?

Who does not know, likewise, that the distinction between the Persons of the Trinity is very different from all the distinctions we know, and is so singular that one cannot find any other example of it?

It is not, then, one will say, as strange a claim as might be believed, to maintain that one believes this dogma without understanding it, and that thus the Faith one has in it is an implicit Faith.

It must be admitted that this Objection is not without color. But the embarrassment found in it comes only from the fact that no difference is placed between having no idea of a subject, and having only ideas that represent only some of its attributes, and among these, only the most general and the most common.

I admit that if one could say the first of the ideas excited by the terms we use to express the Mystery of the Trinity, the consequences just indicated would be necessary. But as we admit only the second, these consequences are false, and have no connection with their principle.

It is true, for example, that we do not have an exact and complete idea of what is called Person in the Trinity. It is true that we do not know all its attributes, especially those most particular to this subject. But we know some of them nonetheless; for example, that a divine Person is something subsisting, acting, etc., taking this word "thing" in the most general sense given to it, insofar as it designates everything that is not pure nothingness.

It is true, likewise, that we do not know with the utmost precision what is the particular nature of the distinction found between the divine Persons. But one nevertheless knows roughly that it is neither a distinction of Reason, nor a distinction of the same order as that found either between two things of different species, such as between a piece of gold and a piece of silver, or between two individuals of the same species, as between two men, and that it is moreover great enough to make it true to say that one of these Persons emanates from the other, that it is sent by the other, etc.

Thus we know some attributes of all the subjects designated by the terms that express this Mystery. Consequently, it cannot be said that we have no idea of it. All that can be said is that the ideas we have of it do not represent either everything that is in their object, or even what this object has most particular, which, as has been seen, is common to this Mystery and to all the objects of our knowledge, whatever they may be.

I cannot therefore admit the second meaning that could be given to the term incomprehensible. I say roughly the same thing about the third, which consists in saying that the terms used to express the Mystery of the Trinity do indeed excite some ideas, but that these are ideas so confused that they mix the true with the false, and cause one to receive or reject one with the other.

I admit that this happens all too often. But this does not come at all from the Mystery itself. It is always either the fault of those by whom one has been instructed, and who have not done it with enough care and precision, or the fault of those who, having been well instructed, have not done all they should to benefit from it.

Besides, if there are people who fall into this deficiency, there are also those who avoid it. If it were otherwise, there would be in the Church only the errant, and if this were inevitable as it would be if the Mystery were incomprehensible in this sense, there would be no errors more venial than those one would fall into on this matter, since it would not be possible not to fall into them.

One must not therefore resort to the incomprehensibility of the Mystery to dispense with answering the Objections by which it is combated, since the meanings that can be given to this pretext are so visibly false or useless. Thus, it only remains to see how it can be done. This is what we will apply ourselves to in the following chapters.

CHAPTER III. Two paths that could be taken. The first is left aside. Three Responses made in the second to this Objection.

There are two paths that could be taken to answer this Objection. The first would be to carefully distinguish what Scripture says on this Mystery, which alone can be a matter of Faith, from what the Scholastics have added to it, and which from the Schools of the Roman Church has passed into most of ours; and then to show that whatever may be the case with these additions, in which we have very little interest, the dogma of Faith which is the result of what Scripture teaches us about it, is not at all shaken by this Objection. The second consists in showing that this Objection does not even overthrow the dogma commonly taught in the School.

The first of these two paths would undoubtedly be the best in itself, but it is subject to very troublesome inconveniences. To follow it somewhat exactly, one must enter into long and thorny disputes. One must shock rather old and almost universally spread prejudices. One must irritate those who are prevented by them, and give them the occasion to treat as Socinians, not to say Deists, Atheists, and something worse, if there is such, those who would like to make this discernment. It is only too well known that this is the dominant spirit of the century, and the fact is, in a word, indubitable.

That being so, should one not avoid with all possible care giving rise to such excesses? Should one not try to spare both this injustice to one's neighbor and this outrage to God, so opposed to the respect we should have for his will? I count for very little the prejudice that comes to the one who is suspected, or even condemned, so inappropriately. But I do not believe that one can, and still less that one should, despise the rest.

Be that as it may, all these considerations prevent me from taking the first route to answer the Objection. I will attach myself to the second, and I will try to show that this difficulty can be fully removed by the very principles of the School.

This is not to say that I take charge of defending and sustaining the responses that the School makes to this Objection. I declare on the contrary that there is none that satisfies me. There are three main ones.

Some claim that the maxim opposed to us is found to be true only when a restriction is added to it, which means that it cannot be applied to the Mystery of the Trinity. They say that when two subjects are the same thing as a third, they are the same thing between them, in this third, and not otherwise. *Ratione illius tertii* [By reason of that third].

Others maintain that this maxim can have two meanings, one true, the other false. The first is this: When two subjects are the same thing as a third that is incommunicable to several, they are the same thing between them; which is very true, but that does not contradict what we believe, the divine Essence being not at all incommunicable. The second meaning is this: When two Subjects are the same thing as a third, which can be communicated to several, they are the same thing between them; which is very false, the divine Essence being able to be communicated to the three persons. From which they conclude that the dogma of the Trinity is opposed only to the false meaning of this maxim, and that it agrees very well with the true one.

The third group says that the maxim is true in finite things, but false, or at least doubtful and uncertain on the subject of the infinite. They say that the infinite is not known to us well enough to be able to decide positively whether this maxim is true on its subject or not, and that thus one can despise the Objections that have only this foundation.

But none of these three responses fully satisfies the mind. They all have this in common, that the restrictions they add to the maxim opposed to us visibly appear invented to evade the difficulty.

And indeed, if it were the nature of things themselves that led to adding them, one would support them with some example taken from elsewhere than from the very subject of the dispute, which is not done.

Moreover, the first makes the maxim an identical proposition, and consequently ridiculous and of no use. For to say that two distinct things between them, but identified with a third, are identified in this third, is to say that being identified in this third, they are identified there, which is ridiculous.

The second response leaves the difficulty in all its force. Two subjects, it is said, can remain very distinct between them, although identified with a third, provided that this third is communicable to several. But is it possible that a simple and indivisible thing communicates itself to several, that is to say that it becomes the same thing

with several? This is what cannot be understood, and it is what the response supposes as possible, or rather as actually existing. It therefore leaves the difficulty as it is, and does not in any way facilitate the belief of this dogma. This reflection can be applied to the first response.

The third has something more plausible than the first two, and I would not dare to reject it positively. The infinite is so little known to us that there are few things that can be either affirmed or denied on its subject without temerity. Nevertheless, as this response does not satisfy the mind, it is necessary to see if better ones could not be found.

CHAPTER IV. Fourth Response. That the Maxim produced is false.

Caramuel makes a much bolder response than the preceding ones, and which moreover he does not support with good proofs, which makes it appear very despicable. He absolutely denies the maxim. He believes it deceptive, but he does not prove that it is. To do well, it was necessary at least to produce some particular case where it was found to be false; and this is what this Author does not do: he is content to allege some maxims similar to this one, and which are not certain.

He says that although two bodies are continuous, contiguous, similar to a third, it is not to be said that they are so between them. See his Philosophy page 71-75.

But even if all the maxims similar to this one were false, it would not follow that this one should be. It is even certain that among the maxims similar to that of which it is a question, there are true ones, this one, for example: If two quantities, discrete or continuous, are equal to a third, they will be equal to each other.

I believe the same thing of one of those that Caramuel produces as false, namely that if two things resemble a third, they will resemble each other mutually.

We must therefore see if we cannot do what Caramuel has not done. I do not believe the thing impossible.

We have just as many examples of the uncertainty of this maxim as there are Wholes composed of really distinct Parts. For these parts, really distinct from each other, are not at all distinct from the whole of which they are composed. Man, for example, is composed of a soul and a body, that is to say of two substances really distinct from each other, and which subsist one without the other after their separation. However, this body and this soul are not distinct from this man whom they constitute.

I hope on the other hand to show in the sequel that this maxim is not found to be true with regard to Modes, which are much more distinct from each other than they all are together from their subjects, which entirely resolves everything that the Objection has most pressing.

From this it can be concluded, not in truth that this maxim is always false, but that it is sometimes, that consequently it is uncertain, and that thus one should not rely on it, if one does not want to run the risk of being deceived.

But, it is said, it must be certain and infallible, since it is the unique basis of reasoning, which consists only in uniting two terms with a third, which is called the middle term, to then join them with each other. If this maxim is uncertain, reasoning, this great source of our knowledge, will have nothing sure.

I answer, firstly, that what is opposed to us, whatever it may be in itself, whether true or false, is not certain, and that as there are those who assert it, like Arriaga, there are also those who deny it, and who combat it with all their strength. See in particular Vasquez on the first part, disp. 123, chap. 2, and Ruys, de Trin. disp. 15, sect. 4.

I answer, secondly, that even if there were some particular reasonings which were based on this maxim, which I still want neither to affirm nor to deny, one could not claim that this was common to all, not even to most. Identity and diversity are two particular species of relationships that can be demonstrated by reasoning. The thing is certain. But these two species are not the only ones that are proven by this way. There are several others, of which one cannot say the same thing.

The relationships of equality and inequality, and in particular those of more and less, exercise Reason at every moment, not only in Mathematics, which has hardly any other object, but also in civil life and in religious life, where it is so often a question of comparing goods and evils with each other, and of knowing which are the greatest or the smallest.

The relationship found between cause and effect also comes up very often on all sorts of matters, and in all sorts of occasions, in Theology, in Philosophy, in Medicine, in Politics, etc.

But above all, the relationships of connection and detachment, of separability and inseparability, etc., are the subject of an infinity of reasonings, and what is considerable, the reasonings of this order are perhaps the most important that one makes. On what other relationship do the reasonings of Preachers more often turn, and what do they occupy themselves with more than putting before the eyes of their Hearers the close and indissoluble link between piety and happiness, between vice and misery? Civil, military, economic prudence, to what do they apply themselves more often than to trying to discover the consequences that the designs one forms, the sides one takes, the movements one gives oneself, etc., can have?

There is no one who does not see that these different relationships that I have just indicated, and the others that it would be easy to add to them, furnish the material for incomparably more reasonings than the relationship of identity and diversity, which it is so rare that one troubles oneself about; and that thus the maxim that is opposed to us, and which can only serve to make known this relationship alone,

could not be the foundation of so many other reasonings that we make on all sorts of things.

But I add, thirdly, that even when this relationship of identity and diversity appears doubtful and important, it is rare enough that one seeks to ensure it by this maxim. There are enough others, the use of which is both easier and surer. One takes care if it is possible to separate the two subjects in question, if after they are separated they can both subsist, if they do not have some opposition between them, if it is possible to conceive of one without the other, etc. It is this that one looks at, and not the maxim in question. It is therefore not as important as one imagines, and one can renounce it without risking anything.

CHAPTER V. Fifth Response. That the Objection made to us is not contrary to our Belief.

One can make another response, which seems to me much easier and more natural than the previous one, and I am surprised not to have found it in the authors I have read.

One can admit the Objection in its full extent, and maintain that it has nothing even slightly opposed to the Mystery of the Trinity. Here is how it is conceived: Whenever two or more subjects are the same thing as a third, they are the same thing among themselves. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are the same thing as the divine Essence. Therefore they are the same thing among themselves. "Quae sunt eadem uni tertio, sunt eadem inter se. Atqui Pater, Filius, & Spiritus S. sunt idem cum essentia divina. Ergo sunt idem inter se."

Nothing is more true than the conclusion of this syllogism. Nothing is more conformable to our belief. We all strongly believe that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are not three Things, three Beings, three Substances, three Spirits, three Gods, but a single and same God, a single and same Spirit, a single and same Substance, a single and same Being, a single and same Thing.

"There are not in God three Infinities, three Beings, three Things," says M. des Marets, "because the three Persons have only one Essence. Quare in Deo non dantur tria infinita, vel tria entia, vel tres res, cum tribus Personis unica sit essentia, non Specie Sed numero." Mares. Coll. Theol. loc. 3. n. 35.

All the Scholastics hold the same language, following the Council of Lateran, in the Canon Damnamus, de S. Trinitate. "The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are but one same thing. Eadem res est Pater, Filius, & Spiritus S."

But what is considerable is that this language is that of Scripture. Witness these words of Jesus Christ, John X. 30: "I and the Father are one same thing," and those of St. John I. Ep. V. 7: "These three are one same thing."

This is how these two passages must be translated, as all modern Interpreters have done: M. Diodati, the Authors of the translation of Mons, M. Simon, and M. Le Clerc; and before them the Vulgate and Beza, who have used the term "Unum". It is true that those of Geneva, and M. Martin, have put the term "one" in the text, but in the note they have warned the Reader that the sense is that those spoken of are one same thing. And indeed those who know a little of both languages do not ignore that the Greek *ἓν* placed thus alone, and without a substantive, does not correspond at all to our "one," but to "one thing."

Nothing is more true, nothing more conformable to the language and Faith of all Christians, than the conclusion of this Objection, from which one can judge whether it is as strong as one imagines.

CHAPTER VI. Response to an Objection.

It will perhaps be said that there is another way to present this maxim to make it more embarrassing; that one has only to change it from affirmative to negative, and to say that it never happens that there is less diversity or distinction between two subjects compared with a third, than between these same subjects compared with each other. Taking it thus, the maxim will be visibly opposed to our belief on the Trinity, since we believe that there is more distinction between the divine Persons than there is between these same Persons and the Essence which is common to them.

I agree with this latter proposition, and I confess that effectively the maxim conceived in this manner would ruin, if it were accepted, the Faith of Christians on the Trinity. But I also maintain that, taking it thus, it is false, and that it is easy to prove it.

I employ, in the first place, for this purpose the example that I produced in one of the preceding chapters, and which has the same force against this second manner of conceiving the maxim that is opposed to us as against the first. It is commonly held that the whole is in no way distinguished from its parts joined together; and indeed one of these subjects has nothing that is not found in the other. It is nevertheless true that these parts, even when they are joined together, are very really distinct among themselves. The soul is really distinct from the body, the feet from the head, etc., although the soul and body joined together differ in nothing from the man, nor the head, feet, etc. from the body.

Thus it can happen naturally that two subjects are quite differently distinct from each other than they are together from another subject.

Here is yet another example, which is no less strong. Total distinction, *adaequata*, is quite differently strong than partial, *inadaequata*. There is, for example, much more difference between my body and my soul than between my soul and me, between my head and my feet than between my head and my body. This cannot be contested.

It is therefore very possible that there may be more distinction between two subjects compared with each other than there is between these two subjects and a third.

I say the same thing about this species of distinction that is called modal, because it is noticed only in modes, or manners of being. Two modes are much more really distinguished among themselves than they both are from the substance that they modify.

This truth will not be contested by the new Philosophers, who hold, on one hand, that there is no real distinction between modes and substance, and who, on the other hand, will admit to me that modes can be distinguished really among themselves. It is true that I do not remember having read this second proposition in the works of the Cartesians. But it is so conformable to their principles that I do not fear they will disavow it.

They hold that the only mark of real distinction between two subjects is that one can conceive them one without the other. "Distinguendi modorum horum signa UNICE petenda sunt ex varietate perceptionum nostrarum, ("The signs by which these modes are to be distinguished must be sought solely from the variety of our perceptions.")" says M. Chauvin in his Philosophical Dictionary, on the word "distinctio." And he adds: "Nam quod realiter sine altero percipere possum, id etiam sine altero existere potest. ("For that which I can really perceive without the other can also exist without the other.")". It is principally on this that one relies to maintain the distinction of the soul and the body.

It is nevertheless true that although one cannot conceive modes without substance, one can conceive one mode without another mode; for example, movement without roundness, and roundness without movement. One can even deny one and affirm the other. One can say that a round body changes shape while preserving its movement, and that it loses its movement while preserving its shape. Thus, in the principles of the Cartesians, it must necessarily be recognized that modes are more really distinguished among themselves than they are from the substance that they modify.

I say roughly the same thing about the Scholastics. When they are asked for the marks of real distinction, they give two: the possibility of that species of separation that is called mutual, and that of opposition.

The first takes place when two subjects can be separated in such a way that each of them subsists without the other: A without B, and B without A. The second takes place when two subjects are opposed to each other, with an opposition of contrariety or relation.

If we are guided by the first of these marks, we will find that two modes are much more really distinguished from each other than they both are from their subject. Indeed, the mode cannot subsist without its subject, not even, it is said, by the

omnipotence of God; whereas it is easy to separate two modes in such a way that whichever it may be subsists without the other; for example, such a shape without such a situation, and such a situation without such a shape.

I say the same thing about the other mark, which is opposition. One stops principally at two species of opposition, that of relation and that of contrariety. On the first is founded the distinction of the Persons of the Trinity. It is said that the Father must be distinct from the Son for this very reason that he is his Father, it being impossible that a Father and a Son be only one and the same person. But if this reason is good, who can doubt that modes can be distinguished really among themselves, since one can be produced by the other, which is sufficient to make a relation, and consequently a distinction?

Every time I sit down or get up, I change shape and situation. Thus, the movement that I give myself is the cause of these two new modes that I acquire. There is consequently a relation between this movement and these modes, and consequently still there is distinction.

This appears above all in our soul, whose different modifications are born from each other. For example, the consent that one gives to the premises is the cause of that which one gives to the conclusion. The love of good is the effect of the knowledge that one has of it, and so on with the rest. Consequently, here are many relations, and thus many proofs of what I am saying.

Modes can also be contrary to each other, and consequently be distinct. For example, affirmation and negation, volition and nolition, love and hate are modes contrary to each other, and which nevertheless do not differ from the soul that they modify so diversely.

From all this, I conclude that nothing would be more false than the maxim that is opposed to us, if one gave it the second of the meanings that I have indicated. Thus, it must be left only with the first, which, as has been seen, has nothing opposed to our belief.

ADDITION: Where what was said in Chapter XII of Part II is applied to Predestination, and it is shown that all Christians are in agreement on what is most incomprehensible in this Mystery.

CHAPTER I: Where the occasion and subject of this Addition are proposed.

I said in Chapter XII of Part II of the Treatise that one has just read that a certain hypothesis, which I had just advanced, is the key to the matter of Predestination, that it is its non plus ultra, and at the same time the fixed point to which are reunited, willingly or by force, those who are most determined to dispute on this obscure and impenetrable question.

Although I made this advance in that place, I did not justify it, and I was careful not to undertake it, not being able to do so without straying from my subject. But as it seems to me rather important, I hope that it will not be found bad that I do now what I would have done then, if the laws of method had permitted me.

The hypothesis of which I spoke, considered in all its extent, comes down to this: that God never does anything without having good reasons to do it; that these reasons are very often, and almost always, unknown to us; that they will even apparently remain so during all the time that we remain on earth; but that although we ignore them, we should not cease to be persuaded that they are very good, very solid, in a word very worthy of the supremely perfect Being.

This hypothesis seems to me certain in all its points, and I have shown it in various places in this Treatise. But besides what I have said about it, it seems to me that it is visibly contained in the idea of infinite Wisdom, which forms one of the highest perfections of the supreme Being. It includes these three Truths: I. that God does nothing without having some reason to do it; II. that these reasons are ordinarily unknown to us; III. that although unknown to men, they are always good, solid, and worthy of him.

The consideration of Wisdom proves the first without other help. Indeed, the principal difference between a wise man and one who is not is that the first always conducts himself by reason, whereas the second acts by caprice, by passion, at random. Thus, God being infinitely wise, there is reason to believe that he always acts by reason and with reason.

It also proves the second: for if this Wisdom is infinite, it is infinitely elevated above ours. It is incomparably more vast and more extensive, and sees an infinity of things that we ignore.

It proves, finally, the third: for God would be neither perfectly nor infinitely wise if he determined himself by bad reasons. It is necessary that these reasons be good to be worthy of him.

The maxim that I have posed must therefore pass for constant. It is also universally received, and there are only Descartes and some of his Disciples who reject it, wanting God to act by absolute wills and without any reason. But as I have refuted this thought at the end of my Treatise on the Authority of the Senses, I am permitted to suppose here the contrary of what these Philosophers claim.

Supposing it then, I say that this is all that is reduced to what is known of the Mystery of Predestination; that all those who admit it, although they conceive it so diversely, necessarily go that far; that on the other hand, they could not go even a little further; and that thus however opposed they may appear on all the rest, they agree at least on this, which is the essential and the principal, and makes what is called free and absolute Predestination.

I except only the Socinians, whose Predestination is so different from that of other Christians that one can say they have nothing, or almost nothing, in common with each other. Indeed, the Socinians recognize none of the things that we make enter into this decree, either as occasion, or as means, or as part. They admit neither original sin, nor interior grace, nor particular decree, nor even prevision of what must happen. Everything, according to them, is reduced to a general and indeterminate design to save good people and punish the wicked, without knowing determinately who these good people are and who these wicked are, which is far from what the rest of Christians teach.

These take routes that appear very different, but which all have this in common: that they finally end at the fixed point that I have marked, so that the diversity, which appears so great to views little applied, consists solely in the fact that some lead there at once, directly, without detour, whereas the others make various circuits, some larger, others smaller, before arriving there.

Two things are troubling on this subject. One is that God, being able to save all men so easily and having for this a thousand ways, a thousand infallible means, nevertheless saves so few. The other is that in actually saving some and letting some others perish, those he saves are rather these than those, St. Peter rather than Judas, St. Paul rather than Caiaphas.

Various things pass for constants among Christians on this matter: I. That all are not saved, but that there are several who perish. II. That all do not perish, but that there are several who are saved. III. That God, who is infinitely wise and infinitely powerful, has graces and other means to spare to save all men, if he found it appropriate. IV. That supposing he did not find it appropriate to save them all, he could save all those who perish and let perish all those who are saved. V. That all those who perish would have been saved if God had done for them, in a certain sense, what he did for the others. VI. That all those who are saved would have

perished if God had not done for them, in the same sense, more than what he did for those who perish.

This sense, of which I speak, is double. The Thomists, the Jansenists, and the Reformed understand that God would have saved all men if he had given them graces efficacious in themselves, as he gave to those they call the Elect. And the Universalists, who posit in God this science that is called middle, understand that he would have saved all men if he had granted them these graces that are called congruous, that is to say those that he knew would have their effect. This is what will be seen more distinctly in the sequel. It suffices for me to have indicated it here in a word.

All this being posed, the two questions of which I have spoken are asked. One asks first: Why is it that God, being able to save all men, does not save them all? One asks secondly: Why is it that he saves rather these and those than these and those others?

This is what is answered very diversely. But after having quarreled a lot, after having made many reproaches to each other, and having mutually accused each other of a thousand horrors, one finally comes to recognize that the first cause of all this is the good pleasure of God. I mean a just, wise good pleasure, which does nothing for which it does not have good and solid reasons, but which are most often unknown to us.

This is what will be seen broadly in the following chapter, and distinctly in the rest of this Addition.

CHAPTER II. That all Christians finally come back to the good pleasure of God as the first cause of the different fate of the Elect and the Reproved.

It is noted broadly that one can say neither that all men are saved, nor that all perish, but that there are some who are saved and others who perish. One asks whence this comes?

The first answer that comes to mind is that God, having very wisely established this law that whoever believes and repents will be saved, and that whoever persists in unbelief and impenitence will perish, it happens that some believe and repent, and that others fulfill neither one nor the other of these two duties.

This answer is solid, but it does not fully satisfy the mind. One asks whence it comes that there are some who believe and who repent, and others who do not fulfill these duties?

It is here that one begins to divide. The Thomists, the Jansenists, and the Reformed answer without hesitation that those who believe and who repent do so only because God gives them grace for it, and that if the others do not, it is because, being

of themselves incapable of doing it, God does not give them the interior and exterior help without which one never fulfills these duties.

We will see in a moment the answer that the others make to this question. Here it must be noted that the one I have just reported, no more than the preceding one, does not entirely content the mind. It gives rise to a new question. One asks why it is that God treats these two orders of persons so differently, that giving to some the help that has given birth to Faith in their heart, he does not give it to others?

To this the Thomists, the Jansenists, and the Reformed answer that God acts in this way because it pleases him.

This answer is clear and precise, but it does not entirely satisfy the natural curiosity of men. It gives rise to a new question. Indeed, one can understand three things by the good pleasure of God. The first is an absolute will, which has no reason to want what it wants and to do what it does, and which is inclined to it only because it pleases it to be inclined to it. The second is a wise, enlightened, judicious will, which does nothing except for good reasons, but which does not find it appropriate to discover them. The third is a will which not only has its reasons but also makes no difficulty in publishing them. It is in this sense that Kings understand this manner of speaking when they end their Edicts with this clause: "For such is our good pleasure," after having begun them with the deduction of the motives that led them to make them. Scripture also sometimes employs this term in this same sense, as it would be easy to show if it were necessary.

That being posed, one asks which of the three meanings is the one in which it is said that God distributes his graces as it pleases him?

Thomas Aquinas, Alvarez, and some others answer that it is in the first sense. The Jansenists and the Reformed declare themselves for the second, and say that God has his reasons for preferring one to another in the distribution of his graces, but that these reasons are unknown to us. This is what they stop at, and this is also on which there is no more new question to ask.

I come now to those who do not approve of this answer, and who treat it as absurd, impious, and blasphemous. When they are asked why it is that some believe and repent, and that others persist in unbelief and impenitence, they answer that God gives to all sufficient graces, proper to give birth to Faith and repentance in their heart, but that some maliciously stifle them; that others not doing this, it happens that these latter are converted, and in this manner are saved, whereas the former persist in sin and are lost.

But this answer gives rise to two different questions. Here is the first: Do all men receive the same exterior and interior help to convert? For example, the child of a Pagan, a Turk, or a Jew, who dies without baptism, and who perishes according to the authors of this answer, a habitant of the Southern lands, to whom never a word

has been said about Jesus Christ crucified, do they have the same help to believe in this great Savior as a man who lives and dies in the bosom of the true Church?

As one admits that this is not the case, nothing is more natural than to ask why it is that God treats these two orders of persons so differently?

Here is the second question: As God employs two sorts of graces to convert sinners, the congruous ones, that is to say those that he knows will have their effect, and the incongruous ones, that is to say those that he knows the sinner will render useless, why is it that having enough congruous ones to convert all men, he employs only these for some, and uses for some others only the incongruous ones?

Two answers are made to these two questions. Most declare ingenuously that God acts in this way because it pleases him, and that he has good reasons to do it. Thus they come back, after a little detour, to the sentiment of the Thomists, the Jansenists, and the Reformed, which seemed so horrible to them.

The others make yet another effort to move away from it. They say that if God treats men so differently, it is not that he does not want the salvation of all; it is only for one of these two reasons: either because he loves some more tenderly than others, or because the order of nature and the ordinary course of things in the world want it thus.

But this answer brings them three new questions, which finally wring from them the confession of the truth. One asks them first, why is it that all men being equally corrupt, God loves some more tenderly than others? One asks them, secondly, if God never departs from the order of nature in the distribution of his grace? And as they admit that he often does it, one asks them all over again, why is it that he does it for some and does not do it for others? One finally asks them why it is that God, being able to establish other orders, in which all men, or at least other men, would have been saved, he did not do it?

To this they answer finally, just like the preceding ones, that all this comes from the good pleasure of God, and from the secret and impenetrable reasons to men that he has to do it and to want it.

If what I have just posed is true, everyone sees that I had a very just reason to say: I. That the good pleasure of God, conducted by very solid reasons, is the non plus ultra on the matter of Predestination. II. That it is the fixed point to which are reunited, willingly or by force, those who dispute on this matter with the most heat. III. That it appears from this that Christians are not nearly as far from each other on this matter as one imagines.

One should not object to me that I have spoken until now only of what God does in time. For as God does nothing in time that he has not resolved from eternity, one must judge one on the footing of the other, and be assured that God was no less free in his decrees than in their execution. Thus what I have said of the execution applies of itself to the decree, and is always equally true.

Everything therefore comes down to knowing if I have faithfully reported the sentiments of the Christian Societies and Schools on this subject. This is what will be seen in the following chapters.

CHAPTER III. How far the Thomists, the Jansenists, and the Reformed go, and where they stop.

I begin with the Thomists, and I will not dwell on them for very long. To know their sentiment, one has only to read the response that the Chief of their School makes to an objection part. I. quaest. 23. art. 5. ad 3. um. He says that God had his reasons for wanting there to be Elect and Reproved. He even indicates one that seems very solid to him. But if one asks why God has chosen rather these than those, either to save them or to lose them, he maintains that he had no other reason than his will. "Sed quare hos elegit in gloriam, & illos reprobavit, non habet rationem, nisi divinam voluntatem." ("But why He chose these for glory and reprobated those, He has no reason except the divine will.")

This is what he tries to clarify with two examples. God, he says, had his reasons for wanting a certain portion of matter to be clothed with the form of fire, and another with that of earth. But it was his will alone that decided which of these two portions should appear under each of these two forms, of which they were equally susceptible. The second example is that of a mason, who places two stones, two similar bricks, one on the right, the other on the left, without having any reason to put the first more on the right than on the left, or to place the second more on the left than on the right.

Alvarez, a celebrated and learned Thomist, says roughly the same thing in "de auxiliis disp. 37. n. 15." I have found various things in Bannez, in Contenson, and in Philippe de Bonne-esperance, which had some relation to this. But I have also found some completely opposed to it. Thus I make no foundation on them.

Regarding the Jansenists, their Chief Jansenius has taken enough trouble to prove two things. One is that it is the good pleasure of God that has made the different fate of the Elect and the Reproved. The other is that this good pleasure was not a will without reason. He employs the two last books "de gratia Christi" to prove this first proposition, and chapter IV of the X book to establish the second.

M. Arnaud does the same thing. He proves in various places of his works the first of these two propositions, and the second in his Philosophical and Theological Reflections on the system of Sr. Malebranche, book II, chap. XI. I do not report their words, those who have some knowledge of Jansenism cannot doubt that this is one of the dogmas most essential to it.

I will not do the same with regard to the Reformed. As several attribute to them monstrous errors on this subject, under the pretext that they conceive the decree of Predestination as an absolute decree, it will not be useless to produce their own

words. I will report them only in Latin, because it would be long and tedious to translate them.

I say then that the most celebrated of our Theologians, ancient and modern, have explained themselves formally on this matter and have declared that this good pleasure of God, which has made the distinction of the Elect and the Reproved, does not at all exclude the reasons that God may have had to dispose of his goods as we see he has done; but that these reasons being absolutely unknown to us, we must stop at his will, which appears enough by the event. This is what Calvin, Zanchius, Beza, Aretius, Valaeus, G. Vossius, Forbesius, L. Cappel, Amyraut, Wendelin, Wittichius, and Heidegger say clearly.

Calvin in his Commentary on Acts XVI.6: "Nothing is better than to leave God free power to make worthy of his grace, or deprive whom he sees fit. Nevertheless, God himself does not lack just reason why he offers his Gospel to certain ones, while passing over others. But that reason, I say, lies hidden in his secret counsel."

The same in one of his Small Works, which has for title, "Confutation of a Rascal's Calumny," page 633: "Although for me God's will is the supreme cause, yet everywhere I teach that where in his counsels and works the cause does not appear, it is nevertheless hidden with him, so that he has decreed nothing except justly and wisely." And a little further down: "Subjecting the human race to God's judgment, I clearly affirm that he decrees nothing without the best cause, which, if today it is unknown to us, will be revealed on the last day."

The same at the end of his Treatise on Predestination against Pighius: "It must indeed be recalled what I said before, that God does nothing except for the best reason, but because the most certain rule of justice is his will, for us it must be, so to speak, the chief reason of all reasons."

Zanchius on the nature of God, Book V, chapter II, column 565: "Moreover there are many most just reasons for God's judgments in God himself, although they are hidden from us. This is what the Apostle indicated by that exclamation, 'O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How inscrutable are his judgments and how unsearchable his ways!' Romans XI.31. He teaches that God does not lack the most just reasons, which he could bring forth for his judgments, that is, his decrees, and his ways, that is, his deeds, although they are unknown and unsearchable to us. He confirms the same when he adds, 'Who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?' For he teaches that God has decreed and done all things that he has decreed and done with the greatest wisdom and counsel, and therefore all his judgments and deeds are most just, although we poor creatures can neither see such reasons by ourselves, because we are blind, nor know them through the Scriptures, because they are not revealed."

Beza expands quite a bit on this on pages 340 and 341 of the second volume of his Works. I will content myself with reporting these two short periods: "Thus it remains that he had just causes in reprobating part of mankind, but hidden from us." And a

little further down: "You have added other calumnies besides. For first, instead of what Calvin said that part of mankind was reprobated for just causes, but hidden from us, you say, making no mention of causes, that we teach that the greater part of mankind was created for perdition."

Aretius also expands quite amply to prove the same thing. I will not report his reasonings, which are a bit long. I will content myself with the conclusion, which suffices to reveal his thought to us. Here it is: "Let it be enough to have brought these things to the previous statement, by which, I think, it can be sufficiently proved that not by absolute will and mere power of command, but with command and will, at the same time with the best and most just reason these are chosen, those truly passed over." Aret. Problem. page 19.

Valaeus in his Defense of M. du Moulin against Corvin, chapter 26, page 252: "Nor does divine Wisdom any less have its reason why it has rejected this one rather than that one, even if that reason is not to be sought in diversity of merits." This is what he proves in the sequel, by the testimonies of St. Prosper, Calvin, and Beza.

Vossius Hist. Pel. Book VII, part III, thesis 3: "There remains a third question, in which by the judgment of antiquity there is the highest darkness for all human minds. For although if it is asked absolutely why God deprives someone of regenerating grace, or the gift of perseverance, a cause can be assigned on the part of man, as we have seen, yet if it is asked comparatively why he deprives of the light of the Gospel these rather than those no worse, or sometimes even less bad, of those also to whom the Gospel has been preached, why he has not placed this one equally as another in that order in which he was going to believe, of believers also why he does not call one equally as another from life before he falls, or does not extend life to one of the fallen equally as to another, until he repents: they deny that the causes of all these things can be brought forth by human minds, but they say that those lie hidden in the treasure of divine Wisdom."

Forbesius Inst. Hist-Theol. Book VIII, chapter 13, n. 34: "Augustine says that it will be revealed to us in the heavenly homeland what now lies hidden from us, why that one rather than this one was taken up, although both were equal in guilt, etc."

L. Cappel in his theses on election and reprobation, part 1, thesis 41: "God has in himself causes and reasons for this selection known to his wisdom. But he has not opened them to us. He wants us to acquiesce in his good pleasure alone."

Amyraut in his Defense of Calvin's doctrine, page 11, produces, and promises to defend against Arminius, these words of Calvin: "Nevertheless, God himself does not lack just reason why he offers his Gospel to certain ones, while passing over others. But that reason, I say, lies hidden in his secret counsel." See also what he says, pages 71 and 173.

Wendelin in his Exercises against Gerard, Exercise 18, n. 22: "Of reprobation considered comparatively (why God reprobated this one rather than that one, Esau

rather than Jacob) we all confess that we can find no cause outside his good pleasure, but we deny that there is none, and that it is known to God. Let us hear Calvin, etc."

Wittichius in his Treatise on God, which is at the end of his response to Spinoza, page 369: "When it is asked why God chose Peter rather than Judas, Theologians are accustomed to respond that God knows his reasons, even if we are ignorant of them. And since they are not in Peter, as if he were better than Judas, they could not be taken from anywhere else than from God's wisdom, which constitutes the best order of all things, which because we are ignorant of, we cannot give the reasons for that counsel."

Heidegger in his Body of Theology, loc. v. n. 10: "Thirdly, God's decree is wise, and therefore is based on the highest reason, although where it is not revealed, it is unsearchable by us. O the depth of the riches, etc."

CHAPTER IV. How far the Molinists go, and where they stop.

Here then is the non plus ultra of the Reformed, and generally of all those who hold that the grace which converts us is efficacious by itself. This is how far they advance, rising degree by degree, and this is also where they stop, unable to take a single step to go further. Let us now see if their Adversaries can go further, or avoid going that far.

As they do not agree on everything, let us consider them separately, and begin with the Molinists, who currently have the upper hand in the Roman Communion.

First, these Theologians attribute to God that species of knowledge called middle, or conditional; That is to say, they believe that God foresees not only everything that will happen in the course of time, but also everything that would happen in all sorts of suppositions; for example, what such and such sinners would do if God granted them such and such graces, which he has resolved never to grant them. This is what they believe they can prove by these words of Jesus Christ: "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes." Matt. XI. 21.

They hold, secondly, that God gives to all men an internal grace, which puts them in a position to be able to convert and save themselves if they want to make good use of it, so that they lack nothing that would be necessary for this effect, but which also leaves them the freedom to reject this help. This is what they call sufficient grace, taking this word not in the sense of the Thomists, which is in effect a ridiculous sense, but in the sense of the rest of men, who never say that a thing suffices except by understanding that no other is necessary.

They hold therefore that if there is a grace which has its effect, and another which has none, this does not come from the nature or degree of efficacy and activity of

this grace, but solely from the fact that the will submits to one and does not submit to the other, being able to submit or not submit, as it pleases, to whichever of the two it may be. They call the grace which should have its effect, and which God foresees will have it, a congruous grace, and that which will have none, an incongruous grace.

They hold, thirdly, that there is no sinner, however obstinate he may be, who would not actually be converted if it pleased God to do any of these three things. The first would be to give him a grace of another order. They hold indeed that there are actual graces of several species. There are some for the mind, and there are some for the heart. The graces that attack the mind are good thoughts, which God inspires, and which, as everyone understands, can have very different objects. Those that attack the heart are indeliberate movements that he excites there, and which can be very different, sometimes of fear, sometimes of desire, sometimes of compunction, and sometimes of love, etc.

They say therefore that such a sinner, who resists such a thought, such a movement, which God inspires in him, would yield to such other thought, and to such other movement, which he does not inspire in him, although he sees the effect that this thought and this movement would have. By middle knowledge, says Platelius, God sees an infinity of graces, which would have their effect on the most lost of all sinners, and which he does not find it appropriate to grant them. "Cum respectu cujuslibet, etiam perditissimi, peccatoris per scientiam mediam infinita (gratia) praevideantur, effectum habitura, quae tamen non dantur." ("In regard to any sinner whatsoever, even the most lost, by middle knowledge, infinite (graces) are foreseen, which would have an effect, and yet are not given.") Platel. Syn. Theol. part. I. cap. 4. n. 200.

The second thing that God could do would be to increase the attraction of the very grace that he grants, and which is rejected, and to make it rise to a degree superior to that of the obstinacy in evil, where the sinner finds himself engaged. Let us imagine, says Caramuel in this sense, that the sinner has a hundred degrees of obstinacy. What does it matter, if the attraction of actual grace has two hundred? "Si sit obstinatio voluntatis ut centum; gratia, quae sit ut 200, illam superabit & vincet." ("If the obstinacy of the will is as a hundred, grace which is as two hundred will surpass and overcome it.") Caram. Theol. Fundam. tom. 1. fund. I. n. 49.

The third thing that God could do to triumph over the sinner who renders his grace useless would be to give him at another time, and in other circumstances, this same grace, this same degree of grace that he rejects presently. If he did it, this sinner who rejects the help offered to him would accept it and would be saved. Father L'Ami maintains that not only is there no sinner who would not be converted if this happened, but that it is even impossible that there be such. "Impossibilis est secundum se creatura, quae cum nullo auxilio, in quibusvis circumstantiis oblato, consensura sit." ("It is in itself impossible that there be a creature who, with no help,

in whatever circumstances it be offered, would give consent.”) Amic. Theol. Tom. I. disp. 12. n. 239.

Whichever of these three things God did, he would infallibly convert the most obstinate sinners, and those who are less so, even those who actually convert would not do so if, instead of the congruous graces that God grants them, he gave them incongruous ones. Thus according to the Molinists, the effect of actual grace, conversion, salvation, depend in such a way on the congruity of this grace, that as an incongruous grace never converts and saves anyone, a congruous grace always infallibly converts those whom God favors with it. Both give the power, but only the congruous one produces the effect.

That being so, the first question that comes to mind on this matter is the one that tends to know why it is that God, being able equally to grant congruous graces and incongruous graces, gives congruous ones to certain people called the Elect, and incongruous ones to others, called the Reproved. This is what two responses are made to, which, although they appear quite different, nevertheless come back to the same thing.

The Molinists say precisely as we do: God acts thus because it pleases him. This is in particular the response of Molina in that famous work "De Concordia," which has made so much noise in the world. God, he says, does not regulate himself according to the good or bad use of free will to distribute the help that is the effect of Predestination, but he conducts himself according to his good pleasure. Following his mercy and his liberality, he blows where he wills, giving to some the help that he foresees will lead them to eternal life, and to others that which he knows will not have the same effect. *“Therefore God does not confer the helps and effects of predestination according to the reason of the future use of free will, but according to His own good pleasure; from His mercy and liberality He breathes where He wills, to some more sparingly, to others more abundantly, yet to all sufficiently for salvation—giving to some those gifts by which He foresees they will, by the liberty of their free will, attain eternal life, and to others those by which He foresees they will not attain eternal life through that same liberty.”* Mol. Conc. Quaest. 23. art. 4. disp. 1. memb. 4. p.m. 416.

Elsewhere he says that it is in this alone that the incomprehensibility of this Mystery consists. The point, he says, of Predestination, and the impenetrable abyss of God's counsel, consists in the fact that having an infinity of ways to lead to salvation those whom he has not predestined, and just as many in which the predestined would have been lost, he determined by a free movement of his will, and not by the consideration of our acts, to act in such a way on some and on others, that some would be lost and others would be saved. This is the gist of what this Author says at this point a little more at length. Here are his own words: *“But the very point of predestination and the unfathomable abyss of divine counsel consist in this: that although God knows infinite other ways of providing for the non-predestined, by*

*which, with the same liberty, they would have come to eternal life and so would have been predestined; and likewise knows infinite other ways of providing for the predestined, by which they would have lost beatitude through their own liberty and so would have been reprobate—He has chosen for both, solely by His free will and not by the quality of the foreseen use of free will, not even as a necessary condition, that mode of provision by which He foresaw that the one group would not reach eternal life by their liberty, and the other would—and so the former are to be reprobate, and the latter predestined.”*Mol. Conc. quaest. 23. art. 4. disp. 1. memb. 9. p.m. 473.

A hundred other Authors have said roughly the same thing, and it would be rather useless to report the places where they have explained themselves on this. I content myself with noting that when Abbé Albani, nephew of the Pope currently reigning, received the Doctor's cap from the hands of the Jesuits, and in their College in Rome, he maintained extremely clear and precise theses on this subject, of which here is the third and the fourth “*Therefore (the helps of grace) obtain a saving effect in the order for which God mercifully bestows them on us, insofar as, from the infinite vocations which God foreknows as possible, He draws out that one or those ones by which He foresees that our free will—not indeed left entirely to itself, but moved and stirred by those vocations—will use them well, omitting those by which He foresees it would be abused. In this sense, ‘He has mercy on whom He wills.’ Conversely, for reasons He alone knows, from the same heap He draws out those vocations by which He foresees man will abuse them. And in this sense, ‘He hardens whom He wills.’ And since this whole matter of calling men by one or another call depends solely on God, therefore it is God alone who discerns the predestined from the unhappy mass of the reprobate.*” See the Memoirs of Trevoux, December 1704.

The only difference I notice between Molina and this Abbé is that the former speaks only of God's good pleasure alone, and that the latter gives to this good pleasure reasons that determine it. But I have difficulty believing that Molina understands a good pleasure without reason, although I do not remember having noticed that he spoke of it, as did after him Suarez, Arriaga, and some others. See Suarez De auxiliis lib. III. cap. 17. n. 20. Arriaga Tom. I. disp. 35. Sect. 9. n. 97.

CHAPTER V. Reflections on the sentiment of Lessius and his Disciples.

This is the first response that is made to the question proposed in the preceding chapter. The second is that of Lessius, Compton, and some others. They say that if God distributes his graces so unequally, giving to some congruous ones, and to others only incongruous ones, it is not that he wants some to be saved and others to perish; it is rather that he could not act otherwise without overturning the order he has established for the conduct of the world, and without working perpetual

miracles, to which his wisdom cannot consent. See Lessius in his *Treatise on Predestination* n. 52, 57, 65, and Compton, Tom. I. disp. 38. sect. 3. n. 7.

If it were a question here of pronouncing on the truth or falsity of this response, it would be easy to show that it is very absurd. One could prove by various passages of the Sacred Writings that far from the order of grace being subordinated to that of nature, on the contrary the order of nature is subordinated to that of grace, to the point even that the entire world subsists only for the Elect, and will be destroyed as soon as this number is completed.

It would be easy to ask Lessius how he understands what he tells us on this subject, and to refute the two responses he could make. Indeed, does he understand that God never departs from the order of nature, or does he believe only that he follows it sometimes, and that sometimes also he derogates from it? If it is the first, he annihilates the use of prayer, as I have shown in my *Treatise on Games of Chance*, and nothing will be more judicious than the word of the Poet, "*Cease to hope that prayer can bend the fates of the gods.*" (From *Virgil, Aeneid*, Book VI)." What will be easier, moreover, than to prove the contrary? How many incontestable examples can be produced of it, the taking up of Enoch and Elijah, the flood, the subversion of Sodom, the plagues of Egypt, etc.

If it is the second, the question is recalled, and the difficulty returns. For if God sometimes follows the natural order, and sometimes also departs from it, one will ask whence comes this difference. One will want to know why it is that God gives to one congruous graces, despite the order of nature, which wants the contrary, and gives to the other only incongruous ones. This is what one cannot answer solidly except by recurring, as we do, to the free will of God, and to the secret reasons it has for doing what it does.

But here is something more pressing. When God established this order, the observance of which causes so many graces to be useless, and so many sinners to come to perish, he undoubtedly saw all its consequences, and saw them with the utmost clarity. He saw at the same time a hundred thousand other orders that it would have been easy for him to establish, a hundred thousand other plans that he could have made of his work.

Among these different orders and these various plans, there were several in which all men and all Angels would have attained happiness, several, on the contrary, in which all would have perished. In some, all those who are saved would have been lost, and all those who are lost would have been saved; in others, the same thing would have happened to half, to a quarter, to a hundredth, etc.

As they admit all this, and as it would be temerity to deny it, given the immense and inexhaustible extent of God's wisdom and power, they are asked why it is that among all these plans that he could have made, he chose precisely this one, and preferred it to all the others which would have had such different consequences.

To this, neither Lessius nor anyone else could answer otherwise than by saying, either simply that God has acted in this way because it pleased him, or that if he did it, it is because he had good reasons to do it, which is to come back to what we maintain.

Molina makes the first of these two responses. He maintains that it is impossible to find in men, or anywhere other than in God's good pleasure alone, the reason which made him prefer this sequence, this order of help that he gives us, and of the rest of the events, which work our salvation or our loss: "When," he says, "there already existed in God, before any free act of His will, the idea of that order of things, of helps, and of circumstances which He, on His part, chose, as well as of infinite other possible orders that could have existed by His omnipotence, and when He foresaw what would happen in each of them in terms of the liberty of creatures' free will—on the hypothesis that He willed to choose that order—then indeed, there is no cause, reason, or condition, not even a necessary one, to be found on the part of the use of free will, foreseen either in themselves or in others, for which God predestined those rather than others in Christ to eternal life, nor for which He decided to confer on them, through Christ, those means by which He foresaw they would, by their own liberty (or by others', if they were infants), reach eternal life. Nor is there a reason why He wanted to give *these very* means to *them* rather than to *others*. All of this must be referred solely to the free and merciful will of God, who willed it thus by His good pleasure alone." Mol. Conc. quaest. 23. art. 4. disp. 1. memb. 9. p.m. 466.

He says the same thing in another place, which is the conclusion of all his work. "That God," he says, "chose this order of helps and of other things—in which He foresaw that some adults would, by the freedom of their own will, attain eternal life, and others would not—rather than any other order in which events would have turned out differently, and that by choosing this order rather than another He predestined these rather than those, there was no cause or reason on the part of the predestined themselves. All of this must be referred solely to the free will of God." Ibidem, memb. ult. p.m. 486.

This passes for so constant in the School of Molina that a Spanish Jesuit, named Jacques Granados, believed he found in it something that all Theologians of all Sects have vainly sought until now. This is to reduce all Predestination to a single act. It is known to what point this would be desirable. For as the simplicity of God excludes the diversity of acts, one feels well that any system that attributes several to him is not right. This is, however, what one has not yet been able to avoid. The Jesuit of whom I speak is the only one to my knowledge who has believed he discovered this secret. He says that all Predestination consists in a single act, which is nothing other than the preference that God has given to the order he has established, over all the others that he has neglected, although he was not ignorant of the consequences that the ones and the others could have. This preference alone has made the salvation of the Elect, and the loss of the Reproved. It has even made it such that such and such

are Elect, and such and such are Reproved. Can one refrain from saying on this subject: "Si non é vero, é ben trovato" (Even if it's not true, it's well invented.)?

Lessius himself sometimes has recourse to it. He asks, for example, why it is that God wanted his Gospel to be preached in a manner that caused the Jews to reject it, and he answers that one could not give any other reason than the will of God. "Respondeo id ad bene-placitum divinum esse referendum." (I answer that this must be referred to the divine good pleasure.) Less. de Praedest. n. 36.

Elsewhere he asks why it is that God does not give us greater help, and he answers that the judgments of God are an abyss, of which it is impossible to find the bottom. "Plurimis," he says, "datur satis parcè. Sed judicia Dei abysus multa. Habet Deus justissimas rationes cur ita faciat." ("To very many, enough (grace) is given rather sparingly. But the judgments of God are a great abyss. God has most just reasons for acting in this way.) There n. 70.

In n. 72, he recognizes that God loves men unequally, and unequally wants their salvation. He even proves it quite strongly, and finally adds that it is impossible to say where this comes from. "In particulari cur hos prae aliis diligat, majora gratiae auxilia conferat; plerumque ratio alia praeter ipsius bene-placitum assignari nequit." ("As to why in particular He should love these more than others, and confer greater helps of grace—it is, for the most part, impossible to assign any reason other than His own good pleasure.")

Compton, who is in the sentiments of Lessius, asks why it is that God has put this individual in circumstances that have caused his loss, rather than in others that would have worked his salvation; and he answers that it is impossible to know, that one must only assure oneself that God did it for very good reasons, but which are unknown to us, which he proves by the testimony of St. Augustine: "If someone asks why this man in particular, rather than another, is placed in these or those circumstances, this pertains to divine Predestination and is beyond our comprehension. God has the most just reasons for this in the abyss of His infinite wisdom. And He does this by a hidden, but not unjust, judgment, says St. Augustine (Homily 58 on John). And he says that in heaven it will be revealed why one was chosen rather than another. Therefore, as the same St. Augustine says (Tractate 26 on John), 'Why He draws this one and not that one—do not presume to judge, if you do not want to err.' Meanwhile, we must cry out with the Apostle, 'Oh! the depth of the riches [of the wisdom and knowledge of God] &c.'" Compt. Theol. Tom. I. disp. 38. sect. 3. n. 8.

CHAPTER VI. How far the Lutherans go, and where they stop.

I will not insist further on the sentiment of the Theologians of the Roman Communion. I come to that of the Lutherans, and I say that no one can less than they dispense with resorting to what I have said to explain the Mystery of

Predestination. They do it also on several occasions, of which I will indicate the principal ones.

I. The first is the one that arises from a distinction celebrated in their Schools. They pose a double vocation, a double grace, one ordinary, the other extraordinary, and they make the principal difference of these two species of grace and vocation consist in the fact that the ordinary is very often rejected, and the extraordinary never is. This grace always has its effect, "Semper sortitur optatum eventum," ("It always obtains the desired result.") says Brochman De gratia Dei, cap. 1. sect 4. Also, he says, it is an effect of the absolute power of God. "Adest absoluta quaedam Dei potentia." ("A certain absolute power of God is at work [in it].") Ibid.

He gives as examples the vocation of Abraham, that of St. Matthew, and that of St. Paul. Others add to this that of the Sinner woman. Meisner himself and Danhaver want the same thing to happen still today, and that it happens quite often. "Extraordinariè Deus saepè hunc peculiari gratia vocat prae illo." ("God often calls this man with a special grace rather than that one, in an extraordinary way.")

It is now asked why it is that God, who could grant such a grace to all the men in the world, and consequently convert them and save them all, grants it only to some; why it is again that, not wanting to grant it except to some, he grants it to these rather than to those? This is what these Theologians make no other response to than the one we make to those who ask us why it is that God gives his efficacious grace to these rather than to those? They say that only God knows it.

This is what can be seen in this passage of Meisner, Anthrop. Dec II. page 28, cited and approved by Danhaver Hodosoph. page 856: "We distinguish between the ordinary conversion of a man and the extraordinary or miraculous one. Regarding the latter, we say it happens through efficacious grace—*infallibly and always*. This grace calls a person in such a way that he is converted with a kind of necessary will and voluntary necessity. We have examples in Abraham and Paul, who were extraordinarily called to faith and to the Church. The question is asked whether this grace could have been rejected by either Abraham or Paul. Theologians hold that the answer must be negative. Therefore, if this extraordinary grace is compared to the ordinary, it may be called efficacious in itself, always—because all who are called by this grace are always converted. And to this belong all the benefits which, apart from hearing the word, God has granted to this or that person—for instance, that it was an extraordinary grace that greater miracles were done in Chorazin than in Tyre and Sidon (Matt. 11:20). Of this grace, no cause can be given except the will of God. All men are ordinarily called by one and the same grace; but extraordinarily, God often calls this person by a special grace rather than that one, the reason for which is known to Him who searches minds and hearts."

One finds in this passage all the following propositions: I. That extraordinary grace always infallibly has its effect. II. That it cannot be rejected. III. That with that it does not harm freedom, but that the necessity that it imposes is a voluntary necessity. IV.

That God often (*saepe*) grants such a grace. V. That he does not grant it to all. That if one asks why it is that God grants it to some, and not to others, one can give no other reason than his will: one can only add that if this will has some reason to act thus, as it undoubtedly has, this reason is known only to him alone.

It would only be necessary to put us entirely in agreement on this matter to change the word extraordinary to that of regenerating. But be that as it may, one clearly sees by this that the Lutherans go as far in this as we do, and that they stop neither sooner nor later.

II. The same thing will appear, even if one restricts oneself to ordinary graces alone. Everyone knows that the Lutherans have adopted the middle Knowledge of the Molinists. In posing it, it must be recognized that God sees all that sinners would do if he gave them, to convert themselves, all the ordinary help, internal and external, natural and supernatural, that it would be easy for him to grant them, and that he even grants to some others. This means that he sees no sinner that it would not be easy for him to convert, and consequently to save, by doing, with this design, all that it would be very easy for him to do.

Someone perhaps will quibble with me about the extent that I give to the power of God, by maintaining that there is no sinner, whoever he may be, that it would not be easy for him to convert. It will perhaps be said that there are some so obstinate that they would resist all possible graces, known and unknown. But besides the fact that there would be temerity in saying it, since it would be supposing that the wisdom and power of God have limits that they could not pass, and even boasting of knowing them, besides that, I say, it should suffice us to know that the Lutherans are very far from this thought.

Here is what Hulseman says on this subject: "God cannot be frustrated in His purpose, nor can He be mistaken regarding the cooperation of lower causes, because through His infinite omniscience He foresees all the movements and natural capacities of the lower causes. He beholds, in one eternal act of vision, the dependence of supernatural causes on Himself as their principle, and the future admission or non-admission of these causes in human beings to be saved. Therefore, He has no need to take on the concern of selecting the most convenient means or of choosing the end that is most easily attained or most delightfully pleasing." Hulsem. *Breviar.* cap. 15. n. 3.

Who is it, on the other hand, that God could not convert if he could convert the inhabitants of Sodom, as Jesus Christ assures, Matt. XI 23? But let us not contest on this. Let us suppose that there are these sinners, whom no grace would convert, which Father L'Ami treats as impossible with an absolute and Metaphysical impossibility. Will one at least deny to me that there are not an infinity that some grace would convert, and that it does not convert, because it is not granted to them? This is what I do not fear will be contested with me.

But if that is so, why is it that God, being able to convert and save these, lets them perish? Why is it that, being able to give them congruous graces, in the sense of Lessius, he gives them only incongruous ones? It is clear that there is only a single response to make to this question. It is that God acts in this way because it pleases him, and it pleases him for reasons very good in truth, but which are unknown to us.

CHAPTER VII. Continuation of the same subject. Other proofs of what has just been said.

III. The Lutherans strongly and unanimously maintain the necessity of explicit Faith in Jesus Christ crucified, and fight with all their strength against the Socinians who deny it. They are careful, moreover, not to deny that the preaching of the Gospel is necessary to give birth to such Faith, as St. Paul said, "How will they believe in him of whom they have not heard?" Rom. X. They see, on the other hand, that a large number of entire peoples, and at any rate an infinity of persons, live and die without anyone speaking to them of Jesus Christ, while a large number of other persons and peoples are carefully instructed in the truths of salvation. From this it happens that many of the first group, who would have believed if they had been well instructed, are lost for lack of instruction, as would have happened to those very ones who are saved, if God had done for them only what he did for those who perish. Their salvation, then, and their damnation, depend on what God does or does not do to call them. But why is it that God, being able to call them all, calls only some? Why is it above all that, wanting to call some, he honors these rather than those with this vocation? What can one answer to these two questions, other than what I have already answered, namely that God is master of his goods, that he distributes them as it pleases him, and that whatever the case may be, he never uses this right without having good reasons to do precisely what he does? This is also the ordinary response of their Doctors, witness these words of Quensted, Syst. Theol. Part. III. page 465. "If God grants to one nation the light of the Gospel, and leaves another without giving it the same grace; if there are Turks, Americans, and other Barbarians, who are converted to the Faith, and if others, who were not inferior to them, are left in their infidelity, the whole must be attributed to a secret and impenetrable judgment of God, and one must exclaim with St. Paul to the Romans: O! depth of the riches, etc."

"That God grants the light of the Gospel to one nation, neglecting another, that some of the Turks, Americans, and other Barbarians are converted to the faith, while others, who are equal to them, are left in their infidelity, must be ascribed to the secret and impenetrable judgment of God, and we must exclaim with Paul, Rom. XI. 33. O the depth! etc."

IV. The Gospel is preached at the same time to two peoples, and bears fruit there. Some time after, these two peoples abandon the persuasion and profession of the truth, and let this light that they had received be extinguished. They remain a long

time in this sad state: but finally God rekindles this torch in one of these peoples, and thereby works the conversion of a large number of individuals. He leaves the other people to wallow in its darkness, and thereby lets it perish. Where does this diversity of conduct and treatment come from? It is, says Hulseman, from the free and absolute will of God, who decides as he pleases both which people should be called first to the knowledge of the truth, which second; and after they have let it be lost, which should be restored to it first, and which some time after, which finally should be reinstated in it, and which should not be.

"It must be granted that God, just as in the order of the first calling, as to which nation is to be called earlier and which later to the knowledge of Christ, acts according to his absolute judgment, so according to his absolute judgment he determines not only the order of the word once rejected, to which nation he wishes to restore the benefit of preaching later, to which sooner, but also according to his absolute will he determines the restoration itself, or the non-restoration, because he has nowhere promised it." Hulsem. in formul. Concord. page 443.

V. The Lutherans maintain the absolute necessity of Baptism, at least for children born outside the Church. They hold that whatever may be the case with others, on which they are not in good agreement, those of this order who die before the age of understanding, and without having been baptized, perish infallibly. Why is it that God, who administers this Sacrament to some of these children, and who thereby puts them on the way to Heaven, leaves so many others to die without giving them the same grace?

We will know it in Heaven, responds Gerard to this question. Here the judgments of God are incomprehensible. "But if," he says, "examples of infants born in paganism are brought forward, to these and similar cases, we respond, the judgments of God can be hidden, but never unjust. Many things in this point of doctrine are impenetrable to us in the light of nature and grace, which someday we will know more fully in the light of glory." Hunnius, Hulseman, Varenius, and several others, also make the same response.

VI. The Lutherans believe that there are righteous people who, coming to fall into sins that subject them to damnation, die at the very moment they commit them, without having time to recover from them by repentance, and who consequently perish. They hold that there are others who, having carried themselves to similar excesses, sometimes even to greater ones, live long enough to recover from them and to save themselves. Why is it that God grants to some this delay, which is so useful to them and which was so necessary for them, and refuses it to others, who were no more unworthy of it, and who perhaps were even less so?

To this they all respond that this is one of those judgments of God that the Spirit of man cannot fathom; but that although it does not discover its justice, it should persuade itself that it has nothing that is even slightly opposed to this virtue. This is

in particular the side that Hunnius takes on this subject in his *Treatise on Predestination*, page 820 of the folio edition.

He produces, in the first place, righteous people who, having become drunk, and having thereby closed the gate of Heaven to themselves, are killed in this sad state where it is impossible for them to repent, either by assassins or by the accomplices of their debauchery, with whom they have quarreled; or, without even that, in mounting a horse, they fall and kill themselves, or fall into a river and drown, not to mention those who in this state suffocate from apoplexy. He speaks of those who, being surprised in adultery or in some other similar sin, are killed at the very moment when they commit it, and compares them with so many others who, having committed the same sins or other greater ones, survive by an effect of God's mercy on them, and have all the time they need to make their peace with him. He asks why it is that God treats these two orders of fallen righteous people so differently, and he answers that only God himself knows the true reason. Here are his own words:

"Not infrequently he allows some to be killed unexpectedly, when they have not yet thought anything about doing penance, while to others of the same type, or even of worse note, he grants a space for repentance, which grant for some as time progresses becomes salutary. Thus he permits many to be killed in their very drunkenness, either during quarrels, or dragged by horses while drunk, or to fall into rivers and perish. He allows some fornicators and adulterers to be stabbed in the very criminal act, so that they die in their sins by just judgment. Others no better than these he keeps safe from such tragic cases, and by granting a period of repentance recalls them to better fruit: What the reason for this inequality is, he knows who searches the hearts and minds."

On this question Hulseman stops at the will of God alone. "But the cause," he says, "of the decree concerning the elect who have fallen away for a time from union with God, and from his gracious influence, who are to be infallibly restored, does not so much rest on the foreseen non-rejection of divine grace calling them to repentance, as on the purpose of God, or the will to restore this one, not that one." *Breviar. cap. 14. n. 7.*

These, then, are up to six different occasions where one can remark, by the admission of the Lutherans, and in conformity with their principles, the absolute freedom of the will of God, who disposes of his graces as he pleases, in such a way that it is impossible for men to know the true reasons he has for acting thus. Among these six occasions, there is none where what God does is not followed by the salvation or the loss of a very large number of persons. Indeed, I have said nothing of the diversity that appears in purely external circumstances, and which change nothing in the substance; for example, that of two men who convert, one is called in his youth, and the other at a more advanced age. I have said nothing of this, which in effect would prove nothing. I have restricted myself to what decides salvation and damnation; which I ask my Reader to note well. Among these occasions again, there

are two, namely the first ones, where it was a question of nothing less than the salvation of all the Elect, and the damnation of all the Reproved. For finally, if God had given to all men either extraordinary graces or congruous graces, all these men would have been saved. Thus here is a double good pleasure of God, of which the damnation of all the Reproved, without exception, has been the infallible consequence; which one cannot note with too much care.

CHAPTER VIII. How far the Remonstrants go, and where they stop.

The Remonstrants are not, by a long shot, as constrained on the matter of Predestination as the Lutherans and the Molinists. They admit neither the necessity of Baptism nor that of an explicit Faith in Jesus Christ crucified, two hypotheses incompatible with universal grace, such as the Lutherans and the Molinists believe it. Thus it is much easier for them to have a consistent and well-connected system, which is not a mediocre advantage. When therefore they would not admit the maxim that I have posed, it should not be found strange. But the truth is that they pose it like all the others, which shows that it must be very reasonable.

To be assured of this, one has only to read the entire chapter XI of the IV book of Mr. Limborch's Christian Theology. One will see that he proves very amply there the necessity of external vocation. It is true that he does not believe this necessity to be total and absolute. He believes that, absolutely speaking, one can be saved without being called in this manner. But it appears that he regards this event as something extremely rare. Be that as it may, he appears persuaded that this vocation is of great help for salvation, and that in a people who are honored with it, there are incomparably more people who are saved than there are in nations who are deprived of it, and who wallow in barbarism and ignorance. I do not report his words, because that would be extremely long, and besides his book is found everywhere.

He recognizes, however, which is moreover so evident, that not all are called in this way. This is what he supposes from n. 11 to 14. But to what does he attribute the diverse distribution of this grace? Why is it, according to this Author, that so many millions of persons, who would be saved if Jesus Christ were preached to them, live and die without hearing about him, while so many others, most of whom do not even profit from it, possess this great advantage? It is, he says, that God is the master of his benefits, and that he dispenses them as he pleases.

"He always dispenses grace according to his absolute right, and is so far from wanting to be bound to the good merits of men, that sometimes he offers grace to the more unworthy, passing over the less unworthy." n. 12.

He explains himself even more clearly in n. 13.

"It is clearly a matter of divine judgment that he has dispensed grace so unequally, both formerly and still does so now. That he calls some only through the works of creation and providence, and through certain extraordinary judgments, but others

through his word. That formerly he called men through the law, in which he gave his most perfect will more obscurely to be seen, wrapped in various shadows and figures, but now he calls to salvation through the manifestation of his good, holy, and well-pleasing will through the Gospel of his Son Jesus Christ. That he does not yet arrange for the Gospel to be announced to all, but also leaves some peoples, who cannot be said to be worse than others, still destitute of the knowledge of the Gospel. That he does not endow all whom he calls with an equal measure of grace, but some with far more excellent grace than others, such as Paul, Acts IX, Cornelius, Acts X. That he does not send equally suitable ministers everywhere, has not wanted equal miracles to be done before all, does not deem all worthy of the same inspirations and secret suggestions of the Holy Spirit, does not cause equal opportunities for advancing in the knowledge of truth and virtue, among which education and daily association stand out, to occur for all."

He concludes in n. 14. "Nothing adverse or repugnant to divine justice and equity is done by God in this unequal dispensation of grace; but according to his highest wisdom he administers all things suitably to his justice." What he says about the wisdom of God in these last words shows that this good pleasure of which he speaks is never without reason.

Episcopius in his Antidote, chapter VI. page 33, complains bitterly that the Synod of Dort accused the Remonstrants of believing that if God honors one people with his vocation rather than another, it is because it is more worthy of it. He maintains on the contrary that, according to them, God does it by virtue of his supreme and absolute power.

"In the ninth article it is not obscurely imputed to the Remonstrants that they teach that the reason why God sends the Gospel to this nation rather than to another is not the mere and sole good pleasure of God, but that this nation is better and more worthy than that to which the Gospel is not communicated."

Here is how he repels this accusation:

"For they know that there is no one who thinks or professes this, since at all times they have directly taught and professed the contrary, inasmuch as they maintain that in the dispensation of the means to salvation, supreme and irrefutable authority, and autocratic right is to be attributed to the sole and unique good pleasure of God, so that God is free to send his Gospel to whichever and whatever kind, whether peoples or men, it has seemed good to his majesty."

But to return to Mr. Limborch, he says various things in his Conference with Orobio, which show that he is persuaded that God could convert all sinners without exception. For example, page 198.

"God could have directed Israel from the beginning with his grace in such a way that it would never have sinned, and thus would have always remained in the burning

grace of God, and would not have experienced the evils of captivity. Yet it is most certain that God did not want this."

In page 233.

"We add that God hardened Israel for a time, until the fullness of the Gentiles has entered the Church, and afterward with a fuller and more efficacious operation of grace, such as he has not used until now, he will look upon the remnant of the Jews, so that a huge door will be opened for them to recognize their Messiah."

Finally in page 246.

"If (the Apostles) had wanted to be evil, they could have (absolutely speaking) deceived men through wickedness. But such great and abundant gifts of divine grace were given to them that, although their freedom was not destroyed, nevertheless this was in no way to be feared, indeed it would have been like a miracle if such excellent gifts of grace had been insolently despised by these upright men who worshipped God with a sincere heart."

God therefore, according to Mr. Limborch, could convert all men. Whence can it come that he lets them perish, except that for good reasons, but which are unknown to us, it pleases him to act thus? Consequently the Remonstrants, like all the others, must have recourse to this, and they cannot in any way dispense with it.

One can even say that in certain respects they carry the freedom of God much further than we do. We believe that God, by a perpetual law and without exception, shows grace to all those who truly and sincerely repent before the end of their life, however late their repentance may be. But the Remonstrants, just like the Socinians, believe that among those who convert only on their deathbed, there are some who are saved, and others who perish, so that God shows grace to some, and punishes others, as it pleases him. See Episcopius's response to the fifteenth of the 64 questions that were proposed to him at various times, and by various persons.

CHAPTER IX. That it is not surprising that Christians agree on this subject.

One will perhaps be surprised to see that Christians, who have for a long time been so horribly divided, and most of whom take such great pleasure in contradicting each other and moving further and further away from each other, have been able to agree on the truths that I have indicated. But this concert is not as surprising as it appears at first. It has been extorted by the evidence of the truth.

It is certain, first of all, that whatever repugnance one may naturally have, it is necessary to recognize in God a right and a supreme freedom to dispose of his Creatures as he pleases. It must even be confessed that he uses this right in a manner quite opposed to our petty imaginations. I will not allege, to justify it, the sacred authority of the Word of God, which in so many places proposes to us this

good pleasure as the first cause of the difference between the Elect and the Reproved. No one is unaware of the freedom that has been taken to twist all these passages, and to put them to the rack, to make them say what one wanted.

If there had only been that, one would not have reconciled as much as has been seen. What has contributed much more to it is the impossibility in which one has found oneself to imagine any other cause of what one saw. If one had seen that God treated all men equally and uniformly; if, for example, he gave them all an equal facility to conceive things that are not perceived immediately by the senses, if above all he had them all instructed equally in his Truth, if he always sent, and everywhere, Preachers of his Gospel, who announced to all the same Truths, if even putting some difference there, he preferred the most honest people, those in a word who conduct themselves the best, to the most disorderly and the most impious, one would be easily inclined to seek in the will of men themselves the source of the difference in their fate; and one would stop at this cause, as the most plausible.

But whatever natural inclination one has to do this, one cannot remain even slightly firm in this thought, seeing it so opposed to what is noticeable everywhere. One sees men very unequally endowed with regard to natural gifts: one notices in some a mental bias so universal that they judge badly of everything and appear absolutely incapable of discerning the true from the false, at the time when one knows others, whose mind is naturally right, just, and enlightened.

One sees on one side entire peoples, who for several consecutive centuries possess the precious treasure of saving Truth, so that fathers leave it to their children, as an inheritance: And at the same time one sees others, who for thousands of years wallow, not only in ignorance, but also in barbarism, and seem to have stripped off nature itself.

Above all, one notices an infinity of individuals very richly endowed with natural gifts, raised with care, and perfectly well instructed in all that it was most important for them to know, who nevertheless carry crime to its height, and live like Demons, at the time when others, who are more regular, live and die in ignorance of what it would be most important for them to know.

As all this jumps to the eyes, and as one knows moreover that everything is conducted by Providence, one cannot help but recognize, on one hand, that this Providence is very free, and on the other that the rules by which it conducts itself are very elevated above our weak imaginations, which comes back more or less to what has been seen.

One has also been extremely constrained by the hypothesis of God's foreknowledge, which Socinus alone dared to deny. One could not doubt that God foresaw the success of all the cares he would take to save and to convert men. One did not doubt that he knew that such means that he employs to convert Peter, and that he does not employ to convert John, could be useful for John, and useless for Peter. One has seen that notwithstanding this knowledge, he employed them for Peter and did not

employ them for John. As this procedure is directly opposed to all our rules, one has well felt that it was necessary either to deny that God foresees the future, or to recognize that we are ignorant of the reasons he has for doing all that he does.

Socinus, the boldest spirit that was ever seen, and whose maxim has always been to renounce everything that inconvenienced him, took the first of these two sides. Episcopius was tempted to follow him, and made it quite understood in his Dissertation "De termino vitae," that he would have taken the step, if the consideration of so many predictions found in Scripture had not held him back. But be that as it may, the others having more respect for the sacred authority of the Word of God, were constrained to take the other side, which was the only one that remained.

I admit that one could say with Thomas Aquinas that God conducts himself by an absolutely free good pleasure, and without any reason. But first of all, it has been seen that it was an extreme temerity to maintain positively that God has no reason to do what he does, under the pretext that we see none, as if our knowledge were the measure of truth. And moreover, the procedure that Thomas attributes to God corresponds very little to the idea we have of his wisdom, which being the first reason, must do everything with reason. All this has meant that Thomas has had few Followers, even in his own School, where his authority is so excessively and so disproportionately revered. Everyone has seen that there is something more reasonable in recognizing that God may have had reasons that we do not know, for doing what he has done, than in deciding rashly that he had none.

The mind having been led this far by the evidence of the thing itself, one has had less difficulty in yielding to a double authority, to that of St. Paul, and to that of St. Augustine. I ask my Reader to consider that it is not a question here of right, but of fact. I do not speak of what it would be more just to do, but of what is done, justly or unjustly. Looking only at the right, the supreme authority of the Word of God should suffice for us. But with regard to the fact, this authority is not always as revered as it should be, especially when it is separated from evidence, and deprived of this great help. Here this evidence not lacking, as has just been seen, one has been in some way disposed to receive with respect the decisions of the Word of God, which makes salvation of men depend firstly on the free will of God. Witness what Jesus Christ said to his Father Matt. XI. 26. "I thank you," or rather, "I praise you," or "I bless you, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children." Witness what St. Paul said to the Rom. IX. 18. "He has compassion on whom he wants, and hardens whom he wants." And to the Ephes. 1:5. "He predestined us to himself through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will."

Secondly, this Word makes us understand that this good pleasure of God, which sovereignly disposes of everything, always has its reasons, which we do not know in truth, but which are no less solid. This is what St. Paul makes clear enough in chapter

XI of his Epistle to the Rom. 33, 34. After having dealt amply with the rejection of the Jews and the calling of the Gentiles, he concludes his discourse with this exclamation, "O depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How incomprehensible are his judgments, his ways impossible to fathom! For who has known the intention of the Lord, and who has been his Counselor?"

Let one pay a little attention to the manner in which this great Apostle expresses himself. He does not say, "O absolute and independent freedom of God! O supreme power of the Master of the Universe!" But, "O depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" It is therefore by the lights of his wisdom, and by the infinite extent of his knowledge, that God conducts himself in this, as in all the rest. He prefers one to the other, not because he is the Master, and he has the power to do what he pleases, but because he knows everything, he sees everything, he penetrates everything. It does not take much light and knowledge to make an authoritative move without reason. Men make such moves every day, although their lights are so limited. The least enlightened are even those who make the most of them. Thus the Apostle admiring in this the wisdom and knowledge of God, it appears that he glimpses in his conduct reasons that he does not undertake to penetrate.

Finally he asks: "Who has known the intention of the Lord, and who has been his Counselor?" He recognizes therefore an intention that God had in this. He recognizes a counsel that he held, and in which he did not need to take anyone's advice. And does not all this lead us to conceive of reasons to which he had regard, and by which he was guided?

St. Augustine followed St. Paul exactly. If one reads chapter 5 of the second Book of Merits, and of the Remission of sins, chapter 8 of the Book of the Predestination of Saints, and chapter 95 of his Manual to Lawrence, one will find there these three propositions: I. That the reason for such impenetrable conduct is with God. II. That he wanted it to be unknown to us. III. That if we are ignorant of it presently, we will know it in the life to come.

All this shows that one should not be surprised that this doctrine has been so universally received. But there are other reflections to make on all this. They will be seen in the following two chapters.

CHAPTER X. That what has just been said serves to make understood what an Absolute Decree is, and thereby to end a very heated dispute.

What I have just said clearly shows that however heatedly one disputes on these matters, one is much less distant in sentiment than one thinks. As has been seen, the diversity that exists on this subject in opinions does not consist in the fact that when it comes to finding the first root, the first cause of the diversity that is noted in the fate of men, of whom some are saved and others perish, some believe they find it in the free will of God, and others in that of man. It consists solely in the fact

that some resort sooner to this first Cause, others later. Some allege it immediately without any detour. The others, after having fled and quibbled for some time, finally come to it. This is, as has been seen, all the diversity that is noted in the manner in which one responds to this question.

Here is another considerable clarification that this same remark provides. It serves to explain the true meaning of an expression very innocent in itself, but which many people regard as unbearable because they explain it as they please. It is the epithet of absolute, which we ordinarily give to the Decree of Predestination, and especially to that of Reprobation. An absolute Decree is, in the judgment of many people, a horrible monster, a prodigious excess of absurdity and impiety, a blasphemy that one cannot detest enough. Where does this come from? It is solely from the fact that one gives to this expression a meaning very different from the one we give it: and this is what will appear very clearly, by simply recalling what we have just said.

One can understand three things by an absolute Decree. First, a Decree formed by a will that has no other reason to want what it wants than its good pleasure, and which says, "Sic volo, sic jubeo, sit pro ratione voluntas" [Thus I will, thus I command, let my will be the reason].

One can understand, secondly, an antecedent Decree, as opposed to a subsequent Decree. As these two expressions are rather obscure, it is good to explain them, but in few words. By an antecedent Decree is meant a Decree that precedes all foreseeing, such as is that of Creation. A subsequent Decree is called one that is formed only because one foresees something that must happen. Such is that which God made when he resolved to send his Son into the world, for he resolved it only because he foresaw the sin of man, and its consequences.

One can understand, thirdly, a Decree that is not suspended by conditions, the presence of which must make it executed, and the absence prevent its execution, as when I form the design to go the next day for a walk, provided that the weather is fine.

If the Decree of Predestination were an absolute Decree in the first of these senses, if God had had no reason to prefer this Elect to this Reproved, it must be admitted that this Decree would have something a little strange, although in the end I do not believe that one should cry out much about it. There would be many things to oppose to those who would be shocked by it. But it is not necessary to come to that. For, as has been seen, this first sense is not that of our Theologians. Let one say what one will about it, we take no interest in it.

I do not say quite the same thing about the second sense, which is that of the Supralapsarians. It is only too true that it has supporters among us. This is a misfortune that cannot be deplored enough. But first, the number of these supporters has always been very small, and incomparably less than that of the Infralapsarians. Moreover, the Synod of Dort, which is so respected among us, formally followed the latter. One can even say that it rejected the former, in the

conclusion of its Canons, declaring in as many words that it is not at all our belief that God, by his pure will, and without any regard to sin, has predestined and created for damnation the greater part of the human race; which is precisely the thought of the Supralapsarians. Here, then, is another sense that we reject.

According to us, the Decree of Reprobation is something quite different from an antecedent Decree. However one understands it, it is always based on the foreseeing of sin. Our Theologians distinguish a double Reprobation, the negative and the positive. The negative consists in the design to leave in misery and in sin a certain number of persons who have fallen into it in Adam. The positive consists in the design to punish eternally these same persons. Negative Reprobation supposes the foreseeing of original sin, and the positive that of actual sins, and in particular that of unbelief and final impenitence. This appears clearer than day, by art. 15 of the Decrees of the Synod of Dort, on the first point. Here are its words:

"Moreover, the Sacred Scripture illustrates and commends to us this eternal, gratuitous grace of our Election most especially in that it further testifies that not all men are elected, but that some are not elected, or passed by in God's eternal election, whom God, out of his most free, most just, blameless, and immutable good pleasure, decided to leave in the common misery into which they have cast themselves by their own fault, and not to bestow saving faith and the grace of conversion upon them, but leaving them in their own ways and under his just judgment, at the last to condemn and punish them eternally, not only for their unbelief, but also for all their other sins, to the manifestation of his justice."

It is therefore clearer than day, according to us, that the Decree of Reprobation is not an antecedent Decree, but a Decree based on the foreseeing of sin, and consequently of the number of those that are ordinarily named subsequent. Thus here is a second sense of the word absolute, which it is wrong to impute to us.

There remains only the third, which by an absolute Decree understands a Decree that is not suspended by conditions. This is the sense that we admit. We believe that God, foreseeing the unbelief and final impenitence of such and such sinners, resolves absolutely, and without any condition, to punish them eternally, and to punish them at the same time for the other sins into which they have fallen. But are we alone in believing it so? Is this not the unanimous sentiment of all Christians? Is it even possible to conceive of it otherwise?

Let the antecedent Decree, which preceded the subsequent, have been as conditional as one wants. It is still certain that the subsequent that God forms after the act of foreseeing will be absolute. For finally it is a certain maxim, and the truth of which appears even in our resolutions, that the most conditional become absolute, as soon as the condition is fulfilled or one knows with certainty that it will be.

In what, then, someone will perhaps say, does the difference consist? It is not at all in the form of the Decree by which God positively resolves to damn the sinners

whose final unbelief he foresees. It is just as little in the foreseeing of this unbelief, and of the other sins of these wretches. All conceive in roughly the same way these two acts. It is solely in the fact that the Universalists put before these two acts a general and conditional Decree to save all men provided that they believe, and to damn them if they do not believe, and that the Particularists put in place of this conditional Decree, which they have good reasons not to admit, an absolute Decree to join together Faith and Salvation, unbelief and damnation, as inseparable things; to make a law of it, which is never violated; or, if one prefers, to give to this law the form of an alliance, by which he obliges himself to show grace to believers, and men remain subject to damnation, in case they persist in unbelief and impenitence.

There is all the difference that exists, in this respect, between the two hypotheses. It is very thin, as one can see: however, it has some reality, which is not at all to be despised. The Particularists claim with reason that conditional Decrees suppose ignorance in the one who forms them. This is why they maintain that it belongs only to men to make such. One never makes any except when one does not know if the condition will be posed. For example, I do not know if tomorrow the weather will be fine, without which I do not intend to go for a walk. I can therefore take a conditional resolution on this, and say to myself: "I will go for a walk if the weather is fine." But as I know that the day of tomorrow must be a Sunday, and a day of public exercise of devotion, I will not say "I will go tomorrow to the Temple if it is a day of exercise," but I will say absolutely, "I will go," for it must be a day of devotion. An Astronomer, who knows that there must be an Eclipse the next day, but who does not know if the weather will be clear enough to be able to observe it, can well say, "I will observe it if the weather permits me"; but he will be careful not to say, "I will observe it provided that it happens."

One could even take the matter further, and say that it does not belong to men to take absolute resolutions, there being none whose execution cannot be thwarted by some unforeseen obstacle. James IV: 15. But be that as it may, it is beyond doubt that there is something ridiculous in making one's resolutions depend on a condition, which one knows with certainty whether it will be posed or not. Thus God, being ignorant of nothing, it is clear that he cannot make conditional Decrees.

With regard to negative Reprobation, there is a little more diversity. According to us, this Reprobation consists either in the fact that God does not resolve to give efficacious grace to such or such sinners, or in the fact that he positively resolves not to give it to them; for one conceives the thing in these two ways.

The Universalists take it quite differently. According to them, God resolves to give to these same sinners certain graces, which he sees and knows that they will reject. But is it more advantageous to receive graces, which will only serve to render more inexcusable, more criminal, and more unhappy, those to whom they will be granted, than to receive none?

Here, then, is another diversity of sentiments, which comes down to very little. It would be easy to prove it by other considerations, but the thing is not of this place. It suffices for me to have said this word in passing.

CHAPTER XI. That in admitting middle Knowledge, and congruous Grace, one must necessarily admit the absolute Decree, in the sense of the Reformed, and even the sentiment of that order of Supralapsarians, who are not Predeterminants.

Here is a great Paradox, but which seems to me very certain, at least provided that one supposes, with the entire Roman Church, with the Lutherans, and the Reformed, that the Decrees of God are eternal, or even that with the Remonstrants one admits that they are older than the world, which cannot be contested. Only this being posed, the rest will appear by the simple explanation of the terms.

I pose, then, first, a man who believes in the Knowledge that is called middle. One poses in God three different sorts of Knowledge: that of simple intelligence, which has for its object the essence of things, and generally all that is possible; that of vision, which has for its object all that has existed, that exists, or that will actually exist; and the middle, which has for its object, not what will happen, but what would happen in all the suppositions that one can make, which sees, for example, if such a sinner would convert, or would not convert, in case at such and such a time, God granted him such or such grace.

Let us suppose, then, with the Jesuits, the Lutherans, the Remonstrants, and some of our Theologians, that there is in God such a Knowledge. From this it follows that there are congruous graces, and incongruous graces, at least in the sense of Lessius. There is indeed on this a small diversity of sentiments. Some want God's intention to be included in the congruity, I mean that congruous grace is that which God gives with an absolute design to convert the sinner, and consequently incongruous grace is that which does not include such a design. But Lessius, and several others, do not understand it in this way. By a congruous grace they mean simply a grace that God sees will have its effect; and by an incongruous grace, that which God sees will be ineffective, in whatever design he gives, whether one or the other.

The first sense can have its difficulties, which should not stop us. Thus I reduce myself to the second, which cannot be contested with me. I say that if one poses middle Knowledge in God, one poses at the same time incongruous graces, in the second sense, I mean graces of which God foresees the good and bad success. That is clear, and cannot have the least difficulty.

Can one, on the other hand, without abjuring Universalism, deny that God does not give graces of these two orders, so that there are men to whom God gives congruous graces, and others to whom he gives only incongruous ones? This is also beyond dispute.

If moreover one admits to me that God has resolved, at least before the birth of the world, all that he actually does in the course of time, can one deny me that as presently he grants to some congruous graces, and to others incongruous ones, in the sense of Lessius, he did not resolve it, at least in the moment in which he formed his other Decrees, that is to say from all eternity, according to most, and before the birth of the world, according to some others? Who can make any difficulty in admitting it to me?

I ask now, Why is it that God, who saw so distinctly the congruity, and incongruity of these graces, which he wanted to grant to men, resolved to give congruous ones to such and such, and incongruous ones to such and such?

I see only four responses that one can make to this question. The first that God resolved to give congruous ones to those whom he foresaw would make good use of them, and incongruous ones to those whom he foresaw would abuse the first. The second that he resolved to give them congruous or incongruous, according to what the course of things, and the order of nature would demand. The third that he conducted himself in this by a free movement of his will, but without any reason. The fourth finally that he had his reasons, but which are unknown to us.

The first is universally rejected, as has been seen, and appears directly opposed to what Jesus Christ says, Matt. XI. "Woe to you, Chorazin, etc." I refuted the second in chapter IV, and it would be easy to refute it more strongly, if it were necessary. The third is not very probable, and does not correspond to the idea we have of God's wisdom. Be that as it may, what it poses is much harder than what we maintain. It is indeed much harder to say that God resolved not to give congruous graces to some, and incongruous ones to others, without having any reason for it, than to say that he did it for very good reasons, but which are unknown to us.

It is therefore necessary to reduce oneself to the fourth response, which is precisely ours, and consequently to pose an absolute Decree, in the sense that I have indicated.

From this I conclude that there may well be some diversity of sentiments between the Universalists and the Particularists, on the subject of the execution of the Decree, but that there is none on the Decree itself, at least with regard to its freedom. For the execution I admit that the Particularists make it consist in a grace efficacious by itself, which the Universalists do not want. But as regards the Decree itself, both admit that God resolves to give to some graces that he knows will infallibly convert them and does not resolve to give such to others. They further agree that he resolves it freely, because it pleases him to act in this way, and he has good reasons to do so. In this therefore they are in agreement, if they are divided on the manner of execution.

Even with regard to execution, the division is much smaller between the Lutherans and the Reformed, than between the Reformed, the Jesuits, and the Remonstrants. The Jesuits and the Remonstrants do not admit grace efficacious by itself. But this

is what cannot be said of the Lutherans. As has been seen, they recognize a grace, which they call extraordinary, and whose effect they claim is infallible. Thus in this respect the dispute does not revolve around the efficacy of grace, but only on the more or less of subjects to whom a grace efficacious by itself is granted; which considerably diminishes the diversity of opinions, and the distance of the Parties.

But it is time to come to the last part of my Paradox. Let us suppose that one admits all that I have just said, middle Knowledge, congruous Grace, and the absolute Decree, all in the sense that I have indicated. I say that it is necessary to go still further, and give right up to the sense of the Supralapsarians, who are not Predeterminants.

Here, indeed, is a distinction, which is very important, and to which one does not pay all the attention it deserves. There are two sorts of Supralapsarians, those who explain this sentiment by physical premotion, and others who reject this premotion.

The first believe that no Creature could act if God, not only does not concur immediately with it, but also if he does not determine it invincibly to the substance of the action, so that, according to them, the first man, for example, did not eat the forbidden fruit, did not resolve to do it, etc., except because God determined him invincibly to eat it, to want it, to resolve it, etc.

This sentiment joined to that of the Supralapsarians, makes the most frightful compound in the world. Taking it in this way, God will not only have determined all the Demons, innocent man, and all sinners, to the evil actions that they have committed; but again he will have done it, and will have even created them, only to make the severity of his justice shine forth by their damnation.

I do not, therefore, accuse the defenders of middle Knowledge, and of congruous Grace, of falling in fact, or by right, into the sentiment of this order of Supralapsarians. That is not at all my thought. I say only that they fall back into that of the mitigated Supralapsarians, and non-Predeterminants, such as are Suarez, Granados, and many others.

These reject physical premotion, and combat it with all their strength. They pose in God only a simple permission with regard to the first sin. But however that may be, God having permitted it, and permitted it voluntarily, in time, it is necessary that they admit that he resolved from eternity to permit it. Thus it is necessary that they go back above this permission, that they make it enter into this Decree, as one of the things that God resolves, and that in this way they give as an object to Predestination, not the human race fallen in Adam, but the human race still innocent, which is precisely the System of the Supralapsarians.

Above all, this appears evident, if one considers that among the various plans of the world, which God had, if I dare say it, before his eyes, when he resolved to create it, there were two principal ones. The permission of sin entered into one, and the care to prevent it, and to prevent it from being born, and from spoiling everything,

entered into the other. God chose between these two plans, and preferred the first to the second. It is therefore necessary in the hypothesis of middle Knowledge, and of congruous Grace, to go back above the permission of sin, and to enter into the sentiment of the Supralapsarians, I mean those who are not Predeterminants.

It is not the same with the Particularists. Nothing obliges them to be Supralapsarians, if they do not want to. They can say that God made two distinct Decrees, and separated even by an act of foreseeing. One to create the world, and the other to redeem it. The first ends with the state of innocence, which it was very worthy of God to produce. Then comes the foreseeing of sin, and this foreseeing is followed by a new Decree, which is that of Redemption. See M. de la Place in his Dissertation de Ordine Decretorum.

RESPONSE TO AN OBJECTION

Applied to various subjects, and which tends to show that if God has resolved events, one may neglect the cares that appear most necessary.

WITH AN ADDITION,

Where the Dogma of Physical Premotion is examined.

BY JEAN LA PLACETTE, Pastor of the French Church of Copenhagen.

IN AMSTERDAM, At the expense OF ESTIENNE ROGER, Merchant Bookseller, from whom one finds a general assortment of all kinds of Music very correctly corrected, and which he will always sell cheaper than anyone else, even if he should give it away for nothing. For besides correcting on the score with utmost accuracy all the Music that will be counterfeited, he will always lower the price. M.

DCC. IX. [1709]

PREFACE.

I DOUBT NOT that many will find fault that I make a book, though rather short, to respond to a single Objection, especially to an Objection as trivial as the one I propose to solve, and which the most ignorant present to us each day. It will be said that I am abusing my leisure, and that of the Public, by occupying myself with such a small matter, and that it would have been more appropriate to disregard this difficulty, than to employ so many words to clarify it.

I have above all reason to fear the censure, perhaps even the indignation, of those who are not ignorant of what was done about seventy years ago in various parts of Europe, to respond to this Objection. A Doctor from Dordrecht, named Bevervic (Beverovicus), seeing that it tended to discredit his profession, which is mainly occupied with trying to lengthen life, proposed it to all the Scholars, who were then making the most noise in Europe, of whatever sect they might be, and made of his questions, and their answers, a rather large volume, which he published under this title: "Epistolica questio de vitae termino, fatali an mobili? cum Doctorum responsis." (Epistolary question about the end of life, fated or changeable? with Doctors' responses.)

Some time later a Professor from Leipzig, named Heinrici, published various disputes on this subject, which he later revised, and composed a volume, which was printed in 1691, with some other Treatises by various Doctors of the same party.

One will then ask what my thought is. One will want to know if I merely intend to repeat what so many skilled people have already said, or if, not being content with their answers, I flatter myself with the hope of finding and proposing better ones. It will be maintained that if I have nothing to say but what has already been said, the trouble I am taking is quite useless. And it will be added that I am very presumptuous

if I imagine seeing more clearly into this matter than so many skilled people who have neglected nothing to unravel it.

All this has come to me various times in part of the first of the two Collections that I have indicated. This proves sufficiently that they themselves did not have a very advantageous opinion of their Responses: And indeed if one examines them with even a little care, one will see without difficulty that they are built on foundations that are not very solid. Some admit only conditional Decrees; and others, throwing themselves into the opposite extreme, admit all the harshness of the Supralapsarian System, without excepting the absurdities of Physical Premotion, perhaps more unbearable than the very error whose attacks they undertook to repel.

If then I dare promise myself to succeed more happily than all these great men in the design of resolving this particular difficulty, it is not that I believe myself more enlightened than they. By the grace of God, I know myself well enough to be very far from such a foolish thought. It is only that I believe myself freer from certain prejudices, which have prevented them from seeing certain things, which are not otherwise very imperceptible. It is above all that the principles that I have laid down in other works, and of the truth of which I am convinced, appear to me incomparably more proper than those of these Theologians, to lift, both this particular difficulty, and a great number of others, which are no less significant.

Fundamentally, if one should no longer touch on matters that skilled people have undertaken to clarify, there would remain very few of which it would be permitted to speak. In particular, one should no longer write on the sciences, and it would be necessary to leave them all in the state of imperfection, from which one feels sufficiently that they have not yet been drawn.

I therefore believed that I should be permitted to try to clarify this troublesome difficulty, provided that I had some hope of succeeding in it. Thus it remains only to see if that which made me undertake this small work had some foundation. But that is a question that others than myself must decide. It is for the Public to pronounce on this.

As in working on this work, and on some others, it has happened to me various times to encounter on my path the Dogma of Physical Premotion, which has always caused me extreme pain, I believed that it was good to examine it thoroughly once, and to try to put its falsity and absurdity in its proper light. This is what I have done in a particular Dissertation, which will be the closure of this volume. May God make it serve to clarify his truth.

[This came to my] spirit, but all this has not convinced me that I should abandon this design. Here are the reasons that have determined me to persist in it. It will be for my Readers to judge if they are solid.

First, St. Paul recognized himself indebted for his care and works in favor of the ignorant as well as in favor of the learned; and indeed the most ignorant have been

no less redeemed by all the blood of Jesus Christ, than the most skilled. Thus even if this book would serve only to advance the salvation, or to prevent the loss, of the least enlightened of all men, I would believe the trouble it costs me very well employed.

It seems to me even that what is told to us that the Objection that I refute is a popular Objection, and which presents itself to the narrowest and most limited minds, that this, I say, should rather have engaged me to make all my efforts to solve it, than if there had been only skilled and enlightened persons who made it.

If there were only extraordinarily subtle Minds who were struck by it, one could perhaps neglect it. This sort of Minds are not in such great number, that even if it troubled them all, one should be very alarmed about it; especially since there would be reason to promise oneself that this same penetration which would have made them perceive the difficulty, would also discover for them the solution.

But when a difficulty causes pain to all sorts of Minds, one must apply oneself in quite another manner to try to lift it, and regard it with the same eye as those epidemic diseases, which attacking at the same time the young and the old, the strong and the weak, threaten to cause extraordinary ravages, if one does not work with contention to arrest their course.

It must be remarked indeed that it is not the ignorant alone who are struck by this Objection. The most learned themselves find themselves embarrassed by it, and this goes so far that most of those who have undertaken to respond to it have expressly declared that it is an abyss where the mind is lost, that one must not flatter oneself with the hope of being able to fully resolve it in this state of ignorance and infirmity, in which we find ourselves on earth, and that it will be only in the life to come that we will discover what is weak and captious about it. This is what can be seen in particular in the Writings of Rivet, of Crucius, and of Colvius, which are part of the first of the two Collections that I have indicated. This proves sufficiently that they themselves did not have a very advantageous opinion of their Responses: And indeed if one examines them with even a little care, one will see without difficulty that they are built on foundations that are not very solid. Some admit only conditional Decrees; and others, throwing themselves into the opposite extreme, admit all the harshness of the Supralapsarian System, without excepting the absurdities of Physical Premotion, perhaps more unbearable than the very error whose attacks they undertook to repel.

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June 23, 1708.

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FIRST PART. Where after making some General Reflections, we examine the Objection as tending to prove the uselessness of the care one takes for the preservation of life, and we add a word about marriages.

CHAPTER I. Occasion, design, and division of this Writing.

As it is commonly believed among us that there is no event that God has not foreseen from all eternity, it is not surprising that this is believed in particular of these three: the time at which we die; the marriages we contract; and the good or bad success of the care we take for our salvation. It is even believed that these three kinds of events have been determined by Decrees that are not only positive, but also absolute, at least in this sense, that they exclude any condition.

I could maintain that this view is not particular to us, that on the contrary it is common to us and to celebrated Theologians of most other societies that profess Christianity. But as all this may come in its place, I leave it, and I content myself with saying that many people draw from these principles a very false and very pernicious consequence. This is that one should take no care, nor make any effort, with respect to any of these three matters. They base themselves on two maxims of good sense, which have always passed for incontestable, and which the Wise have always made the rule of their conduct.

One is that one should never do anything useless, especially if what is to be done has something troublesome, inconvenient, and tiring about it. The other is that it is useless to work to procure two kinds of goods, the impossible and the unfailing; that it is no less so to take pains to protect oneself from two types of evils, those regarded as inevitable, and those one is quite sure one will never be attacked by. What does one gain, in fact, by working for any of these designs? Are not the pains one takes lost pains? Is one not acting consequently against the most common notions of good sense, when knowing this one does not stop working at it, and doing all one can?

Does one see, for example, a traveler who would need a little more daylight than remains to reach his lodging, decide to do anything to delay the course of the Sun? Do we even see that he asks this of God, who could undoubtedly do it, if He found it appropriate, but who certainly will not do it? Do we further see that, neither this traveler, nor anyone else, asks Him that this Star rise the following day? Does one not persuade oneself that what one wishes in this regard, having to happen infallibly, whether one asks for it or not, it is useless, and consequently against good sense, to ask for it?

It would undoubtedly be a very great misfortune if the Sun lost its light. Nothing would be sadder, nothing more inconvenient than the frightful night, in which all the earth would be plunged. No one, however, takes any step to prevent this misfortune, because in fact one has no reason to fear it.

As therefore one is sure, on the one hand that what God has neither foreseen nor resolved, in this order of things, will not happen, and on the other that what He has foreseen and resolved will not fail to happen, it seems that there is something ridiculous in hastening, either to avoid, or to postpone death even slightly, or to try to marry ourselves as advantageously as possible, or to save ourselves, since this haste, however great it may be, cannot make more unfailing what must happen infallibly, nor make less impossible what is absolutely impossible in itself.

Indeed, whether one does all one can to succeed in any of these three designs, or whether one does absolutely nothing; whether one takes in this regard all the care of which one is capable, or whether one neglects them all without exception, it is the same thing. It will be neither more nor less. In all sorts of suppositions only what God has resolved will happen, and His Will will be equally executed, whether our will strives to concur with it, or whether it remains without action and without movement, or whether it opposes it.

This Objection is not without color. Many people, who are not at all suspect, believe it insoluble. It is such, on the other hand, that it can naturally produce very pernicious effects, if it once passes for constant that one has nothing solid to oppose to it. Thus it would by no means be a waste of time to apply oneself strongly to discovering its secret defects, provided one could succeed. This is what made me resolve to try if I could, and it is with this design that I composed this little work.

I have divided it into two parts. In the first I examine the Objection as made to prove the uselessness of the first two of these cares, which are those that have as their object life, and marriage; and in the second I consider it as intended to discredit the efforts of the third order, I mean those that we make to avoid hell, and to save ourselves.

CHAPTER II. Various orders of persons who make this Objection.

To respond solidly to this Objection, it is not only necessary to understand it well, one must also pay close attention to the goal and intention of those who make it. This is all the more necessary on this occasion, as this intention is not the same in all, and there is such a response that should fully satisfy some, and is only suitable for confirming others in their error.

It is therefore important to know that this Objection comes to us from three different orders of persons.

The first are those who, receiving the principles as certain, and rejecting the conclusion as insupportable, hope to prove thereby that one should have no regard

for all that our Reason can say on the things of Religion. What regard, they say, should one have for a faculty, which draws the most absurd conclusion in the world, from the most certain principles, and which imagines seeing clearly a close and indissoluble link between truth and falsehood, without being able to find in its most applied reflections the means of returning from such an error?

The second, on the contrary, esteeming Reason much, and finding on the other hand absurd and insupportable, but at the same time necessary, the conclusion that the Objection draws from the Foreknowledge of God, and from the immutable firmness of His Decrees, are led to reject these Decrees, and some even to deny this Foreknowledge. Thus in their intention this reasoning is one of those arguments, which Logicians call *ab absurdo*, and which appear all the stronger as the consequence they draw is more evidently false.

It is believed that this was the thought of those ancient Philosophers, whom Cicero introduces saying to the sick, "If your destiny is that you recover from this illness, whether you call a Doctor, or you call none, you will recover. And if your destiny is that you do not recover from it, you will die. However, your destiny bears one or the other. It therefore serves nothing to call Doctors." "If it is fated for you to recover from this illness, then whether you employ a doctor or not, you will recover. Likewise, if it is fated for you not to recover, then whether you employ a doctor or not, you will still not recover. And since one or the other is fated, therefore it is of no use to employ a doctor." Cic. de Fato, cap. 6.

In all likelihood these Philosophers were Epicureans, who wanted thereby to make the Stoics feel the absurdity of what they said concerning Destiny.

Many people believe that it is in this alone that consists the heresy of the Predestinarians, or Predestined, of which so much has been spoken on the occasion of Jansenism, and of the disputes it has given rise to. They are persuaded that no one has ever delivered the extravagances that are attributed to them, and that these were only consequences that the enemies of Grace drew very inappropriately from the pure Doctrine of St. Augustine and his Disciples. What happened to them then is what still happens to us today. We are imputed these same absurdities, as can be seen in the *Nodus Predestinationis dissolutus* of Cardinal Sfondrato page 63 of the Antwerp Edition, and no regard is paid to the protests that we have made so many times of detesting this abominable Doctrine.

Above all, one must put in this second rank the Socinians, who use this argument, and some other similar ones, to combat the particular and absolute Decrees of God, and even the Foreknowledge of contingent events, which we have such good reasons to attribute to Him.

The last order of Adversaries who make this Objection to us, are those who want it to be regarded as a sincere expression of their sentiments, and as a direct proof of what they think, whether they actually believe it so, or whether not believing it they

pretend to, in order to exempt themselves from doing certain things required of them, or to justify the faults reproached to them.

I am persuaded that one must place among those who speak sincerely, first the Turks, who according to Busbecq stun themselves with this sophism, and are thereby led to neglect the care they could take of their life. They say that the time, and the kind of death of each of men, have been engraved on his forehead by the hand of God, and that it is impossible to change anything. They maintain that there is extravagance in imagining being able to avoid what must happen infallibly, and, on this foundation they have no difficulty in using the linen, and the clothes, in which those who have died of plague have just expired, from which it happens that this disease so often makes horrible ravages in Constantinople.

He reports in the same letter that during the time of his Embassy, the plague suddenly ignited in this great city, which made him take the resolution to leave it, and to retire to a small Island, which was not far from it. But not being able to do so without the Sultan's permission, he had it requested of him. The Sultan granted it to him, but at the same time had him told that he was not thinking properly, that he should consider that the plague, and other similar diseases, are the arrows of the Almighty, which would know how to find him everywhere; that for himself he acted differently and that although the plague had attacked some people in the Seraglio, he was not thinking of leaving it.

Rivet in an excellent letter that he has added to his Antidote against the plague, complains that at a time, when this disease was making horrible ravages in Holland, several pious people made a scruple of retiring elsewhere, and made none at all of entering the houses, and even the rooms of the plague-stricken. He says that they did not stop burying in the Temples those whom this disease had carried off, and that as they did not want to take the trouble to close the tombs until they had put in them the number of bodies that each could contain, some were seen that were all open at the time when the people were assembled to hear the preaching.

I am assured that among the common people of that country there are still many today, who are filled with these same imaginations.

I learn also that there are many men of war, who appear intrepid in dangers, only because they are imbued with this thought. It is said in particular of a great Prince, who has been reproached for not taking care of his life nearly as much as prudence would demand, and who when this has been complained about to him, has defended himself only by this single consideration.

There is reason to believe that those I have just spoken of were actually of this opinion. But it is not the same with several others, who hold the same language. There are good reasons to suspect them of not really believing all that they say on this subject, and of speaking of it only to find some miserable excuse, with which they intend to color their conduct.

Such are first these excessively delicate patients, who having repugnance for certain remedies, and not wanting to do the necessary violence to use them, defend themselves by this reasoning, which they would perhaps not make, if the remedies proposed to them were as pleasant, as they are disgusting.

Such are secondly those who having contracted extravagant marriages, and having nothing better to oppose to those who reproach them for it, reduce themselves to saying that marriages are made in heaven rather than on earth, that no one can flee his destiny, and that from the very fact that they have effectively married, it appears that God had so resolved; which suffices, according to them, to exculpate them.

Such are these profane and impious people, who having no excuse even slightly plausible to produce to color their excesses, make this one prevail as much as they can, and try to make those who cannot approve of them understand, and sometimes to persuade themselves, that they are not nearly as blameworthy as they appear.

Such was in particular this Landgrave of Thuringia, of whom Caesarius of Heisterbach speaks. He was very impious, and very disorderly, and when he was reproached for it, and when to move him more he was threatened with a tragic death, if he persisted in it, he only responded by saying, "I will only die at the time that God has fixed, and determined by His Will. I cannot, either postpone my death by my good works, or advance it by the most enormous excesses."

But he did not remain firm in this state of mind. For being attacked by a dangerous illness, and fearing to die, he called his Doctor, and asked for his help. The Doctor opposed his own reasoning to him, and said to him, "You must either recover, or you must die. If it is the first, my care is not necessary for you. If it is the second, it will serve you nothing." The Landgrave seeing himself caught, and wanting to recover, abandoned his reasoning, and preferred to renounce this vain subtlety, rather than risk his life. Caesar. Dial. mirac. dist. 1. cap. 27.

There are then three different orders of Adversaries that we have on our hands, and that must be fought differently. We must prove against the last that it is not at all permitted to neglect the care they represent as useless. We must prove against the second that it is certain that God has foreseen and resolved events, and in particular the three in question. We must prove against all that the consequences they draw from the Decrees and the Foreknowledge of God are not at all legitimate.

This is what I propose to do presently in the order I indicated in Chapter I.

CHAPTER III. That God foresees with certainty the time, and other circumstances of our death.

I am persuaded that it is with this Objection as with most others that cause some difficulty. They only do so because they mix so adroitly the true with the false, that it is extremely difficult to separate them, and to prevent oneself, either from rejecting the true, which one does not know how to disentangle from the false, or

from receiving the false, which one does not know how to discern from the true. This is what happens on this occasion. This Objection contains both truths and falsehoods, which it is difficult to indicate with any exactitude. One must nevertheless try to do so, and I do not believe it impossible to succeed.

I say therefore first of all that one must be careful not to call into doubt the solidity of the two foundations, on which this Objection is built, I speak of the foreknowledge of God, and of His Decrees. One must hold for certain, that God sees with the utmost certainty when it is that we will come to die. One must recognize further that not only does He foresee these events, but also that He has resolved it, and what is much more, that the resolution He has taken on this subject is an absolute resolution, at least in this sense, that it is not suspended by conditions.

There are only the Socinians who deny the first of these truths. They do not even deny it absolutely, and without exception. Sometimes this death is an effect of the absolute will of God, and then they admit that He knows what will happen. But often also this death is the consequence of some action that depends on the free will of men, and then they maintain that as the free acts of our wills are unknown to Him, He is ignorant of the time at which they are the cause of our dying.

I have refuted this error quite amply in my Clarifications on the difficulties that arise from the consideration of freedom, and I have shown there that the future, however contingent it may be, has nothing that is hidden from the penetrating eyes of the Supreme Being. Here I content myself with saying that the time of our death makes no exception to this rule, not even when this death is the consequence of some free act of our wills.

I prove it by this great reason, that God must indeed foresee the time, and the other circumstances of such a death, since He has predicted a thousand times the whole with the utmost precision, and the event has always exactly corresponded to His predictions. Thus God said to Noah, Gen. VI. 13. "The end of all flesh has come before me." Thus He said to Abraham, Gen. XV. 15. "You will go to your Fathers in peace, and will be buried in good old age." Joseph said to Pharaoh's Cupbearer Gen. XL. 19. "Within three days Pharaoh will lift up your head, and will hang you on a tree, and the birds will eat your flesh." Joshua predicted the death of Hiel's children, which happened so long afterwards. Jos. VI. 26. God predicted several times to David that he would ascend to the throne of Judea, and consequently that he would avoid the ambushes of Saul, and of the rest of his enemies. Isaiah predicted to Hezekiah that he would live another fifteen years. Jeremiah predicted to two false Prophets, named, one Ahab, the other Zedekiah, that the King of Babylon would roast them. Jer. XXIX. 22. God assured Simeon that he would not die until after having had the satisfaction of seeing the Messiah. Jesus Christ predicted to St. Peter the kind of death he would suffer. He predicted to St. John that he would see the ruin of Jerusalem, for that is what must be understood by this coming, until the time of which this Apostle was to remain. John. XXI.

The time at which Jesus Christ died, and the kind of death He suffered, were the effects of the free will of men. That of the members of the Sanhedrin, that of the Scribes and Pharisees, that of Judas, that of Pilate, and of Jesus Christ Himself, concurred in it. However, this great Savior foresaw the whole, and even predicted it several times. The Oracles of the ancient Prophets had announced it, as each one knows, and this is a truth that cannot be contested.

Thus these are several examples which justify that God has predicted the death of a very great number of persons, although it depended on the actions, and voluntary, free, contingent omissions, both of those who were to suffer it, and of those who were to be the authors of it. And if He predicted it who can doubt that He foresaw it? For if not knowing the future He predicted it, it could happen that His prediction would be belied by the event, which would clearly show two things. One is that He would have been mistaken, and would have fallen into a positive error, which would be a defect of which the perfect Being is very certainly incapable. The other is that He would have voluntarily exposed Himself to this danger, which is regarded as a blameworthy imprudence in a simple man, and consequently should not be imputed to God, and cannot be without blasphemy. But I examine all this with more care in the place I have indicated. This makes that without dwelling on it any longer, I will pass to the consideration of the Decree that God made from all eternity concerning the time, and other circumstances of our death.

CHAPTER IV. That God has positively resolved the time at which we will die.

I say therefore secondly that the time of our death is not only the object of God's Foreknowledge, but also that of a positive act of His will. I know that there are people who deny it, and who maintain that if we die at one time rather than another, it is not that God positively wills it, it is only that He permits it, and that being able to prevent it He finds it appropriate not to do so, and to let things follow their natural course. This is the view of a Physician of The Hague, named Arnoud de Reek: in a letter inserted in Bevervic's Collection.

If he means it universally, and without exception, as it must necessarily be to remove the difficulty, what he says is visibly and incontestably false. The contrary is certain, at least with regard to those who die, only because God wants to punish them thereby for some enormous crime they have committed. This is what was seen in the flood, in the subversion of Sodom, and of the four neighboring cities, in the death of Er and Onan; in that of the firstborn of the Egyptians, and of the whole army of that nation, which was buried under the waves while trying to cross the Red Sea; in the death of Korah, and his adherents; in that of the Israelites after the idolatry of the golden calf, after the murmurs of Nasa and Meriba, and after the prostitution of Moab. The Canaanites, the Amalekites, the Bethshemites, the seventy thousand people, whom the exterminating Angel put to death as a consequence of the

numbering of the people, the one hundred and eighty thousand Assyrians whom the same Angel slaughtered in the camp of King Sennacherib, the Jews who perished by the sword of the Babylonians, and long afterwards by that of the Romans, all those, I say, and several others of whom the Holy History speaks to us, died only because God positively willed it, condemning them to this temporal punishment to punish them for some sin.

The same thing happens every day, although in a less striking manner. A premature death is very often the punishment for some sin, known, or unknown. Thus several Corinthians died because they had profaned the Sacrament of the Eucharist, which would apparently have been unknown, if God had not revealed it to St. Paul, who taught it to us I. Cor. XI. Who can likewise doubt that God executes from time to time this great number of decrees, which He has inserted in the holy books, such as these: "He who has shed the blood of man, his blood will be shed. The Bloodthirsty and the deceivers will not reach the half of their days. He who has cursed his father or his mother, his lamp will be extinguished in the deepest darkness. He who has struck with the sword will perish by the sword."

Not that I claim that every time a man is carried off by a tragic accident it is the punishment for some sin. The Son of God teaches us the contrary in various places of His Gospel. See Luke. XIII. 1.---5. & John. IX. 2. 3. I say only that it happens sometimes, perhaps even quite often, and that whenever it happens, it appears that God positively wills the death of those who are taken away in this manner.

I say the same thing of those whom He removes from the world from a principle of love for them, as when He took away the good King Josiah to spare him the pain he would have felt if he had seen the ravages that the anger of this formidable Judge was to make shortly after among his people. I say it also of those whom He takes away by death from the dangers to which their salvation was exposed, and from the temptations that could have brought them down, in conformity with what the Author of the book of Wisdom said of the Patriarch Enoch, that he was taken away lest malice should corrupt his heart.

If there were anyone whose death could be suspected of being the result of a simple permission from God, it would be without difficulty those who die as a consequence of general laws, such as for example those who die of old age, and by a simple extinction of natural heat. However, one cannot say it even of these. For since God established these laws at the beginning, and established them seeing and penetrating all the consequences they were to have in the course of the centuries, all the particularities and circumstances of these consequences, it is evident that the time of the death of those who die in this way being one of these consequences, it is to His will that one must attribute it as to its true cause.

To say something more general I maintain that death is with regard to all the wicked a terrible judgment, which terminates once and for all the delays that divine mercy had granted them to convert, and puts their salvation in a total and absolute

impossibility of being accomplished, whereas during the time that they were living, access to the throne of grace was not completely closed to them.

For good people, it terminates their miseries, and their sufferings, and what is entirely more considerable, it puts their salvation in safety, and out of reach of all sorts of risks. This makes death for the wicked one of the most severe, and most terrible judgments of God, and for good people an inestimable grace, the seal, the crowning, and the consummation of all others. But is it conceivable that God exercises this judgment, and grants this grace, otherwise than by a positive Will?

If God always lets secondary causes act without changing their course in any way, nothing will be more useless than prayers. What can they serve in this supposition? And if they are useless, what were David and Hezekiah thinking of addressing theirs to God in their illnesses? Why again does God command us to invoke Him in the time of our affliction, with the promise of delivering us from it? Why does St. James say, "Is there anyone among you who suffers? Let him pray. Is there any sick person among you? Let him call the Elders of the Church and let them pray for him."

But why should one waste time reasoning so much on this subject, when we have the express Word of God, which has explained itself on this? It says that the issues of death are in His power, that He holds the keys of hell and of death, that He makes descend to the sepulcher, and makes ascend from it. It says that when a man comes to die, by a fortuitous accident, for example when an ax escapes from a wood-splitter, it is because God willed it in this way. It says that the hairs of our head are all numbered, and that the most vile, and the smallest birds do not come to fall without His Will. After such strong expressions who can doubt that our death is always the effect of a positive will of God, and not a simple consequence of His permission?

But that is not all. I maintain that as in time God positively wills that we die, He has also resolved it from eternity. Indeed if having resolved nothing in advance on this subject, the design came to Him then, it would be a novelty directly opposed to this firmness, to this immutability, which makes one of the most striking perfections of His immortal essence. He would pass from a state of indifference to a state of determination, and thereby there would be in Him some change, whereas according to St. James one does not notice in Him the slightest appearance, the weakest, and the lightest shadow of one.

This same Apostle tells us elsewhere that all His works are known to Him from all time. He has therefore always known what He will want in each occasion. And how is it possible that He knows what He will want, and that He will want wisely, and in a manner worthy of Him, without approving it, and consequently without actually wanting it, which differs in nothing from a Decree?

I do not even understand how He could be indifferent for the things that He foresees with so much certainty. For example was it possible that He foresaw the abominations of Sodom without resolving anything on this subject? I therefore hold

for certain that He has resolved from all eternity the time at which each one must die. This is also what Job clearly gives us to understand. After having said that man born of woman is of short life, and full of trouble; after having said that he is cut like a flower, and that he flees like a shadow, he adds, continuing to speak to God, "His days are determined. You have the number of His months with you. You have prescribed his limits, and he will not go beyond." Job. XIV. 5.

CHAPTER V. That the Decree by which the number of our days has been fixed, is an absolute Decree.

What I have just said clearly shows that one should not contest with those who make this Objection to us that God has not positively resolved that we will die at such, or such a time. One must even grant them something much stronger, and much more likely to increase the difficulty. One must admit to them that the Decree that God has made on this subject is not a simple conditional Decree, but an absolute Decree.

This is what mainly causes difficulty on this subject. Indeed we do not cease to be masters of our actions, and consequently of their consequences and of their effects, even though God has foreseen the whole from eternity, even though He has resolved these consequences and these effects in case we freely do such, or such action, which He leaves in our power, which is sufficient to make the difficulty disappear. But what causes difficulty is that God has, not simply foreseen, but resolved; and what is much more, resolved absolutely, and without condition, that we will die at such, or such a time. For after all such a Decree gives rise to that species of necessity, which is called in the Schools an antecedent necessity, and which is regarded as contrary to freedom. This once established it seems that the effect of it is so immutable, so fixed, and settled, that we can change nothing in it, and that thus it is in vain that one works, either to make the thing happen as it has been resolved, or to prevent it.

Whatever may be the case with this consequence, which I do not yet examine, I maintain that one cannot help admitting the principle from which it is drawn, and that indeed God has resolved absolutely, and without condition, the time, and the other circumstances of our death.

For first I have shown in another work that conditional Decrees are absolutely unworthy of God. Indeed even men, who so often take conditional resolutions, never do it except when they do not know whether the conditions will be fulfilled. Thus God not being able to be ignorant of anything, He can resolve nothing except absolutely.

Moreover if God had made conditional Decrees concerning our death, it would be necessary that He had made a great number of them with regard to each individual. The reason is that there is no moment in life, at which some cause, physical, or moral, internal or external, or better said several of these causes, cannot, some make our life last, others terminate it. It will therefore be necessary that God make just as

many conditional Decrees to terminate, and to lengthen our life, as there are possible combinations of each of these causes with each of the moments of our life, which goes to infinity, or at least to a prodigious number. I nevertheless have difficulty believing that anyone would want to attribute to God such a multitude of this sort of Decrees.

Be that as it may, this clearly shows how little precision and exactitude there is in the procedure of those, who to prove these conditional Decrees press the passage of Psalm LV where the Prophet says that the bloodthirsty and liars will not reach the half of their days. They say that the Prophet distinguishes quite clearly two different terms of the life of these wretches, that which they actually reach, and that which they would have reached without their impiety. From this they conclude that God had made a conditional Decree to let them go up to there, and that their wickedness prevented Him from executing it.

But as their hypothesis leads them to attribute to God a very great number of conditional Decrees concerning the death of these people, it also obliges them to posit a similar number of terms, which He assigns to them by these Decrees. As God will have said, "They will die at such an age, if they do this thing," He will also have said, "They will die at such another age if they do some other thing," and at such another if they do a third, and so on to infinity.

Supposing then, as is claimed, that by the term of a man, one must understand that which God had assigned to him by a conditional Decree, it will be true to say that each of us has an infinity of terms, some more distant, others closer. In this same supposition it will be true to say that there are just as many halves of our days, as there are terms that God has assigned to us. For if our term is sixty years, the half of our days will be thirty years, and so on for the rest.

But that being the case I ask if there is anyone of whom it cannot be said that he dies both before some of these terms, and after some other, or better said, before several of these terms, and after several. And as no one will maintain to me that there is a single one, on the subject of which this is not true, I ask secondly if this being common to all without excepting the most virtuous people, it is very credible that the Prophet made it the subject of a particular remark for deceivers and murderers.

These days therefore, of which these two orders of sinners do not see the half, are not at all those that God had assigned to them by some conditional Decree. They are solely, those that the strength of their temperament, and the goodness of their constitution, gave them reason to believe that they would pass in the world. It is the time that they would have lived if the general laws, I mean the natural ones, had been observed with regard to them, and if God had not suspended their execution by virtue of some laws of another order, to punish them for their impiety. This is what I hope to clarify with more care in the sequel.

The example of King Hezekiah is also objected, who obtained from God the prolongation of his life for fifteen whole years after Isaiah had said to him, "Thus has

said the Eternal; Dispose of the affairs of your house, for you will die, and will live no more." The event not having corresponded to this denunciation, it seems that one must conclude from it one of two things, either that God changed His mind, or that the resolution He had taken to terminate the life of this Prince was only conditional.

But in fact one should conclude neither one nor the other. Although God who was not ignorant of the fervor with which Hezekiah was to ask Him for his cure, had absolutely resolved to grant it to him, He could say to him without wounding the truth, "You will die." The reason is that this proposition was true, not in an absolute sense, but in a conditional sense, being understood in the same way as if the Prophet had said, "If the laws of nature are observed, and if God does not perform a miracle, you will infallibly die in a few days."

Now who can contest two things, one that this conditional proposition was true, the other that God is accustomed to express absolute conditional threats? Witness that of Jonah, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh will be overthrown." I add that it appears indeed that Hezekiah understood it thus, since what the Prophet said did not prevent him from asking God for the restoration of his health, on the contrary it was what most strongly moved him to do so.

But one will say, does it not appear that God conditionally wanted Hezekiah to die, since He had him told in a conditional sense that he would die? I answer that there is no consequence to be drawn from one of these things to the other, and that it is very possible that one adds conditions to things that one absolutely wants to do, especially when one only wants them, because one foresees what will happen.

To avoid being mistaken on this point, one must distinguish four things, which not only are different from each other, but can even be separated: To see the truth of a conditional proposition, to affirm it, to foresee conditionally a future event, and to will it conditionally. Neither the first, nor the second, have anything incompatible with the perfections of God. Some of our Theologians, such as Gomarus, Valæus, and L. Crocius, say the same thing about the third. But the fourth is constantly unworthy of God, there being only the ignorant who can take conditional resolutions.

Be that as it may, all that can be concluded from what I have said, is that God saw the truth of this conditional proposition, "If the order of nature is not changed, Hezekiah will die," and that seeing it He affirmed it. But one cannot conclude from it, neither the third, nor especially the fourth, which is the only one with which we are presently concerned.

CHAPTER VI. That it is astonishing that those who draw these consequences from God's foreknowledge, and from His Decrees, do not draw others, which do not appear less necessary.

IT is therefore certain that God has foreseen the time at which we will die. It is even certain that He has resolved it, and resolved it absolutely, and without condition, and that thus the principles on which the Objection is founded are incontestable. Everything therefore reduces to knowing, on the one hand if the consequences it draws from these principles are necessary results of them, and on the other if they are true in themselves. This is what remains for us to examine.

I say then first of all that it is astonishing that those, who being persuaded that God has foreseen, and resolved the time at which we will die, conclude from this that one can not use remedies, and expose oneself without scruple to the greatest dangers, content themselves with drawing from these principles the few consequences they deduce from them. For after all if these are legitimate, there will be a quantity of others that will be no less so.

If from the fact that God has foreseen, and resolved our death it follows that one can neglect the most necessary remedies, it will follow with the same necessity that one can neglect the use of food. One will be able to say on their subject, as on that of remedies: Whether I take some nourishment, or I take none, I cannot change, either the foreknowledge of God, or His Decrees. Whatever I do, or do not do, I will arrive very certainly at the term that God has marked for me. Thus it is useless for me to eat, or to do anything else whatsoever to make my life last. Let someone find some difference between this reasoning and the Objection. Let someone show in a word that the reasoning being, only a sophism, the Objection must pass for a true demonstration.

I say the same thing of the claim of those who from the fact that the plague is a scourge of the Justice of God conclude that it is not permitted to flee from it, and that one must remain in the places where it does the greatest ravages. It is a scourge of the Justice of God, I admit. But is it the only one? Does one not know that famine, wars, floods are the same? And does one see anyone who has the least scruple about moving away from the places where these last scourges are felt?

When provisions are lacking in a country, does one not transport oneself to another which is provided with them? And is this not what the Holy Patriarchs did several times? When war ravages a province, does one not retire to another, which enjoys all the sweetness, and all the fruits of peace? Does one not do the same thing when one learns that a dike has just been pierced in the neighborhood, and that the sea begins to flood and cover the countryside! Does one see that this vain scruple holds anyone back on these occasions? Does one see that one loses the shortest moments to deliberate on what one should do?

One sees some of those who enter boldly into the houses, and even into the rooms of the plague-stricken, and who to justify their conduct say that if God wants them to die of this disease, He will know how to find them in their houses as well as at the homes of those who are struck by it, and that if He wants them to live still for some time it will be easy for Him to preserve them in the midst of the worst air. All that is true. But is it less true that God if He wishes, cannot prevent us from being consumed in the midst of flames, and from being submerged when the vessel that carries us comes to open, or to sink? Does it follow from this that one should, either enter a house that is already burning, or refuse to leave it when one finds oneself there, or embark on a half-broken vessel, which is leaking on all sides?

In a word if this reasoning is solid, there will be no care that one should take, no means that one should employ, no danger that one should avoid, and against which one should take precautions. Thus it is necessary, either to draw all these consequences from our principles, or not to draw those that are deduced from them, all being equally connected to them, and it not being possible to find any difference.

As therefore there is no one who admits them all, and who does not even positively reject most of them, one must believe one of two things, either that those who want us to regard this reasoning as the expression of their true thought are not acting in good faith, or rather that they do not perceive that there is very little uniformity, and connection, either in their reasoning, or in their conduct. If they had a little more light than they show, they would see without difficulty, that they are very wrong, either in admitting a part of these consequences, or in rejecting the others, since they are all, either equally certain, or equally deceptive.

CHAPTER VII. That nothing is more false in itself than the consequences that are drawn from the Foreknowledge of God, and from His Decrees.

All that is true, someone will perhaps say. One is wrong to separate these consequences, and to reject some while one admits the others. Perhaps one should receive them all, and rest in all sorts of occasions on the care of Providence, without undertaking to add our own. This is what it is fair to examine.

I say then that one cannot even escape this way, and that it is certain that nothing is more legitimate, nothing more necessary than the care, and the precautions, which are represented to us as useless.

Who can doubt, for example, that one should take remedies in illnesses? If remedies were useless, one would have no need of Physicians. For what are Physicians good for if the remedies they prescribe serve for nothing? It is nevertheless true that Physicians are, not only useful, but even necessary in a certain sense, since Jesus Christ says expressly that those who are unwell need their help.

This imagination is also directly opposed to what St. Paul said to the Centurion on the subject of the Sailors, who wanted to abandon the vessel, which carried them, and whose shipwreck was feared. If these, he said to him, do not remain, you cannot save yourselves. What can one imagine more decisive to prove the connection that God has put between the means and the end, and the absolute impossibility of arriving at this end, without employing these means? Does not St. Paul attest very expressly both of these two things, this impossibility, and this connection, by saying not that one will not avoid death, but that one cannot avoid it, if the Sailors withdraw, and by founding on this the advice that he gives to the men of war to prevent it?

Those that I am presently refuting would not have made St. Paul's reasoning in this occasion. Here is what they would have said. Since God has promised us that no one will perish, we can let these coarse and timid people go. Let them flee as much as they please, since they do not have enough faith to remain here. As for us who are instructed quite differently from them about the immutability of God's Decrees, and of the impossibility that there is that they remain without execution, we have no intention of moving.

But St. Paul takes it differently, and however persuaded he is of the power, and of the other perfections of God, he does not fail to maintain that all is lost if the Sailors withdraw.

Solomon says several things in his Proverbs, which strongly prove this truth. Nothing appears more formal to me than these words of Chapter XXIV. I passed by the field of the lazy man, by the vineyard of the man devoid of sense; and behold all of it had grown up in thistles, and nettles had covered the top of it, and their stone fence was demolished: And having seen that, I put it in my heart. I looked at it, I received instruction from it. And in Chap. XII. He who plows the earth will be satisfied with bread, but he who goes with the idle is devoid of sense, and will have his fill of poverty.

I even go further. I maintain that to neglect the ordinary means, in the hope that God will employ extraordinary ones to make up for this defect, is to commit this sin, which Scripture calls Tempting God. This appears by the History of the Temptation of our Savior, where it is said that the Demon having proposed to Him to throw Himself from the top of the battlements of the Temple under the pretext that according to the Prophet God has commanded His Angels to carry us in their hands; and to prevent us from coming to bruise ourselves against the rocks, the Savior of the world answered him, go Satan, for it is written, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

If this answer is just, as one cannot doubt without impiety, it would have been tempting God to do what the Demon proposed. Thus the Demon having proposed only to expose oneself without necessity, and on the hope of an extraordinary help, to a present danger, it is clear that to do this is to tempt God, and that consequently

one makes oneself guilty of this sin every time that in the hope one has that God will guarantee us from loss, one approaches too closely the plague-stricken.

Finally we have the example of the greatest Saints, who seeing themselves threatened with losing their life have neglected nothing to preserve it. Sometimes they have hidden themselves, sometimes they have fled, without anyone having blamed them for it. This is how Moses, David, Elijah, the hundred Prophets that Obadiah hid in two pits, Joseph, the Holy Virgin, Jesus Christ Himself, and St. Paul acted.

Among these examples, each of which has its particular force, there is one, which is worth a Law. It is that of Jesus Christ. This great Savior not only knew that His Father had foreseen, and even fixed by His Decree, the time, the kind, the place, and the other circumstances of His death. He even knew Himself what would be the case, as St. John expressly notes XIII. 1. He even revealed several times to His Disciples what He knew of it. However before this time had come, He did not fail to flee, and to hide Himself when He saw that there were bad designs against Him.

He knew in particular that He was to die, not in Galilee, but in Judea, in Jerusalem. He declared it even more than once. However when attempts were made on His life, not in Jerusalem, but in Galilee, where He knew that He would not die, He withdrew, and hid Himself. He did it in particular when the inhabitants of Nazareth led Him to the edge of a precipice to throw Him there. He was not ignorant that it was impossible for them to execute this barbarous design, and notwithstanding this knowledge, He did not fail to escape from the fury of these impious people.

What more can one wish to know what one should do in these occasions? If someone nevertheless finds that this is not enough, we have an express law that this great Savior has given us on this subject, in the person of His Disciples, when He said to them, If one persecutes you in one city, flee to another. Here is a clear and precise rule, against which there is no speculation that can hold.

CHAPTER VIII. That from the fact that God foresees the time at which we will die, it does not follow at all that we should neglect the care that one believes necessary for the preservation of life.

Those who make this Objection to us only to lead us to abandon the Dogmas of Foreknowledge, and of absolute Decree, will agree without difficulty with what I have just said. They will admit that these consequences are absurd and insupportable. But as they claim that they are necessary, they will maintain that one cannot dispense with admitting them except by disavowing the principles from which they deduce them. One must therefore see if effectively these consequences are as necessary as they claim. This is what the whole difficulty reduces to.

As they are drawn from each of these two articles of our belief, and as each of the two has its difficulties, and requires particular reflections to remove them, it will be

good to consider them separately, and to begin with foreknowledge, on which there are far fewer things to say than on the rest, and which moreover prepares the mind for what we must add.

Here is the difficulty reduced to this first point. One introduces a sick person, who to exempt himself from taking remedies that are proposed to him, says, God has foreseen one of two things, either that I will recover from this illness, or that I will die from it. If He has foreseen that I will recover from it, it is impossible that I die from it, for His foreknowledge is certain and infallible. Thus I will recover, whether I take remedies, or whether I take none. That being the case again, these helps are useless to me, and being such I can do without them without risking anything. I even should do so, for it is common sense to do nothing useless, and superfluous.

If God has foreseen that I will die of this illness, it is impossible that I recover from it, whether by taking remedies, or by not taking any at all. In this supposition therefore they would be useless to me, and being such I risk nothing in not taking any. I can therefore do without taking any, and I even should, for I should do nothing useless.

Here is the difficulty proposed in all its force. Let us examine it presently piece by piece, and let us see in this way if it is as embarrassing as it appears.

The first proposition, which appears so true, may not be. Indeed it is equivocal, susceptible to two different meanings. The first is this, God has foreseen that I will recover, without foreseeing how by what means I will recover, or why it is that I will die. The second is, God has foreseen that I will recover, or that I will die, foreseeing at the same time all that will cause my death, or my recovery.

The first of these two meanings would be troublesome if it were true, but fortunately it is false, and so false, that no one defends it, not even the Socinians. The whole earth agrees that if God foresees the effect, He necessarily sees the causes. Thus it is impossible that He sees that I will recover, without seeing what it is that will cure me. Let us leave therefore this first meaning, and let us attach ourselves only to the second. Let us remember that in saying that God foresees the recovery of a sick person, one understands that He sees at the same time the causes that will produce it; and that being supposed, and well retained, let us see what one must think of the consequences that are drawn from it.

If, one says, God foresees that I will recover, it is impossible that I die, even if I do not take remedies. As it can happen that one recovers in three ways, I. by means of remedies, which are the physical causes of this effect, II. Without any remedy, as happens when one recovers by the sole force of temperament etc. III. By taking useless remedies, and which have no virtue. As moreover in whatever way the thing happens God cannot be ignorant of it, this part of the Objection can have three meanings.

The first is. If God foresees that I will recover by means of remedies, I will not fail to recover even if I take nothing.

The second is, If God foresees that I will recover without taking remedies, I will not fail to recover, even if I take none.

The third is, If God foresees that I will recover by taking remedies, which will contribute nothing to my recovery, I would not fail to recover even if I took none.

I take no interest in the last two of these meanings. I want them to be true, as indeed the second is without difficulty. It will follow from this at most that remedies are useless in these two cases. But it will not follow at all that I should, that I can even, abstain from them. This consequence, I admit, could be good, if I knew what the case is. But as I am ignorant of it, common sense wants me to take them, because it is a constant maxim, that in matters of doubtful things one must always hold to the surest, and that there is ordinarily more safety in taking remedies than in taking none.

Everything therefore reduces to the first meaning, which appears so strange to me, that I do not understand how it is possible to accept it. It supposes that God foresees that we will recover by means of remedies, which implies that we will take some. From this it concludes that it is not only possible, but certain, that we will recover by taking none. But is this reasoning supportable? One supposes that God has foreseen that we will recover by remedies. One persists in this supposition, and far from changing it one builds on it as on a solid foundation. One concludes from it that we will recover by not taking remedies, that is to say by not doing what God has foreseen that we will do.

But does one regard this last fact as possible? Does one believe that it can happen that one does not take remedies at the time when God has foreseen that one will take them? If one believes it, one is very grossly mistaken, for if that could happen, it could happen that God would be mistaken. And if one does not believe it, what is one thinking in trying to make us afraid of a thing that one admits cannot happen!

But let us imagine that these two things, the foreknowledge of the use that we will make of remedies, and the actual refusal that we will make to use them, can subsist together. By what right will one conclude one from the other? In what new Logic unknown to the rest of men, does it follow that one should recover without remedies, from the fact that God foresees that we will recover by remedies? Is it not very possible that God sees at the same time these two things? one that we will recover by remedies; the other that we would not recover if we did not take them.

Cannot one say that He sees it every time that the general Laws equally demand one and the other, and that He does not find it appropriate to suspend their observation? Who has told the sick person to whom one makes this reasoning, that he is not precisely in this case?

This first branch of the Dilemma therefore has no difficulty. I say the same thing of the second. If God has foreseen that I will die, it is impossible that I recover, even by taking the best remedies. That is equivocal. I can die by taking remedies, and by not taking any. It can even happen that being able to recover with the help of remedies, I die, because I refuse to take any.

When therefore I say, If God has foreseen that I will die, it is impossible that I recover, the meaning of the Antecedent can be double. I can understand that God foresees that I will die, notwithstanding the remedies that I will take. I can also understand that God foresees that I will die, because He sees that I will not take remedies.

If I understand it in the second of these meanings, I reason badly. For how can one imagine that from the fact that God sees that I will die, because I will not take remedies, it follows that I would not fail to die, even if I took all those that will be prescribed to me? It is more natural to conclude the complete opposite, and this is what is done every day. Thus from the fact that Scripture tells us that we will die because we are sinners, one concludes that we would be immortal if we were perfectly innocent.

If I understand it in the first meaning, and my thought is that God foresees that I will die notwithstanding the remedies that I will be able to take, it is indeed true that in this supposition these remedies are useless to me. But it is not true that in taking them I act against common sense. I would do so, I admit, if I knew that they should serve me for nothing. But being ignorant of it, prudence wants me to use them for the reason that I have indicated, and that it is not necessary to repeat.

Thus this Objection has several defects. It separates the things most closely united and associates the most opposed. It affirms absolutely, and without distinction what is true only in certain cases, and in certain respects. It draws from the principles that it posits consequences that have no connection with them, that even reverse them, and are directly opposed to them. It reasons on suppositions, not only false, but even impossible and contradictory. All these defects being found in this Objection, each one can judge of the regard that one should have for it.

CHAPTER IX. Uselessness of the first Response that one opposes to this Objection

I will not dwell any longer on Foreknowledge. I come to the principal, which is the Decree. This is what makes the strength of the Objection. Indeed Foreknowledge gives rise only to a subsequent necessity, which has nothing opposed to freedom. But the Decree gives to its objects an antecedent necessity, which appears contrary to this privilege.

Even if it were only a simple conditional Decree one could extricate oneself without much difficulty from the difficulties that one would find in it. But we have seen that

it is an absolute Decree, immutable, irrevocable, and necessarily followed by execution. How therefore while admitting such a Decree can one respond to this difficulty?

Some have imagined being able to do it, by saying that as the use of means is necessary to arrive at the end, it is to attempt the impossible to claim to go to the end without employing the means. One adds that this necessity being the effect of the Will of God, it is to rise against this first principle of all things, it is to undertake to overturn the order that He has established, to separate what He has so closely joined.

But to say this is not to respond. It is only to oppose Objection to Objection. It is to say that the consequence that one draws from the Decrees of God is false, and absurd, but it is not to show that it has no connection with the principle from which one infers it.

Moreover even if this response, if one can give it this name, could be of some use to disabuse these simple and crude minds who believe in good faith that it is to show more respect for Providence to expect that it will do everything, without acting on our side, it would not fail to be absolutely useless with respect to the second order of Adversaries who make this objection to us.

I said in Chapter II that most of those who make it, do not claim that the conclusion of it is true. They maintain on the contrary that it is very false, that it is even pernicious. They claim only that it is a necessary and inseparable consequence of what we believe concerning the absolute Decree, and from this they conclude that what we believe concerning this Decree must be false, since the consequences of it are so absurd.

Thus it is one of these arguments that Logicians call *Ab absurdo*, and which are never more striking than when the absurdity, to which they lead, is the most shocking. Here is their thought proposed a little more distinctly. One must reject the Dogma of the absolute Decree as false, and invented improperly by rash minds, if it is true that one can deduce from it in a certain and incontestable manner absurdities that nothing can soften. It is nevertheless true that this can be done. For is it not an insupportable absurdity to maintain that one can neglect the means when one wants to arrive at an end? This is nevertheless a necessary consequence of the absolute Decree. For if God has absolutely resolved the end, we will not fail to arrive at it, even if we neglect the means.

The difficulty being thus proposed one sees well that the response that I have just indicated, far from removing it, confirms it, since it only tends to make one feel in a more lively way the absurdity of the consequence, which makes all the force of the objection.

Someone will perhaps say that this reply does not absolutely destroy the response. For, one will say, I want the absolute Decree, conceived as one wishes, to induce

necessarily that if the end has been resolved, one will not fail to arrive at it, even if one neglects the means. What can one conclude from it? At most that the interest that we have in obtaining the end will not oblige us to employ the means. But does it follow from this that it is permitted for us to neglect these means?

This consequence could be just, if interest were the only motive that should lead us to act: But who does not know that this motive, far from being the only legitimate one, is not even the principal one? Who does not know that it is not comparable to that of duty? Thus duty obliging us to remain in the order that God has established, we must employ the means, even if we know that we can obtain the end without using them.

All that appears certain to me, and I have no intention of contesting it. I say only that in reducing the response to the meaning that I have just given it, one puts it in a state of not absolutely removing the difficulty. I want indeed that the doctrine of the absolute Decree, in whatever way one conceives it, leaves the motive of duty in all its force. Is it not enough to make it more than suspect to admit that it annihilates that of interest?

This second motive, although less considerable than the first does not fail to be so a lot. It is moreover one of the two that God proposes to us, witness the fifth commandment, which gives hope of a long life to submissive and respectful children. It is even the only one that St. Paul proposes to the Captain of the vessel, and to his Soldiers. Who can after that doubt that it is good and legitimate?

That being the case one can conceive the Objection in such a way, that it will be absolutely sheltered from this response. One has only to say, Any doctrine that annihilates even one of the legitimate motives, which lead us to do what God wants, is thereby pernicious, even if it will let the others subsist. Now this is the effect of the absolute Decree. It annihilates the motive of interest, which leads us to do what God wants, I mean to take remedies when one is sick, and in general to do all that one can to preserve one's health and one's life. It is therefore a false and pernicious dogma, and the fact that it leaves the other motives subsisting does not prevent it from being so.

It is clear that the response that one makes does not touch the objection thus proposed. It therefore does not remove the difficulty, and does not exempt us from the necessity of seeking another one that fully satisfies the mind.

CHAPTER X. Where another Response is examined.

There are Authors who respond quite differently, but their Response has the same defect as the preceding one. They say that there is a double Will of God, one hidden, the other revealed, and that it is not by the first, but by the second, that one should conduct oneself. They prove it by this example. A good child, who sees his Father sick, asks God that it please Him to heal him, and this prayer is undoubtedly good

and praiseworthy. However, it is perhaps contrary to the hidden Will, which has resolved to terminate the life of this man. But as it is conformable to the revealed Will, that suffices to make it so that there is nothing to say.

This response has the same defect as the preceding one. It defends itself on right, at the time when the attack has as its subject only fact. It maintains that one is wrong to conduct oneself by the hidden Will. Let that be, will say the Authors of the Objection. That one sins in acting in this way. That this sin even be as black, and as crying as one will wish. What will happen? Will one die a moment sooner than one would have died in reasoning differently? If that is so, the difficulty returns. This sin at least will be able to prevent the execution of the Decrees of God, which is absurd. And moreover if this sin has this effect, why will others, which are not less, which are even incomparably greater, not have the same power?

If that is not so, there is nothing to oppose to the Objection, such as I proposed it at the end of the preceding chapter. It will always be true to say that although our doctrine lets subsist the motive of duty, which leads us to take care of the preservation of our life, it annihilates that which is born from the consideration of the interest that we have in it, which suffices to make it more than suspect.

I add that the Will of God on this point is not absolutely hidden, and in every sense. I admit that a sick person usually does not know whether he will die of this illness, or whether he will recover. But he does not fail to know two things. One is that one, or the other, of these two events is inevitable. The other is that whichever of the two must happen, all that he can do to recover is useless, at least in this supposition. Now it is beyond doubt that that suffices to make one not act, as appears by these three examples.

A son who has just lost his Father, does not know what has been his fate. He does not know if this Father is saved, or if he is damned. He knows only two things, one that it is one or the other, the other that whichever of the two is true, all that he could do in this regard would be useless. That suffices to prevent him from giving himself in this respect any movement. That at least is what Protestants will admit to me, which suffices for me.

A pregnant woman, ready to give birth, knows with certainty that the child she hopes to bring into the world will be a boy, or a girl, but she does not know which of the two it will be. It would be important to her that it be a boy. One can imagine a hundred reasons that make her wish for it. But when these reasons would be a thousand times stronger, if she is wise, she will do nothing so that her wishes be fulfilled, and will not even ask anything of God in this respect, because she regards the thing as certain and determined, although she does not know in what way it is.

There are moments when those who play certain games know with certainty that they have won, or lost, without knowing which of the two it is. Would one advise them to do the slightest thing to make it so that it is the first that happens, and not the second?

It is the same in this occasion. The sick person knows that he will die, or that he will recover, although he does not know which of the two it should be. He knows that whatever it is that God has resolved, he could not change the Decree that God has made of it, nor prevent its execution. Is it not therefore useless that he works at it?

Thus this second response removes the difficulty just as little as the first.

One makes a third, which is very ordinary. But as it supposes the System of Supralapsarian Predeterminants, it is not yet time to examine it. Its turn will come in the sequel.

CHAPTER XI. That to properly remove the proposed difficulty one must know of what order is the Decree, by which God has determined the time at which we will die. Various orders of God's Decrees.

I am persuaded that there is only one way to fully resolve this Objection. It is to form a clear and precise idea of the nature of the Decree by which God has fixed and determined the time, and the kind of our death, and to properly disentangle the various meanings, in which one can imagine that this was done.

Most recognize only a single species of these Decrees, which are called absolute, and whose essence consists in not depending on any condition. But it is certain that there are more, which can be arranged diversely, and which it is important to distinguish well, to know exactly to which of these species one must refer the particular Decree, which is presently in question.

One can say in general that there are two principal orders of absolute Decrees. Some are founded on the foresight of what men will freely do. The others precede all foresight.

The Decree, by which God resolved to send His Son into the world was of the first order, for He formed this design only because He foresaw sin and its consequences, and because He wanted to remedy it.

The Decree of Creation was of the second order. As nothing preceded this work, the foresight of anything whatsoever did not give birth to the design of it.

The Decrees of the second order are subdivided again in another way. There are those that resolve equally the causes and the effects; the end and the means; the event, and what contributes to making it happen. And such was the Decree of Creation, which resolving to put the world in the state where we see it, resolved at the same time all the particular actions that were necessary for this effect.

The others resolve only the end, and leave us complete freedom for the means, God, who forms them reserving only to make our care, our efforts, and our labors effective, or ineffective, according as they will agree, or will not agree with His designs. Such was the Decree by which God resolved to no longer send a general

Flood after the first, and which will be executed whatever it is that men do, or do not do.

Here then, all considered, are up to three different orders of Decrees, and which one should all regard as absolute. The first are founded on foresight. The second precede it, and resolve the means with the end. The third precede foresight like the second, but resolve only the end alone.

One could perhaps imagine a fourth, which would include that species of Decrees, which no other reason leads to make, than the sole design of exercising, or at most of showing the supreme and independent power of the God who forms them. But as one doubts with reason if there are such, as it is certain besides that the one that has determined the time of our death is not of this order, and that even if it were this consideration would serve neither to remove the difficulty, nor to increase it, I am persuaded that the best is not to dwell on it, and to content oneself with the three other species that I have indicated, and which have a quite different relationship to this Objection.

I say then first of all that these three orders of Decrees are very distinct from each other, and that it is difficult to imagine a grosser error than that of confusing them.

What is more distinct, for example, than the Decrees of the first and second order? Those of the first are founded on the foresight of men's actions, and those of the second precede it. In the first these actions serve as moral or occasional causes, and in the second as means.

If the Decree, by which God resolved the subversion of Sodom was of the first order, He resolved it because He foresaw the crimes of these impious people. If it was of the second, He resolved these crimes, because He wanted to make perish those who committed them.

What is likewise more distinct than the Decrees of the second order, and those of the third? Those of the second resolve equally the end and the means, and make this end, and these means equally certain, and unailing. On the contrary those of the third resolve only the end, and leave complete freedom for the means.

For example a man will enter the room of a plague-stricken person, will catch his disease, and will die of it. What should one conclude from this? If one admits only the first of these three Decrees, one will say that this man died because he rashly exposed himself to this great danger, and that God did not find it appropriate to suspend the observation of the general laws to preserve him despite himself.

If one posits the second one will say that this man entered this house, caught the plague, and died of it, because God who wanted all that to happen, determined him invincibly to all by this species of operation, which is called Physical Premotion.

If one posits the third one will say that this man died, not because he entered this house, but because God wanted him to die, and that he entered it, being able to prevent himself from doing so if he had wanted to, because it pleased him to do it.

The Infralapsarians will be content with the first of these Decrees. The Supralapsarians will declare for the second. The Turks, and some poorly instructed Christians, will accommodate themselves to the third. This is also what should be attributed to them, and not impute to the first the sentiments of the second, nor to the second those of the third, as is ordinarily done.

But what it is important above all to take good note of, is that the judgment that one should make of the strength, or of the weakness of the Objection depends uniquely on knowing of which of these orders one wants the Decree that God has made concerning our death to be.

Indeed if it is of the last, the Objection is insoluble, and should pass for a true Demonstration. If it is of the second, the Objection falls in truth, but there arise from it others much more troublesome. If it is of the first, the Objection is fully resolved, and the mind has reason to be satisfied. This is what one must try to prove, and to which one will apply oneself in the rest of this first Part.

CHAPTER XII. That if the Decree concerning our death were of the third order, the Objection would be insoluble, but that it is not of this order.

I will begin by comparing the Objection with the last of these views, because it is the one that will occupy us the least. Indeed it does not take great research to perceive its falsity. One can say that it jumps to the eyes. It contains two propositions.

One is that we are masters of this sort of actions, that we regard as suitable for lengthening and shortening life, that we can for example take remedies, or take none, move away from places infected with plague, or remain in them, enter the houses, even the rooms of the plague-stricken, or remain at home, so that in this respect we have this freedom, which is called indifference, and we have it even in all its extent.

The other is that it is not the same with the time, or the kind of our death. Both have been fixed by an antecedent Decree, which will be infallibly executed, whatever it is that we may be able to do, or not do.

When, for example, the Sultan dissuaded Busbecq from leaving Constantinople, he did not doubt that this Ambassador had the power to remain in this city, or to leave it, as he pleased. If he had not believed it, he would not have amused himself by making to him, to retain him, all the reasoning that I have reported; and moreover in the very time that he was making them to him he was granting him permission to retire wherever he pleased. But he believed that if this Minister was to die of plague, he would die from it just as well in the Island, where he intended to take refuge, as in Constantinople; and that if God wanted him to live, he would live just as well in Constantinople as elsewhere.

Likewise those who enter the houses of the plague-stricken do not doubt that it is in their power not to enter them. They believe only that it does not depend on them to avoid the plague and death, if God wants this disease to carry them off. Thus they believe that God's Decree decides only what must happen to us, and not what we must do, in a word that we are free in this second respect, and not in the first.

If this view were true, it must be admitted that the consequence that is drawn from it could not be rejected. In this supposition we can do what we please, without our actions preventing the resolution of God from being executed. Thus, considering only success alone, and leaving aside all the rest, it is indifferent to take care of our health and of our life, or to take none of it, to use remedies, or to neglect their use, to try to flee dangers, or to throw ourselves into them. All that will not change anything in what must happen to us, and in a word only what God has resolved will happen.

But also on the other hand is one quite sure that that is true? Is all that evident? And how could it be, since all Christians reject it? What could this evidence be that no one would perceive?

Not being evident, is it well proved? And where are those who have, I will not say done so, but merely undertaken it? Is it finally our view? It is so little so, that Voetius and Mr. Turretin maintain that there has never been a single one of our Theologians who has approved it.

That being the case, what more contemptible than an Objection founded on a supposition, which is neither evident, nor proved, nor avowed?

But that is not all. One can prove directly the falsity of this supposition, or better said I have already done it in Chapter III, there being nothing in that place which does not have this effect.

One can add that this supposition overturns all the general laws, both natural, and supernatural. For after all these laws consist only in the association that God has made of certain actions with certain effects, wanting these effects to be produced every time that these actions come to be done. What will become of these laws, if these actions being done, the effects do not follow them, or if the effects being produced, the actions had not preceded them?

One will say that God is above the laws, and that He derogates from them when it pleases Him. He derogates from them when it pleases Him, I admit, but not when it pleases men, as will happen if what is said to us is true. In supposing it it will be true to say that Providence is subjected to our caprice, and that one forces it to suspend the observation of its laws, every time that it pleases us to do something which of itself is suitable for preventing the execution of what it has resolved. That is absurd, but it is the consequence of this hypothesis.

But here is something more pressing. God declares in various places of the sacred Writings that piety prolongs our days, and that crime shortens them. What truth will

there be in these two maxims, if independently of all that we will be able to do, or not do, the time of our death has been fixed and determined by Decrees which precede all foresight?

What will there be still less true than what Jesus Christ says in the Gospel? He assures that Sodom would have subsisted until the moment that he was speaking, if it had seen the miracles that he had done in Capernaum. How could he have said it, if the destiny of this unhappy city had had no connection with the actions of its inhabitants, and if being able to act well and badly, they could not prevent the Decree of God, which condemned them to death, from being executed?

CHAPTER XIII. Where the manner in which our days are counted according to those Theologians, who are called Predeterminants, is expounded. Response that they make to the Objection.

The defenders of what is called physical Premotion conceive the thing quite differently from the preceding ones. Here approximately is what their view reduces to.

They hold that God has fixed the time, and the kind of our death by a Decree so absolute, that not only does it exclude all condition, but it even precedes all foresight of what we can do, or neglect, either to lengthen our life, or to shorten it.

It is not that they do not recognize that there is a very close connection between our actions, and the time at which we die. But it is that they give to all these actions, and generally to all that has some efficacy, and some power for making us die precisely in the time that God has marked, not the name, and the quality of motives, of reasons, or of occasional causes, which make in their way God will that we die at such, or such a time, but only the name and the quality of means, which He finds it appropriate to use to make what He has resolved be executed.

They say that God in resolving the end resolves also the means; that for example in resolving the recovery of Hezekiah, He resolved that it would be produced by the plaster of dried figs, which was applied to his ulcer.

That is not all. God according to them does not content Himself with resolving, either the means, or the end. He also executes the whole in time, and does it by a positive action of His power, which they call physical Premotion, and which determines invincibly men, and the other intelligent Beings, to all that can contribute to making His designs succeed.

It is thereby also that they respond to the Objection which is the matter of this Writing. This Objection consists, as has been seen, in saying that if God has determinately resolved the time, and the other circumstances of our death, it is impossible that we not die at the precise moment, that His Decree has marked, and that this once posited nothing will be more useless, nor consequently less judicious, than to work to lengthen our life, and to avoid what could hasten our death, since

whether one does it, or whether one does not do it, the Decree of God will be executed, and in this way our death will be neither more prompt, nor more tardy.

The Predeterminants respond that this Objection is founded only on an impossible supposition, namely that it can happen that we do not do what God has resolved that we will do, and by means of which He wants to lengthen, or shorten our life. They say that this part of the Decree which has resolved the means, being neither less irrevocable, nor less efficacious, than that which has determined the end, if this one is executed, the other could not remain without execution, and that thus to say that although God had resolved, for example, that Hezekiah would recover, this Prince could not apply the plaster which was to effect his recovery, is to say the most false and most absurd thing in the world, since if God had resolved that Hezekiah would recover by the use of this remedy, it was equally impossible that he would die, and that this remedy would not be applied to him.

It is true that this response has all the appearance of a subterfuge, and even of a subterfuge of very little use. It seems that moving the difficulty only one step, it lets it return immediately with as much, or more, force than before. For if the means are determined as irrevocably as the end, and if whatever we may want, they must be infallibly put into operation, it seems that we should concern ourselves as little about them as about the end, since whether we hasten to employ them, or whether we neglect them, if they have been resolved by God, they cannot fail to be put into operation at the precise time that He has determined.

But the Predeterminants do not fail to respond that if the means are of such a nature, that their use depends on our will, as happens quite often, God in resolving them, resolves, not only that we will employ them, but also that we will want to employ them. That is not all. He determines by His Decree, and subsequently by His Premotion, the precise degree of ardor and eagerness, with which we will want to use them.

From this they conclude that one supposes falsely when one supposes that it can happen that we neglect what God has resolved that we will do. On the contrary, they say, God having resolved everything without exception, the end, the means, the use of these means, the will, the desire even to use them, the precise degree of ardor and eagerness, with which this will will be led to employ them, the motives, the thoughts that will give birth to this will, the occasions that will inspire these thoughts, and generally all that must contribute to it directly, or indirectly, one must suppose that all that is equally necessary and inevitable, and there is something absurd and ridiculous, in supposing one part of it, without joining to it the rest, which cannot be separated from it.

I have been very glad to report thus at length this last response, because it reveals to us the foundation of the system, and thereby gives us the means of refuting it strongly, and of making felt its falsity and absurdity. This is what I will begin to work on in the following chapter.

CHAPTER XIV. Where that part of the response indicated in the preceding Chapter, which concerns the moral causes of our death is examined.

It is important before all things to note that there are two sorts of causes that make us die at a certain time rather than at another, the Physical, and the Moral. The physical ones are those that produce this effect by themselves, and by their own virtue, such as, for example, illnesses, wounds, poisons, shipwrecks, etc. The moral ones are those which not producing this effect by themselves make in their way God produce them. Such are prayers, and the rest of good works, which sometimes lengthen life, and such sins which shorten it.

The objection has the same force on these two orders of causes. For if God's Decree authorizes us to neglect remedies, which are physical causes, it will also authorize us to neglect good works, which are moral causes, and what is more dreadful, to engage in the most enormous excesses. This was also the use that we have seen being made of it by this Landgrave of Thuringia of whom I have spoken. For when he was told that it was not possible that he would not perish unhappily by continuing to live as he lived, he responded that this tragic death, with which he was threatened, did not make him afraid, being persuaded, as he was, that only what God had resolved would happen to him.

Each one sees that this second part of the objection contains what is most inconvenient, because the consequence that it draws is the one that should cause the most horror. Indeed if one succumbs under the weight of the first part, if one admits the consequence that is drawn from it, and if in conforming to it in practice one refuses to take remedies in illnesses. What will happen? At most one will hasten death by some miserable year. This even is not very certain. For how many sick people are there not who recover without any remedy? And how many who taking remedies do not fail to die?

But if one gives in to the second part of the objection. What will result from it is that one will no longer do good works, and thereby one will be lost. That is not all. One will engage in the most enormous excesses and thereby one will distinguish oneself from the common run of the damned, and one will become one of the most unhappy victims of celestial vengeance.

That being the case I ask the Authors of this response what is the use that they want to make of it? Do they claim to apply it equally to the two parts of the objection? or do they want to use it only for the first?

If it is the second they strain out the gnat, and swallow the camel. They get up in arms against what is lightest in the attack that one makes on them, and remain without defense against what is most formidable.

If it is the first, they say in obscure terms the most dreadful thing in the world, and which would give the most horror and aversion if one expressed it clearly. Indeed to say that God resolving the death of someone resolves first the end, and then the means, particularly the moral ones, is to say that before anything else, and without being moved to it by any sin that He foresees in this man, He resolves to make him die, and to be able to do it with justice, He resolves to determine him to commit the particular sin which best merits this punishment.

For example on the subject of Sodom, God began by resolving to make perish by fire from heaven the inhabitants of this city, and of the others in the vicinity. And as He wanted this extraordinary accident, to be a visible execution of His justice, and consequently the punishment of some enormous sin, He determined with this design all these wretches to commit the horrors which are reported in the sacred History.

I say the same thing of Judas. Before anything else He resolved that this unhappy man would strangle himself. To lead him to it He inspired in him all the despair necessary to resolve him to such an excess of fury. But that is not all. As this despair came only from the crime that he had committed in betraying his good Master, this crime itself was a consequence and an effect of the design that God had formed concerning the tragic end, that this wretch was to make.

Thus instead of the whole human race having always believed, and Scripture having attested a thousand times, that God punishes men only because they are wicked, it will be necessary to say on the contrary that they are wicked, only because God absolutely wants to punish them. Thus instead of having believed with St. Augustine that there is this difference between good and evil, that whereas for the first the Will of the Creator always precedes that of the creature, for the second on the contrary the will of the creature always goes before that of its Creator, it will be necessary to say, that whether in good, or in evil, the will of the Creator is always the cause, the principle, and the origin of the one and the other.

It is not at all necessary to draw consequences from all this to give horror of it. It suffices to consider it such as it is in itself. That alone is more than sufficient to distance from it all those whose mind preserves some freedom, and nothing proves to me so strongly the force of prejudices, and the weakness of Reason than to see that a great number of Theologians of an elevated genius, and of a distinguished piety, have been able to digest dogmas as harsh, as strange and as shocking as these.

I do not even know what consequence can appear absurd to those who can accept the principle. I except one, which everyone detests, and which is born from it in a way so natural, so perceptible, so immediate, that I do not understand how one can reject it, while admitting the dogma and the response that I am examining. It is that all that makes God the author of sin. This appears to me incontestable.

For finally how could God be in a more proper, and more literal way, the author of men's sins, than by determining them to it by an operation so powerful, that it is not

in the power of any of the creatures to resist it: but that is not all, than by determining them to it voluntarily, and if I dare say it, with premeditation, because He wants to make use of these sins, to which He moves them, to succeed in the design that He has formed of making them perish in such and such a way, without when He conceived it He perceived anything in them that merited such a treatment?

There will even be this particular thing in taking it in this way, that one will not be able to use here the response that one ordinarily makes. One will not be able to say that God is the author only of the material of sin, that is to say of the substance of the act. On the contrary He will be principally of the formal, and of the malice of the action. The reason is that it is not the material of the action that produces the effect that God proposes as a goal, but the formal alone. For in the way that we are now considering sin hastens death only by meriting this punishment, and by provoking the anger of God against the guilty one who commits it. And who does not see that it is the formal, that it is the malice of the action, that has this effect? Who does not see that if it were possible to separate these two things, the substance of the act without the malice would not provoke the anger of God, and consequently would not hasten the death of the sinner?

To make this more perceptible I make a Dilemma of it. Either what hastens the death of the sinner is the material of the action, or it is the formal. If it is the material, Therefore this material itself is morally bad, for it is only moral evil, only sin, that provokes the anger of God, and that draws His punishment. Thus God being the author of the material, He is the author of sin.

If it is the formal, Therefore it is the formal that God resolves, that He wants, and that He uses as a means proper and useful to arrive at His end. It is therefore of the formal that He will be the author.

One tells us that when God wants the end, He wants also the means, and that thus when He wants a sinner to die at a certain time, He wants this sinner to do all that can contribute to making this design succeed. Nothing contributes to it more than the malice of his actions. It is therefore this malice that God resolves, it is it that He wants, it is to it that He determines. Thus what one tells us that it is to the material alone that God determines, that it is this material alone that He wants, that He resolves, is not true in this hypothesis.

CHAPTER XV. Response to an objection taken from what is said of Eli's children I. Sam. II. 25.

ONE opposes to what I have just said a passage of Scripture, which is claimed to be decisive. It is the one found in the I. Book of Samuel, which informs us that Eli's children did not profit from the reprimands of their Father, because God wanted to put them to death. There, one says, is an antecedent Decree, and executed by a positive act of the Justice of God, which blinds these wretches, which hardens them, and prevents them from deferring to the salutary advice which is given to them.

I could respond that the terms of the original can be translated naturally, and without violence, by saying that these young men did not listen to the voice of their Father, and that it was for this reason that God resolved to put them to death. One can see the reasons in Poole's Synopsis on this passage.

But leaving all this aside, and holding to our version, I say that these words have nothing, I will not say that proves demonstratively what is claimed but that induces it with even a little plausibility. In order for them to have this effect, they would have to convey two things. One is that God by a positive action of His power prevented Eli's children from deferring to the exhortations of their Father. The other is that the Will by which God was moved to act in this way, was an antecedent will, and which preceded the foresight of their impiety. Now it is obvious that these words of the sacred Author say neither one nor the other of these two things.

For as to the first, one sees well that the expression of this holy Author is an abbreviated expression, which suppresses a part of what it would have been necessary to say to explain in our way, and which it is necessary to add if one wants to convey his whole thought. This is what can be done in two ways. One is this, Eli's children did not obey the voice of their Father, because God, who wanted to put them to death, prevented them from having regard for it. The other is this, Eli's children did not obey the voice of their Father, because God, who wanted to put them to death, did not give them the grace to submit to it.

One will admit to me that these two ways of supplying what is suppressed are equally natural, and that in particular the text has nothing that obliges us to prefer the first. Now that suffices to destroy the proof that one draws from it. For what will become of this proof if all its force depends on a proposition that one cannot prove?

That alone puts us in the right to despise it. But I add that what one supposes in this way is not at all plausible, and is even directly opposed to our belief. Indeed to say that God prevented Eli's children from profiting from the reprimands of their father, is to say that they would have profited from them if God had left them the Freedom to do what they pleased. It is to say that of themselves they were inclined to good, but that God determined them powerfully to evil. But is this what we believe? Do we not believe that since sin our whole inclination carries us to evil, and that as our Liturgy says, we are inclined to do evil, and useless for all good?

Is this besides the idea that Scripture gives us of these unhappy ones? Does it not represent them to us as impious people, who engage without shame in the most enormous excesses? What then, will such monsters be incapable of neglecting the warnings of an indulgent Father, if God does not determine them to it by an immediate operation of His power? Can one say anything more opposed to the truth?

This also makes all our Interpreters prefer the second meaning, and say that all that God did on this occasion, is that He abandoned these wretches to their own inclination, and did not give them the grace to profit from Eli's reprimands. This is

what can be seen in all our Bibles. That of Geneva puts this Note in the margin of these words, That is to say not giving them the grace to come to repentance, but abandoning them more and more to their bad course. That of Diodati, He wanted them, that is to say He had made an irrevocable decree of it, and therefore did not give them the Spirit of repentance (and of submission) to the wishes of their Father. I add these words, And of submission, which the Copyist has omitted, and which are necessary to make good sense. That of Des Marests, God did not give them the grace to convert to the admonitions of their Father, because they had rendered themselves unworthy of it, that their measure was full, and that having decided to punish them for their crimes, He justly abandoned them, and delivered them by a secret judgment to a spirit devoid of intelligence, etc. That of Mr. Martin. That is to say that God having resolved their death did not want to give them the grace to profit from the exhortations of their Father, for if they had profited from them, they would not have been punished. The Flemish one says the same thing in a Note that I had explained to me, and of which I understand that that of Mr. Des Marests is only the Version.

Strangius extends himself enough on this in *De Volunt. Dei Lib. IV. cap. 6*. He says that it is ordinary to attribute events, not only to the cause that produces them, but also to the absence of what could prevent them. It was in this sense that Martha said to Jesus Christ, Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. It is thus that we say every day speaking of a man dead of his wounds, and who had no help, that he died because he had no one to help him. The true cause of his death is his wounds. But as his wounds could have healed if he had had a skilled Surgeon to treat him, one attributes his death to this lack of help, which did not produce it to speak properly and exactly, but the contrary of which would have prevented it.

I come now to the second proposition, which holds that the resolution that God took to put these people to death was an antecedent resolution. This proposition is equivocal. One could admit it if one understands that the resolution that God had taken to put these two scoundrels to death, had preceded the foresight of the contempt they had for the warnings of their Father. But one can only reject it if one understands that it preceded the foresight of the other sins that had preceded this one.

Here indeed is the order in which the sacred History reports this event. It says first that Eli's children were impious people who engaged without shame in the most enormous excesses. It even specifies these excesses, and adds that God not being able to suffer them any longer resolved to put them to death, and that this resolution made them not listen to the voice of their Father.

Thus this text does not prove at all that God first resolved the death of these wretches, and that to be able to execute this decree, He led them to commit the infamies that are reported in the sacred History, nor prevented them from profiting from the exhortations of their Father; but only that He did not give them the grace

to profit from them, because He wanted to punish them for the first sins they had committed, and which deserved the most rigorous punishments.

CHAPTER XVI. Particular reflections on the physical causes that make us die at a certain time

I WILL not dwell any longer on this order of causes which making us die at a certain time rather than at another, only do so morally. I pass to those that produce this effect by a physical efficacy. These again are of two orders. Some are destitute of reason and freedom, such as poisons, foods, remedies, etc. The others are free and intelligent, such as men.

Indeed these men sometimes lengthen, sometimes shorten, either their own life, or that of their neighbors, and do so principally by applying the blind and natural causes, of which I have spoken. Thus one lengthens the life of a man by making him take remedies, or foods, by defending him against an enemy, by drawing him out of a danger, etc. And one shortens it by poisoning him, by stabbing him, etc.

The partisans of physical Premotion give to the causes of these two orders the name and the quality of means, which God chooses, and which He uses to make us die at the time that it has pleased Him to assign to us. So that if, for example, Cain massacred the innocent Abel, if Ahithophel, if Judas strangled themselves with their own hands, it was because God inspired them with the thought, the design and the will, that He pushed and determined their mind, their heart, and their hand, to do these actions.

This view appears dreadful to me, and nothing indeed is easier, nothing more natural than to conclude from it that in this account God will be the true author of this sort of great sins. It is true that the Predeterminants do not admit this consequence; but it is also true that it is easy to prove it, and to annihilate all that is employed to show that it is not necessary. I will not undertake it presently, however, because it is difficult to do it without entering into great discussions, which are not of this place. But I propose to make it the subject of a particular Dissertation, which will be found at the end of this volume, and where I hope to put this truth in its light.

Leaving therefore intelligent causes, I reduce myself to those that act without freedom, and without knowledge, principally to remedies, which are perhaps the first subject that gave rise to the difficulty. One asks if at least the use of these remedies, and the refusal that one makes to use them, are not means which God uses to lengthen, and to shorten our life.

To this I respond first of all that this is what one cannot say when this use and this refusal have something criminal about them, as can happen very easily. For example many people get drunk to free themselves from certain discomforts; and no one is ignorant of what Justin tells us of this Prince, who was cured only by an incest, of an illness that was believed mortal.

I say roughly the same thing of the refusal one makes to use remedies. This refusal is very often criminal. It sometimes comes from pure despair, and from an absolute and determined will to die; sometimes from an insupportable delicacy, and at other times from an avarice carried to such an excess, that one prefers to let oneself die, than to make the necessary expense to have oneself treated as one should.

In all these occasions I maintain that neither such a use of remedies, nor such a refusal to use them, could be means, which God uses, either to lengthen life, or to shorten it. If they were God would be the true author of the evil there is in the one and in the other, which one must be very careful not to admit.

I say the same thing of the most innocent errors, when they produce the same effects. For example a Physician can be mistaken in the discernment of an illness, and that being the case it can happen that he treats it badly. Even when he knows the nature and the causes of the illness, he can be mistaken in the choice of remedies that he orders to cure it. If he falls into this error, he can easily kill this patient while imagining relieving him.

I maintain that God is just as little the cause of these errors, as of the sins of which I have spoken. It is no less unworthy of Him to deceive men, than to make them wicked, and all that one can say in these occasions, is that He permits these errors, but not that He ever throws anyone into them. These are consequences of the infirmity and of the ignorance, so natural to men since sin, and not works of the hand of God, or objects of His will.

Thus the question reduces to knowing if when there is no crime, either in the use of remedies, or in the refusal to use them, one can say that neither the one, nor the other, happens except because God has willed it, in consequence of the resolution that He has taken to make one die at such a moment, and of such a kind of death.

To say the same thing in another way it is only a question of knowing if every time that remedies have cured a patient it is true to say that this patient has taken these remedies only because God has willed it, and that God has willed it, only because He wanted this patient to recover.

To this I respond two things. The first is that I do not doubt at all that this happens sometimes, even quite often. One sees it in particular in the example of Hezekiah, who applied to his ulcer the plaster of dried figs, which cured him, only because God ordered him to do so, and to whom God ordered it only because He wanted to cure him. This is also what one supposes when one asks God that it please Him to bless the remedies that one is going to take.

But I add secondly that this, although quite frequent, is not perpetual. It can happen that the patient does not take the remedies that will cure him, because God has resolved that he recover, but that God has resolved that this patient recover because He has foreseen that he would take the remedies that have cured him.

My meaning is that, as one will see in the sequel, it suffices that an event is a natural consequence of the general laws, to make God will that it happen; otherwise these general laws would be nothing. Thus the general laws establishing man as master of most of his actions, it suffices that this man is moved by his own choice to take a remedy, and that this remedy is proper to effect his recovery, to make God will that he recover. And one cannot doubt that this happens every time that God does not have particular reasons to dispose of it otherwise.

All that being supposed one sees well that it is very bad reasoning to say, This man has been cured by such a remedy. Therefore this remedy is a means which God has used to execute the absolute decree which He had made of it before foreseeing what this man would do. Therefore it was impossible that this means not be put to work. But this will appear more distinctly in the sequel.

CHAPTER XVII. Continuation of the same subject. Some reflections on the view of the Predeterminants.

WHAT I have said until now on the system of Predeterminant Theologians has made us note very great defects in it. But these defects are not the only ones that one finds in it. There are still several others that are no less. I will indicate some of them in this chapter. The others will be able to present themselves each in its place.

I say then first of all that the Response of the Predeterminants reported in Chapter VII, far from perfectly resolving the Objection, confirms it in certain cases, and in certain respects, and gives it a completely new force.

Indeed if every time that the use of a means, which God has resolved to use to lengthen, or to shorten our life, depends on our will, God inspires us with this will, as this response posits, every time that one does not feel this will, one will have reason to assure oneself that the means that this will refuses to put to work, is not the one which God has resolved to use, and in this way one will strengthen oneself in the resolution where one is not to use it.

Thus a patient, who has repugnance for remedies, will be able to close the mouth to those who press him to take them. He will have for this effect only to say to them, You teach me that when God resolves an end, He resolves also the means, their use, and the will to use them. Let us hold to this rule, and decide by it our question. I conclude from it that if God had resolved to cure me by the use of the remedies that you press me to take, He would give me the will to follow your advice. Now I can assure you that He has not given it to me at all. I am very far from having it. I even have a will directly opposed to that one. Your response teaches me that this will contrary to what you require of me, comes from God, who inspires it to me, and pushes me invincibly to have it.

I ask you therefore if not giving me the will to take these remedies, if giving me even a will directly opposed to that one, is wanting me to take them, at least wanting me

to take them presently. I am not ignorant indeed that I can change my resolution. My heart is in the hands of God, who can bend it, and turn it as it will please Him, and it is not impossible that in a few days from now, that even in a few hours, He will inspire me with other thoughts. If He does it, I will follow your advice then. But until then I beg you to find it good that I count more on your maxims than on your wishes, that as long as I feel for your remedies a repugnance as strong as the one that I presently have to them, I hold for certain that God does not yet want me to use them.

What is it that a Predeterminant could oppose to all these reasonings without abandoning his principles? Thus who does not see that this response is very suitable for confirming the patient in his obstinacy?

But it is no less so for throwing Physicians into negligence. One knows that they ordinarily prescribe useful and salutary remedies, often useless ones, and sometimes even pernicious ones. Where does that come from? According to the response that I am examining, the first cause of all this is the Will of God. When God wants a patient to recover, He makes known to the Physician the remedies that can have a good effect, He gives him the will to prescribe them, and to the patient that of taking them. When on the contrary He wants the patient to die, He makes the Physician order for him only useless, or pernicious ones.

Thus one can assure oneself that the patient will be well, or badly treated, not according as the Physician will be skillful, or ignorant, wise or thoughtless, but according as God will want him to recover, or not to recover.

Let the patient die, and let it appear clear as day that the Physician has killed him, who would be unjust enough to blame him for it? Should one not say to oneself that this Physician has only done what he could not prevent himself from doing? What, would one want that God determining him invincibly to order such and such remedies, and to judge that they were useful and salutary, he judge otherwise of them, and prescribe others in their place? What injustice and extravagance there would be in such imaginations!

Let the Physician himself be convinced as strongly as the others that it is his remedies that have killed the patient, what reproaches should he make to himself for it? Should he not say to himself that he has only done what God absolutely and determinately wanted him to do? And this being supposed will he not neglect himself in the future, knowing that the successes of his art depend, not on what he can, either do, or know, but on the hidden designs that God can have on the patients that he will treat? If God wants these patients to recover, He will make known to him the remedies that can relieve them. And if He wants them to die, he would in vain leaf through his books, and put his mind to the rack, he will order nothing that is not suitable for hastening their death.

Are such thoughts very suitable for encouraging Physicians to work well, and for moving them to make all their efforts, either to become consummate in the Art that they profess, or to treat well each of the patients who will implore their help?

Moreover in taking it thus it will be necessary to remove the use of remedies, and generally all that can serve to shorten and to lengthen life, that is to say, as each one sees, most of our actions, from the number of those that we do with this species of freedom, which is called indifference. Until now it has been believed quite commonly among us that in truth we do not have such a freedom for the actions of piety, but that we have it for civil and natural actions. The Confession of Augsburg, which so many of our Theologians have signed, says it in so many words. Several others maintain it in their Writings. But what will become of all this, if it does not depend on us to take, or not to take the remedies that are proposed to us, as it is certain that it will be necessary to say if the response that we are examining is received?

Can one not even assure oneself by one's own experience that we have such a freedom? This experience that we press against Spinoza, does it not have the same force against the dogma of Premotion, and of the antecedent Decree, as I show in another work?

CHAPTER XVIII. Reflections on a passage of the Book of Acts that is ordinarily alleged on this subject.

I DO not know any Predeterminant, who treating this question does not produce what St. Luke reports to us in Chapter XVII. of the book of Acts, and does not regard it as a decisive proof of what they think on this subject. Here is what it is. This sacred Historian informs us that the vessel on which St. Paul was sailing being agitated by a violent storm, and those it carried despairing of escaping from this great danger, this Apostle to reassure them told them that the Angel of the God whom he served had appeared to him the preceding night, and had said to him, Paul do not fear. You must be presented to Caesar, and behold God has given you all those who are sailing with you.

On this foundation he assured them in a clear, and precise manner, that although the vessel should perish, those it carried would not fail to escape. There will be, he said, no loss among you as to life, but only of the ship. Having nevertheless perceived some time afterwards that the Sailors wanted to save themselves on the boat, and slacken the anchors, he warned the Captain of it, and the men of war, and said to them, If these do not remain in the ship, you cannot save yourselves.

One says thereupon that St. Paul had a complete and absolute certainty that no one would perish on this occasion, and that nevertheless this certainty did not prevent him from doing all that he could to prevent this misfortune. He exhorted the Soldiers to do on their side all that depended on them in this respect, and declared to them that if they neglected to do it it was impossible that they not perish. From this one

concludes that we should not fail to act, however assured we are that what God has resolved will be executed.

To say what I think of this proof, I believe it convincing and demonstrative against the view that is attributed to the Turks. I believe that it puts in all its light the inseparability of the end from the means, and the absolute necessity there is to employ these means to arrive at the end. This is also the use that I made of it in Chapter II.

But I believe also that this use is the only one that one can draw from it on this question. In particular I do not think that the Predeterminants can draw any advantage from it. To find in it the support of their view it would be necessary to show I. that God had resolved that none of those who were sailing with St. Paul would perish on this occasion. II. That He had resolved it absolutely, and without condition. III. That the Decree that He had made of it was an antecedent Decree, and which preceded the foresight of what St. Paul, the Soldiers, and the Sailors could do. IV. That He had resolved, not only the end, but also the means, not only that one would save oneself, but also that this would happen by retaining the Sailors. V. That St. Paul knew all that, and that he had the intention of making it understood by all that he said.

These five facts being posited I admit that the proof would be solid. And indeed if notwithstanding such a Decree that God had made St. Paul could say that the Soldiers could not escape in case the Sailors deserted, it would be clear that although God had made a similar one on the subject of each patient, this patient should not fail to take the remedies, that would be prescribed to him. But also if this passage does not prove all these propositions, especially the last ones, it is evident that it proves nothing.

Now how can one maintain that it proves them all, since far from proving that the Decree that God had made on this occasion had all these qualities, it does not speak of any Decree? Does it indeed say that God had made any? Neither the Angel who speaks to St. Paul, nor St. Paul who gives the account of the apparition of this Angel, nor St. Luke who reports the discourse of St. Paul, do they say anything that approaches it?

I know that God had resolved what happened. I know even that He had resolved it absolutely, and without condition. But it is not this passage that has taught it to me, it is several others, which it is not necessary to indicate.

But I want one to be able to find these first two propositions in this place of St. Luke. Will one find in it the three last ones, which are the only ones that are in question? Will one find in it that the Decree of God was an antecedent Decree? Will one find in it that this Decree had resolved the means with the end? Will one find in it that St. Paul knew it? With what difficulty will one make the sacred text say it?

For me I am so far from believing it, that I do not even believe that one can prove that the certainty that St. Paul had that none of those who were sailing with him would perish on this occasion, was an absolute certainty. Indeed one should not conclude it from the manner in which both this Apostle, and the Angel, expressed themselves. They spoke absolutely, I admit. But is this the only time that predictions, promises, and threats, that are conditional, have been expressed absolutely?

What more absolutely apparent than what God had said on the subject of Jerusalem, My name will be in this city forever. What more absolutely apparent than what Isaiah says to Hezekiah, Dispose of the affairs of your house, for you will die, and will live no more? What more absolutely apparent, than what God commanded Jonah to preach in the streets of Nineveh, Yet forty days, and Nineveh will be overthrown? Nevertheless it is beyond doubt that all that was true, and was to be understood, only under condition.

Although therefore St. Paul expresses absolutely what was to happen, it is not to be said that he had an absolute certainty of it. It is very possible that the one he had of it was only conditional. There is even reason to believe that it was, since he says some time afterwards, If these do not remain, you cannot save yourselves.

It is beyond doubt that this Apostle could have said at once what he says in two. He could have said all in one breath, There will be no loss among you as to life, unless the Sailors flee. These two propositions thus united would not have been less true than being separated. It is nevertheless obvious that in this supposition they would have expressed only a conditional certainty. Why then does one want that the one that the first proposition expresses being taken apart, is an absolute certainty?

But here is something more pressing. Since St. Paul says in such a firm tone, and with so little management, that it is impossible that the Soldiers escape, if the Sailors flee, there is reason to believe that he was quite sure of what he was saying. That is certain. But the difficulty consists in saying how it is that he knew it.

I perceive only two ways by which he could have assured himself of it. One is the total and absolute impossibility there was that the contrary happen. The other is an extraordinary revelation that God had addressed to him on this subject, by the ministry of the Angel, or otherwise, and which had instructed him of what God had resolved.

One will not say the first. For was it possible that after the Sailors had left, a gust of wind throw the vessel against the shore, and that having broken, or run aground, the Soldiers gain the land, some by swimming, others on planks, or otherwise. Is this not a thing that one sees happen every day?

Moreover St. Paul could not be ignorant, either that the life of these persons was in the hands of God, who could dispose of it as it pleased Him, or that His Providence presided over this event in a very particular way since He had had said to him by the

Angel that He granted him the life of those who were sailing with him, which implied that their fate would be decided by laws other than those of nature.

Everything therefore depended on the free will of God and consequently it was impossible that St. Paul knew otherwise than by an extraordinary revelation what was to happen. And if an extraordinary revelation made known to St. Paul that the Soldiers would not escape if the Sailors fled, the certainty that he had of the temporal salvation of these Soldiers was only a conditional certainty. For how could he have founded an absolute certainty on a revelation that posited conditions.

One will perhaps say that this revelation which made known the necessity of such a condition taught at the same time that it would be infallibly fulfilled, that even it would be so by the ministry of this Apostle, that he would work to retain the Sailors, that he would exhort the Soldiers to it and would make known to them the interest they had in reassuring these timid spirits, that God would bless his care, and that thus all would save themselves.

I admit that that was possible, but I maintain that there does not appear the slightest trace of it in the narration of St. Luke. I maintain that it is impossible to prove it, and that the more unproved facts one advances, the more those to whom one opposes them are in the right to reject them. Whatever the case may be until one has proved them one will not be able to draw any consequence from this passage, which suffices for me.

I do not know if it is necessary to warn my Reader that I have spoken until now only of the certainty that St. Paul had of the temporal salvation of the Soldiers, and have said nothing of the one that he could have concerning his own. I have had two reasons for acting thus.

The first is that St. Paul does not speak at all of himself, nor of what concerns him, in the words that are opposed to us. He does not say, If these go away, we cannot save ourselves. He says only, you cannot. The other is that St. Paul had particular reasons to assure himself that he would escape. The Angel had told him that he was to be presented to the Emperor. Thus he had reason to promise himself that even if the Sailors fled, and the Soldiers perished, God would not fail to do him the grace of saving himself.

But as all this does not concern me, and as the condition that St. Paul indicates is not the only one on which one can believe that his preservation depended, I decide nothing thereupon.

CHAPTER XIX. That the Will of God, which determines the time of our death, has regard to various things, and particularly to our actions.

IT appears by all that I have just said that of the three ways, in which one can imagine that God has fixed the time of our death, one should reject the two that I have

examined, and that thus it is necessary of all necessity to have recourse to the third, which is the only one that remains to us. But in order not to omit anything that can help us to form a just idea of it, one must consider on the one hand what God does and wills in this respect in time, and on the other what He has done and willed in eternity.

It is good to begin with the first of these two respects, because it is the one that has the least difficulty; because again this one well understood, will be of great help to us to facilitate the understanding of the other.

With regard to the first I am persuaded that as God is infinitely wise, He never wills that a man die at a certain time rather than at another, unless He has good reasons to will it. It would be temerity, or better said folly, to want to guess all these reasons. There are undoubtedly those that are unknown to the most enlightened of all men. I am even persuaded that all that we can know of them is nothing in comparison with what we are ignorant of.

Notwithstanding all that I do not fear that one will contradict me if I say that there are two things to which God has principally regard in these occasions, the general laws of nature, and the moral actions of men.

When I speak of the general laws, which make the order of nature, I mean principally these two, which I do not believe to be the only ones, but which suffice for me on this occasion, that of the communication of movements between bodies that touch each other, and that of the reciprocal succession of the thoughts of the mind, and of the movements of the body in men, which makes them masters of a great number of external actions.

If God never derogated from these laws, one would not need to seek elsewhere the true reason of the time at which we die. The first of these two laws would discover to us the cause of the natural death, and of several species of the violent death, of men, and of animals. By the second man is established master of his external actions, and does in certain respects all that pleases him, which suffices to account for the other species of violent death.

By this indeed man can kill, hang, throw himself down, take poison, expose himself to various dangers. He can on the other hand confront his enemies, flee from them, take remedies and foods. Men can slit each other's throats, assassinate, poison one another. They can assist and help each other. And all that, as each one sees, can move back, or hasten death.

Consequently if God followed consistently these two laws, one would always find in the one, or in the other, or in both together, the reason that makes us die sooner, or later.

But although God follows these laws very often, He does not follow them always. He derogates from them from time to time, sometimes in a perceptible and striking manner, as happens in miracles properly so-called, sometimes in a more obscure

and more imperceptible manner, as happens since miracles have ceased. If He never did it, nothing would be more useless than the prayers that the sick address to Him in their pains. If He still did not, nothing would be less serious than the promises of a long life, that He makes to those who observe His laws, and the threats that He adds to them of shortening the days of those who violate them.

This is also what He does every time that good reasons demand it. Outside of that He always follows these general laws, and one should not find it strange. These laws are His work. It is He who has established them, and what is considerable, they are very lively expressions of His Wisdom, which ravish us in admiration when we consider them attentively. That being the case should one be astonished if He follows them every time that there is no particular reason that demands that He depart from them?

I go further. I believe it very possible that even when particular reasons, and taken from elsewhere, want God to fix the death of a man at a certain time, this time is not so short, that it does not include a considerable extent, which will perhaps include the term that the natural laws give to this man.

Let us imagine, for example, that God for certain reasons wants a man not to remain long in the world. These reasons can be such, that they do not demand that this man die today rather than tomorrow, although they demand that he die before the end of this week. Let us imagine secondly that the natural laws want this man to die precisely today, and that it would be necessary to suspend their observation, and to make some change in them, to make him live until tomorrow.

I say that in this supposition it is natural to believe that he will die today. Indeed there is no reason that demands that he live until tomorrow. This is what I suppose. There is a reason taken from the general laws, which wants him to die today. It is therefore of the Wisdom of God to will that it be precisely today that he die, and not tomorrow. All this persuades me that God has some regard for the general laws.

He regards also the moral actions of men, good, and bad. For example He had regard for Hezekiah's prayer when He prolonged his life. He had regard for the repentance of the Ninevites when He spared them after having threatened them. He has regard for the respect that good children have for their Fathers, when He prolongs their days, in conformity with what He says of it in the fifth precept of the Decalogue. He had regard for the sins of the inhabitants of the old world, for those of the inhabitants of Sodom, for those of the Egyptians etc. when He unleashed on them the scourges, with which each one knows that He overwhelmed them.

Also we see that Scripture says expressly in various places that it is because one has committed such, or such a sin, that one comes to die at such, or such a time. Here, for example, is what God says to Noah Gen. VI. 13. "The end of all flesh has come before me, for the earth is filled with extortion." Likewise Gen. XXXVIII. 7. "Er was wicked before the Eternal, that is why He put him to death." St. Paul likewise

speaking of the Corinthians, who had profaned the Sacrament of the Holy Supper, "For this reason," he says, "many are sick among you, many sleep." I. Cor. XI.

In all these passages, and in several others, that one could add to them, Scripture gives us to understand that the sins of men have many times made God hasten their death. It says even in various places, that without these sins they would have lived longer. "If the miracles that have been done in you," Jesus Christ said to Capernaum, "had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day." Matt. XI. 23. See also Ps. LXXXI. 14. & Luke. XIX. 42.

Finally Scripture proposes this as a rule, which it gives us to understand that God ordinarily follows. Witness this place of Proverbs X. 27. "The fear of the Eternal increases the number of days, but the years of the wicked will be cut short." And this other from Ps. LV. "The bloodthirsty and the deceivers will not reach the half of their days."

One can therefore be assured that when God wants a man to die at a certain time rather than at another, it is sometimes because the natural laws want it to be so, and sometimes because of his actions. There are even particular conjunctures where these two sorts of reasons unite together, and demand the same thing. The general laws want a man to die, and the actions of this man make God not derogate from these laws.

For example Judas takes the desperate resolution to strangle himself with his own hands, and all that is most criminal in this horrible design merits that God let him do it. Another is obstinate in not taking remedies: And God to punish this obstinacy abandons him to his own sense, and lets him die while clinging to it. A third wants to go without necessity into a plague-stricken house: And God to confound his temerity allows, not only that he enter it, but also that he breathe the bad air, that he catch this disease, and that he die of it.

In all these occasions the general laws are observed, and at the same time the crime is punished. Thus here are good reasons which make God will that one die at a certain precise and determined time, without speaking of other similar ones that could be added to them, and of many more that we are ignorant of.

CHAPTER XX. Response to an objection. God determines the time of our death according to general laws.

I DO not doubt that several of my Readers, prejudiced by the subtleties of the School, will reproach me that I subject the Creator too much to the creature, giving to the actions of the latter some activity, and some efficacy to make God will certain things, and consequently that He does them. They will say that I do not consider enough that God is a pure act, and that there is in Him no passive power.

I could perhaps despise this objection, which, as each one sees, is founded only on a metaphysical speculation. I could add that the efficacy that I attribute to creatures

with respect to God is not at all a physical efficacy, but a simple moral efficacy, which consists only in being the object of the knowledge of God, after which His own perfections move Him enough to act in a way that responds to it.

But although this response appears sufficient to me to resolve this objection, I cannot help proposing another, which appears to me extremely suitable for shedding light on this matter, and which consists only in saying that the actions of men are only simple occasional causes of the actual wills of God.

One knows that according to Father Malebranche, who has spoken so much of this sort of causes, they have no efficacy properly so-called, but that God having obligated Himself to act in a certain way in certain occasions, and having made an arbitrary law of it, He executes it regularly every time that these occasions present themselves. This is what I believe one can apply to our subject, and here is how.

I note first of all that there are a very great number of occasions, where God acts in a constant and uniform manner, both for grace, and for nature. It seems to me even that this manner of acting is the most worthy of Him, since it bears the character of three of His perfections, of His immutability, of His simplicity, and of His wisdom.

I say first of His immutability. For if He did today one thing, and tomorrow another quite contrary, without there being any diversity in the occasions, where He would do it, He would visibly change His conduct, and consequently one could not say of Him what St. James says of it, that with Him there is no variation, nor shadow of change.

His simplicity makes Him exempt from all sort of composition, and consequently from all sort of diversity. He is one, and sovereignly one. He is even so in everything. Thus His conduct being the image of His essence, there is reason to believe that it is uniform, and always similar to itself, like His nature.

Finally the uniformity of conduct is the most perceptible character of wisdom. Nothing is more opposed to it than this inequality, which makes one change each day of rule, or even that one follows none, and which constitutes what is commonly called caprice, and bizarreness. This is why St. James has said of the wicked, who according to Scripture are all fools, that they are inconstant in all their ways. Even the Pagans have not been ignorant of this truth, and one of their Poets has included this trait in the portrait of a vicious man, when he has said on this subject,

"Aestuat, et vita disconvenit ordine toto." [He boils, and his life disagrees with all order.]

As therefore a wise man will always act in the same way in occasions that are quite similar, and where there is no circumstance that makes the least diversity, I have much inclination to believe that God follows the same rule, and that if it sometimes seems to us that He departs from it, it is that in the cases that appear the most similar, there is always some difference that we are ignorant of, and to which some known or unknown law, wants one to have regard.

I admit that in this obstinacy does almost the same effect as wisdom. I admit that they are both principles of uniformity. But what puts a difference in it is that obstinacy is nothing other than firmness without reason, whereas wisdom is uniform, only because it is reasonable. As therefore reason, which wants one to act in a certain manner in certain occasions, demands the same thing in all similar occasions, and which have absolutely nothing that distinguishes them, it is clear that God, who is infinitely wise, will follow this rule, and thus will be absolutely uniform in His conduct.

These always wise and regular ways of acting, that God follows in His adorable conduct, are what Scripture calls His ways, as when Ezekiel introduces the impious who say XVIII. 25. "The way of the Lord is not well regulated," and when God Himself says, Isaiah. LV. 8. 9. "My thoughts are not your thoughts, and my ways are not your ways. For as much as the heavens are elevated above the earth, so much are my ways elevated above your ways." St. Paul assures in this same sense that the judgments of God are incomprehensible, and His ways impossible to fathom. Rom. XI. 33.

These are certain rules that God prescribes for Himself, and which can be of two orders. Some are necessary consequences of His perfections. The others are purely arbitrary, and have uniquely depended on His will. It is certain at least that we do not see very clearly the connection that they can have with His virtues. It is principally of these latter that it is a question here.

There are some for nature. There are also some for grace, and many more for the one and for the other than Father Malebranche recognizes.

Without speaking of those that we are ignorant of, I note five in nature, which are, or nearly so, universally recognized.

The first is that each thing must always remain in the state where it is until another draws it from it.

The second is that of the communication of movements in bodies that encounter each other.

The third is that of the creation and of the infusion of a spiritual and intelligent soul every time that there will be found somewhere a body disposed to receive it.

The fourth is that of the reciprocal succession of the thoughts of the mind, and of the movements of the body, in each man.

The fifth finally is that of the concurrence, that God has obliged Himself to give to secondary causes when they have the occasion to act.

The laws of grace are of three orders.

The first are absolutely unknown to us. Such are most of those that God follows in the distribution of regenerating grace, in whatever manner one conceives it, and which have given the Apostle the occasion to exclaim, "O depth of the riches, etc." I say most, because there is one of them that we know. For example the one which

excludes from the reception of this grace those who have committed the unpardonable sin. Heb. VI. 6. We will say a word about it in the sequel.

The second on the contrary are quite known. For besides that we find them formally expressed in the holy books, we see that they are always observed without exception, and without restriction. Such are these three.

The first that all those who will repent of their sins, and will believe in Jesus Christ crucified, will obtain the remission of all their sins.

The second that all those who will persevere in the faith until the end of their life will be infallibly saved.

The third that those who will die in unbelief and impenitence will be damned.

The last are those that we know in truth, and that we even find in Scripture, but of which we do not know enough the extent, there being various cases where they are observed, and others where they are not observed, without our being able to say with the last precision how far their force extends, and where it is that it stops. Such are these three.

I. Good people will be filled with temporal blessings during this life.

II. On the contrary crime will be punished on the earth itself by all sorts of misfortunes, and in particular by a premature death.

III. Prayers made with faith, with humility, and with ardor will be heard.

It is not that we do not know quite clearly some of the exceptions and restrictions that must be added to these rules. It is only that we do not know them all, and that in wanting to apply them to events, we often find ourselves reduced to silence.

I am therefore persuaded that God never does anything in whatever order of things it may be, and particularly when it is a question of determining the time, and the other circumstances of our death, except in conformity with some one of these rules, known, or unknown.

But there is on all this an important reflection to make. It is that one must be careful not to imagine that these rules are collateral rules, and detached from each other. In following this false prejudice one would throw oneself into inexplicable embarrassments. One must represent them to oneself as so linked, and combined, that the ones restrict the others, and that it is not each of these rules in particular, but what results from all together that God follows in each occasion, and in particular in the one of which we speak.

Thus the fourth of the natural laws restricts the second, and changes very often the term that this one would have marked for our life, if it had been alone. If God had established only the first, Abel, and the other assassinated ones, would have lived longer, than they have lived in fact; and those on the contrary whom Medicine and Surgery have effectively helped, would have died sooner. But the law of the

reciprocal succession of thoughts and movements, which establishes man as master of his external actions, shortened the life of the first, and lengthened that of the second.

But is that all? and do we all live always as much as these two laws joined together, and restricted one by the other, demand? Not at all. The flood, the subversion of Sodom, and the other similar examples of the vengeance of God, show the contrary. One must therefore add a third law to the two preceding ones. It is the one that teaches us that a precipitated death is the consequence of certain sins. Thus here is a new term of our life distinct from the two that the natural laws prescribed for us.

But, do all the wicked die before the time to which the natural laws would lead them? Not at all. The example of the Ninevites proves the contrary. One must therefore add a fourth law to the three preceding ones. It is the one that one finds in chapter XVIII. of Jeremiah 7.8. and which holds that repentance and prayers can exempt from the observation of the preceding one, and lengthen the life of those who without that would have had to die.

But do repentance and prayers always have this effect? This is what one should not imagine, and the example of several of those who perished by the flood shows it enough. St. Peter tells us that they were mortified according to the flesh, so that they might live according to God in spirit, and he gives us to understand by this that there were among those who repented before dying, and whose repentance, however useful it was to them for avoiding hell and damnation, served them nothing for avoiding temporal death. Thus there is a fifth rule, which restricts the fourth, and which teaches us that this fourth only has place when repentance is prompt, and when it precedes the beginning of the execution of the judgment that the crimes of men had attracted.

But this fifth law, which makes an exception to the fourth, is it perpetual? The example of the Israelites bitten by the burning serpents of the desert, and cured by the sight of the brass serpent, shows that it is not, and that there is still another restriction to make, which is unknown to me, and which perhaps is not the last.

It would not be impossible to find in Scripture and in experience several other similar laws, which restrict one another, and each of which lengthens, or shortens our life. Above all there is reason to believe that God has established others which are absolutely unknown to us, and which being taken jointly with those that I have indicated, make the total and perpetual rule that He follows in these occasions, so that no one comes to die except precisely in the time at which the result of these laws demands that he die.

That is too composed, the Malebranchists will say, and this system does not bear enough the character of the simplicity of God, and what is most admirable in His wisdom. There is something much more worthy of the perfect Being in attributing to Him only two or three rules, which account for everything.

That would not be bad, I would respond to them, if the laws that they indicate would suffice to explain everything. But it is far from that being the case, and it would be easy for me to show it, if what I am doing was not already a digression, which is already too long, and if others had not done it before me, especially Mr. Arnaud in his Philosophical Theological Reflections.

Moreover it is so little true that God follows no other rule than those of Father Malebranche, that I have just indicated several others which cannot be contested.

CHAPTER XXI. Of occasional causes in general, and in particular of those that make us die at a certain time rather than at another.

ONE has been able to note in the preceding chapter that the laws that God follows in the conduct of the world suppose, or establish, a very close connection between certain events, and certain things that God obligates Himself to do every time that these events will appear. When they do not suppose this connection, but produce it and establish it, they give to these events the quality of occasional causes, of which it is fair to say a word.

One distinguishes three sorts of causes: the physical, the moral, and the occasional.

The physical causes are those that really produce their effects by a true and positive influence, which goes all the way to them. It is thus that one has always believed that fire burns, and that ice cools. And it is thus that Father Malebranche, who leaves no activity to creatures, wants God to act.

The moral causes are those that make their effect by proposing to intelligent Beings motives that determine them to act. In this way a man who advises another to do some action, who presses him, who solicits him, who makes him for this design promises, or threats, is the cause of the action that he moves him to do.

The occasional causes have less efficacy than either the physical, or the moral. Properly speaking they contribute nothing to the production of the effect, but they simply warn the one who must produce it that it is time to act. Thus the hour that strikes makes me leave to go to the temple, because having resolved to go there, I understand by this that I must leave, if I want to execute my resolution.

One had believed until now, as I have already noted, that natural agents were physical causes of their effects. But Father Malebranche takes this quality away from them, and leaves them only that of occasional causes not recognizing anyone but God as the physical cause of all things. This is not the place to examine if he is right, or if he is not. I content myself with saying that one must be careful not to contest with him that there are occasional causes, which determine God in their way to certain actions that He would not do without that.

This appears certain to me, and I find various examples of it in Scripture.

The first is that of the Sacraments, which confer without difficulty some grace, as Theologians agree. But it is not by their own virtue that they confer it. It is by virtue of the law, by which God has obligated Himself to it. I say the same thing of the water of jealousy. No one is ignorant of what the law had prescribed thereupon. Each one knows further the manner in which it made guilty women die. Constantly it did not operate this effect in the manner of physical causes. It was God Himself who produced it immediately, and the water was only the occasional cause of it, which drew all that it had of efficacy from the establishment that God had made of it by the law.

The imposition of the hands of the Apostles conferred the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit. These same Apostles anointed the sick to cure them of their discomforts, which never failed to have its effect. However neither this imposition of hands, nor this anointing, were physical causes which really operated their effects. They were only simple occasional causes of them that the sole will of God made efficacious.

I say the same thing of this species of faith, which is ordinarily called the faith of miracles, and of all the external means, to which the production of these extraordinary effects was attached, such as were the rod of Moses, the elevation of his hands when it was necessary to combat Amalek, the hair of Samson, the water of the Jordan where Naaman was ordered to plunge himself, the plaster of dried figs which cured King Hezekiah, the pool of Bethesda, which cured the first sick who plunged themselves into it after the descent of the Angel.

When Elijah was on the point of going up to Heaven, Elisha earnestly begged him to leave him a double portion of his Spirit, and Elijah answered him, "You have asked a difficult thing. If you see me taken away from you it will be done to you thus. But if you do not see me, it will not be done to you thus." There the sight of Elisha is established as the occasional cause of what was to happen to him.

It is reported in chap. XIII. of the II book of Kings that the Prophet Elisha having said to King Joash that he should strike against the earth, without indicating to him how many times he should do it, this Prince was content to strike three times. That displeased the Prophet. "It was necessary," he said, "to strike five or six times. Then you would have struck the Syrians until consuming them, but now you will strike them only three times." That means that God had resolved that this Prince would win just as many victories over his enemies as he would strike blows on the earth. There would be something ridiculous in thinking that these blows had some physical, or moral, efficacy, for the production of this effect. They were therefore only simple occasional causes, established in this quality, not in truth by a general, and perpetual law, like several others, but by a particular will of God manifested to Elisha alone.

I could perhaps terminate thereby a quite heated dispute on the efficacy of Faith in the work of our Justification. I had undertaken it some years ago in a Treatise that I had composed on this matter, and which it has been impossible for me to withdraw

from certain hands where it had fallen. But I am careful not to undertake it presently. I content myself with making the application of it to my subject, and with saying that one can give the name and the quality of occasional causes of the time at which we die to all that contributes, either physically, or morally, to hastening it or retarding it, provided that it does so, not by its own force, but by virtue of an arbitrary law, that God has made on this subject, and which holds that one will die at such, or such a time, when such, or such a thing will happen.

Putting it in this way, the difficulty that the Metaphysicians make for us reduces to nothing. For after all occasional causes have no efficacy properly so-called. Besides that they act only objectively, as one says, they do not even act as truly as several of the causes that have only this single species of activity. I speak of those that determine in the quality of motive intelligent Beings to will, and to do certain things. Occasional causes do not even go that far. All that they do, is that being produced elsewhere, God sees thereby that it is time that He do what He has resolved to do, which as each one sees, posits in Him no passive power, and does not prevent Him from being a very pure act.

CHAPTER XXII. That even when God has determined the time of our death by His eternal Decree, He has had regard for our actions.

I HAVE considered until now the Will of God which fixes the time of our death, only as actually exercised in time by execution. One must presently consider it as exercised from all eternity by the Decree that He has formed thereupon; and this is what makes the difficulty.

Indeed one understands without difficulty that when God acts in time He has some regard for our actions. But it is difficult to conceive how it is that these actions, which are produced only in time, can have the same efficacy with regard to the Decrees, which are eternal.

But indeed this difficulty is not great. It would be, I admit, if one claimed that our actions had some physical efficacy, which really influenced, either the will of God, or whatever it is of His acts. But as no one claims it, and as whoever it is attributes no other activity to all that we can do in these occasions, than that of being the object of the knowledge of God, on which He takes His resolutions, it is clear that this should not cause any difficulty to anyone.

Although an action is done only in time, it can be foreseen from eternity, and being foreseen it can make in its way God form His resolutions thereupon. Thus we see that He resolved to strike Egypt with the heaviest of His blows, because He foresaw the cruelties and barbarities that it would one day exercise on His people, witness what He says to Abraham, "Your posterity will sojourn in a strange land, and there they will enslave it, and mistreat it for four hundred years. But I will judge the nation to which they will have served." Act. VII. 6. 7.

Even more. Simple foresight has sufficed sometimes to God, not only to resolve, what He should do, but even to execute it. Thus He disclosed His secret designs to Abraham, because He foresaw the care that this holy Patriarch would take to lead his children to revere Him. "The Eternal said, Would I hide from Abraham what I am going to do? For I know him, that he will command his children, and his house after him, that they keep the way of the Eternal, to do what is just and right." Gen. XVIII. 17.19.

It is moreover very natural that what makes one take resolutions be what moves one to execute them. This is what happens among men, who are so changeable. Why will one not believe the same thing of God, who is always similar to Himself, and who acts with so much uniformity?

If the actions of men not having moved God from all eternity to will that they die at a certain time, moved Him to it today, this will would be something new, and would show in God some change, which would make Him pass from one state, and one disposition, to another, which can only be very absurd.

There is much more. The Decree that God has made from all eternity on each of the events that are its objects, and the will that He has to produce them in time, and which produces them in fact, are not two distinct acts, but a single and same act, a single and same will, which always remains the same. Consequently if God has regard to our actions when He wills our death in time, He also had regard to them when He resolved it in eternity. Thus the one of these things entails the other, and it is not possible to separate them.

Finally if foreseen sin was not the reason that made God resolve to punish it by a precipitated death, it would be necessary of all necessity that not resolving death because of sin, He resolve sin because of death, I mean that He resolve that man would sin so that He could make him suffer this punishment.

I do not see indeed except these two relations that sin, and such a death, could have in the Decree of God, either that of cause, whether moral, or occasional, and of effect, or that of means and of end.

As therefore I have shown clearly in Chapter VIII. that there is something horrible in maintaining that God resolves to push man to sin to have the occasion to punish him, one must recognize that He resolves death, only because He foresees sin, and that thus the Decree is not in this different from the execution.

CHAPTER XXIII. Response to an objection. In what manner the death of Jesus Christ was resolved.

HERE one will doubtless say that one must make the same judgment of our death as of that of Jesus Christ. One will add that the death of this great Savior was resolved by an antecedent decree, and which was not founded, either on general laws, or on His actions, not even on those of His persecutors and of His executioners, as appears

by these words of the Apostles, Act. IV. 27. "Against your Holy Son Jesus, whom you have anointed, have assembled Herod, Pontius Pilate, with the nations, and the peoples of Israel, to do all the things that your hand and your counsel had previously determined to be done." This is why it is noted in the Gospel that however animated the Jews were against Him, no one laid a hand on Him, because His hour had not yet come. From which one concludes that it is the same for each one of us.

It is good to examine this objection with some care, and for this effect to see on the one hand if the fact, which serves as its foundation, is quite certain; and on the other if the consequence that one draws from it is necessary.

For the first I do not believe that one can say absolutely, and without exception, that the death of Jesus Christ was resolved by an antecedent decree. This decree supposed the foresight of various things, above all that of sin, and of its consequences. For indeed the eternal Father would never have destined His Son to death, if this death had not been to be the price of our redemption, and there would have been no necessity to redeem us, if we had not been the slaves of sin and of death. This Decree also supposed the foresight of the consent of Jesus Christ to His death, without which His Father would not have subjected Him to it.

But, one says, this Decree preceded at least the foresight of the hatred, of the violence, and of the injustice of the Jews, and of the other authors of the death of our Savior, who engaged in all these excesses, only because God had resolved that they would engage in them, as appears by what the Apostles say of it in the words that I have reported.

I respond that one can understand this in two ways. The first is that God wanting His Son to die in order to redeem us, resolved to push and to determine the mind of the Jews, and of the other authors of His death, to do all that they did, and that they would never have done without this impulse. The second is that God wanting His Son to die to operate the salvation of men, and seeing the minds of the Jews disposed and determined by their own hatred, and by their other passions, to do all that they did, He resolved to let them have free rein in this occasion, and to permit them to carry themselves to all that was necessary for this effect.

To say the first is to say first of all that the Jews were not wicked enough to carry themselves by themselves to such excesses, which is to be ignorant of the extreme depravation of our nature, and not to consider that there is no horror, of which it is not capable, if God abandons it to its own inclination.

But what appears to me most grievous, is to make God the true author of these crimes, which I regard, not as a simple error, not as a simple absurdity, but as a blasphemy. Thus I believe that one must reduce oneself to the second, and if one finds that this explanation weakens more than is permitted the expressions of the sacred text, one has only to cast one's eyes on what I say thereupon in my Addition concerning physical premotion.

I therefore do not admit the fact on which this objection is founded. I agree just as little with the consequence that one draws from it. One supposes that one must make the same judgment of the death of Jesus Christ as of ours. But it is obvious that to suppose this is to suppose falsely. The death of Jesus Christ was of an order quite different from that of the rest of men. If this great Savior died, it was not by virtue of the sentence that God pronounced in the beginning to the first of men, and in his person to his descendants, saying to him, "You are dust, and you will return to dust": it was for another reason quite different, and which no one is ignorant of. The time of His death was determined, neither by the consideration of general laws, nor by that of His actions, like the time of ours, but by other very particular views. Thus there is no consequence to draw from the death of Jesus Christ to ours, and the one could be the effect of a particular will, and was so effectively, without preventing that of the rest of men from being the execution of a general will, which follows constant, and perpetual laws.

By this same reason it could happen that God did not permit the Jews to sate their hatred against Jesus Christ, except at the moment that His wisdom had marked for this great event, and that He acts quite differently with regard to several of His children who are persecuted. It is not that I claim to deny that He very often represses the fury of our enemies. I say only that if He does it sometimes, He does not do it always, and that thus there is no consequence to draw from the one of these events to the other.

CHAPTER XXIV. Where one applies to the Objection all that has just been said.

AFTER all that I have just said I believe that one can be assured that when God determines the time at which we die He has regard for two things, for what is demanded by these general laws, which make the order of nature, and for our actions. That being posited in this way nothing is easier than to see the weakness of the Objection considered as founded on the Decree of God. For that one needs only to apply to it the Response that I have already made to this same Objection taken from the consideration of Foreknowledge.

Here is the Objection. If God has absolutely resolved all sorts of events, and particularly the time at which we die, He has resolved concerning a sick person one of two things, either that he will recover from his illness, or that he will die of it. If God has resolved that he will recover from it, it is impossible that he die of it, and that being posited he will recover, whether he takes remedies, or whether he takes none, in which case the help is useless to him, and being such he can do without it without risking anything. He should even do so, for it is common sense to do nothing useless.

If God has resolved that this sick person will die of this illness, it is impossible that he recover from it, whether by taking remedies, or by not taking any at all. In this

supposition remedies are useless to him, and being such he risks nothing in taking none. He can therefore do without taking any, and if he can, he should, for one should do nothing superfluous.

It is always the same Objection, with this sole difference that it is founded sometimes on the foreknowledge of God, and sometimes on His Decree. Thus one must make the same response to it.

One must say that the first proposition is equivocal. When one says that God has resolved one of two things, either that a sick person will recover, or that he will die, one can understand it in three senses. The first is that He has resolved only the event, without determining anything whatsoever on the causes that will produce it. The second is that He has resolved equally the causes and the effect. The third, that He has resolved the effect, but that He has taken this resolution only because He has foreseen all that was to contribute, either physically, or morally to producing it.

If one understands it in the first of these three senses, the consequence is necessary, one must admit it, but the principle is very false, as has been shown in Chapter....

If one understands it in the second sense, the consequence can be false, but in exchange others will be born from it, which are no less grievous, which perhaps even are more so, as one has been able to see in Chapter.... and in some of the following ones.

If one understands it in the third sense, there is still a third distinction to make. As God can cure us in two ways, by remedies, and without remedies, and make us die by preventing us from taking them, and by permitting it, one can understand these four things in saying that God has resolved that we will recover, or that we will die; and what is considerable, this diversity of meanings that one can give to what one says, can make it true or false, useful or useless to the design one has. This is what it is important to show.

First, when one says that if God has resolved that we will recover, it is impossible that we die, even by not taking any remedies, one must not forget that it is a question of a resolution founded on the foresight of what we will do, and in particular of the party that we will take on the subject of the remedies that are proposed to us.

Secondly in reducing oneself to this, what one says can have two meanings. The first is, if God foreseeing that I will take remedies has resolved that I will recover, I could not die, not even by taking nothing. The second is, If God, who has foreseen that I will not take any remedies, has not failed to resolve that I will recover, I will recover by taking none.

The first of these two meanings is very false. It joins together two contradictory propositions, and which destroy each other mutually, and what is particular, it joins them as if the one induced the other, which is so strange, that I fear expressing myself weakly in saying that there is absurdity in it.

To say that God has resolved that a sick person will recover by such remedies, is to say three things. The first that this sick person will take these remedies: the second that these remedies will act, and the third that their action will produce the recovery of the sick person. To say on the contrary that the sick person will recover without taking these remedies, is to say three things directly opposed to the three preceding ones. The first that this sick person will not take these remedies: the second that these remedies will not act; and the third that they will not operate his recovery. Thus there are three contradictions contained in this first meaning. And are three contradictions that are found between two propositions a good proof that these two propositions are closely, and indissolubly linked one with the other?

I do not say quite the same thing of the second meaning. If God has resolved that I will recover without remedies, the refusal that I make to take them, will not prevent me from recovering. This meaning is very true, and in positing it it is beyond doubt that remedies are useless. But it will not fail to be true that notwithstanding all that prudence wants one to take them. It would not want it, I admit, if one knew what the case is. But as one is ignorant of it, it wants one to take them, because one of its most constant maxims is that in matters of doubtful things one must always hold to the surest. Now there is ordinarily less danger in using remedies than in not using them.

I say the same thing of the other branch of the Dilemma. If God has resolved that I will die of this illness, the use of remedies will not prevent me from dying of it. This proposition can receive these two meanings.

I. If God has resolved that I will die because He has foreseen that I will not take remedies, I would die even if I took all those that one could indicate to me.

II. If God has resolved that I will die whatever it is that I can do, I would not fail to die despite the remedies that I could take.

The first of these two meanings is very false, and contains the same contradictions, and the same inconsequence, as the first of the two preceding ones, as each one sees well enough by himself, without it being necessary to prove it.

The second meaning is true, and would authorize one not to take remedies, if one knew what the case is. But as one is ignorant of it, it does not prevent one from having to procure this help, because, as I have already noted, one must always go to the surest.

Thus whether one is founded on the foreknowledge of God, or on His Decree, one will never prove that the consideration of these two acts of God engages us to neglect, either the use of remedies, or the other care that we should take of our health and of our life.

CHAPTER XXV. Where one applies to marriages what one has just said of the time of death.

THE principles that I have posited in the preceding chapters can serve very usefully to show the falsity of a popular imagination, very similar to the one that I have just refuted. One sees among us an infinity of persons, who imagine to themselves that not only the end of our life, but also our marriages have been determined by God by antecedent decrees. They persuade themselves that without having regard either to our inclinations, or to all that we will be able to do, we, or our close ones, our friends or our enemies, either to thwart them, or to make them succeed, God has from all eternity resolved that John will marry Joan.

On this foundation most imagine themselves to be able to justify, or at least excuse, the marriages most opposed to the maxims of prudence and of piety, by saying that one cannot flee one's destiny, that marriages are sooner made in heaven than on earth, that it appears indeed that God had resolved the one of which one speaks, since one sees it concluded and consummated, and that it not being in their power to oppose effectively the will of God, one is wrong to blame them for having executed it.

No one is ignorant how common and ordinary this ridiculous manner of defending oneself is. Thus there will be no harm in examining it a little before leaving this subject.

I say then first of all that those very ones who appear the most infatuated with this thought, are not nearly as strongly persuaded of it as they imagine themselves to be. For after all if marriages were determined by antecedent decrees, which made useless all that one can do, either to thwart them, or to make them succeed, and if this consideration excused the faults that one makes in contracting them, it would follow that there is no precaution to take on this subject, that it is very uselessly that one amuses oneself deliberating thereupon, that there is folly in making any step to make succeed those that one wishes the most, and that the best is to abandon oneself to Providence, and to remain in inaction, without giving oneself any movement, and without even thinking if what one has in mind will be able to be good or bad, useful or prejudicial.

As one sees none who act in this way, and as on the contrary the most thoughtless deliberate in their way in these occasions, as the most negligent make various steps and give themselves much movement, it appears that they are not convinced of all that they say, and that in fact what they think thereupon is so confused, and so tangled that one can say that it is only a mass of contradictions.

To help them untangle their thoughts I would like to ask them if they believe that God disposes of everything without exception by antecedent wills or if they imagine that He acts in this way only with regard to marriages alone.

If it is the first, one has only to convince them of the contrary by opposing to them all that I have just said in the preceding chapters, and which is in fact directly opposed to this thought!

If it is the second, I would like to ask them on what they are founding themselves. What do they find in marriage, which demands that God act otherwise to govern it, than to govern the other events, among which there are several which are no less important than this one? Is it reason which persuades them of a thing so incredible? Is it Scripture.

But rather is it not true that neither the one, nor the other of these two great sources of our knowledge, has anything that can give us such thoughts? The one and the other teach us that God leads everything, that He governs everything, that nothing escapes His care. But neither the one, nor the other has anything that tends to give us reason to believe that He acts otherwise with regard to marriages than with regard to the rest of things. Thus to say the contrary is to speak without reason and without foundation.

I would wish further that one take note of a thing which appears to me incontestable. It is that there is no doubt that a happy marriage is one of the temporal blessings, by which God most perceptibly testifies His love to His dear children, and that on the contrary a poorly matched marriage should pass for one of the most formidable effects of His anger. Who does not know however that the blessings of God are ordinarily gratuitous rewards, with which His liberality crowns the piety and the zeal of His children, in conformity with what the Prophet says of it in Psalm CXXVIII. and that on the contrary traverses and afflictions are most often, either the punishment, or the chastisement of some sin? As therefore, neither God, nor men, ever reward, nor punish, nor chastise without having regard to the good or bad actions of those whom they treat in this way, it is evident, it seems to me that happy and unhappy marriages are, either always or almost always, the effects, not of an antecedent will, but of a will which supposes our actions.

If God resolving our marriages had no regard for our actions, what would it serve to pray to Him on this subject, as people of goodwill ordinarily do? In this supposition prayers would be useless, since they cannot obtain from God that He change His resolutions. Thus it would be in vain that one would make requests to Him on this subject.

Moreover one cannot deny that there is an infinity of marriages formally contrary to the law of God, such in a word that one sins in contracting them. Such are, for example, incestuous marriages, such those which join together faithful and unfaithful, those of persons bound by other marriages, etc. One must therefore at least except all these diverse orders of marriages, and all the other similar ones, from the number of those of which God is the Author. For as, I show it in another place, God is never the Author of any evil, and when we do some, it is to us alone that one must impute it.

Finally if the excuse that one takes from the will of God to justify extravagant marriages, is vain and frivolous, why does one use it? And if it is good, and solid, what is the injustice of the reproaches that Ezra and Nehemiah formerly made to the Jews, who in their time had married foreign women against the express prohibition of the Law of God Ezra. IX. & Neh. XIII. Could one not close the mouth to these two great men, by representing to them that marriages are sooner made in heaven than on earth, and that in marrying foreign women one had done nothing that God had not resolved?

But in fact since the Jews, who were guilty of this sin, did not defend themselves by this consideration, since above all Ezra and Nehemiah, who could not be ignorant of this, if it had been true, did not stop at it, and did not fail to speak strongly against this sin, it appears clearly, it seems to me, that this excuse is not capable of extenuating it, and that thus it is very uselessly that one uses it.

Let one therefore remove from one's mind all these vain imaginations, and let one recognize that in truth God presides over marriages, as over the rest of events, that in truth He has resolved them from all eternity, but that it is in another manner than one imagines. There is an infinity of them that He has resolved, not to procure, but simply to permit, which does not give them any necessity. There are others that He resolves positively, I admit, but it is rare that He does it without having regard to the actions of those that He resolves to unite, and moreover those that He resolves in this way are always, either positively good, or at least innocent. Consequently what He does with regard to those of this order cannot serve to excuse, either the criminal, or the thoughtless.

But let us suppose that there are marriages that God has resolved without having regard to our actions, which is not impossible. Still it is certain that no one can know if his in particular is of this order, or if it is not. This is a thing which is known only to God alone. Thus one could not find in it the matter of a good excuse.

SECOND PART. Where this same difficulty is examined in relation to the care we should take of our salvation.

CHAPTER I. The difficulty is proposed in this second respect, and some considerations that diminish it are indicated.

ONE does not apply this Objection only to the care we should take of our health and of our life. One applies it also to what we should do to avoid hell, to save ourselves. Nothing is more ordinary than to hear it said, Either I am elected, or I am reprobate. If I am elected, whatever I do I cannot perish. If I am reprobate, whatever I might do I could not save myself. I can therefore do what pleases me; I can give free rein to my most unjust, most criminal passions; I can commit the most enormous excesses, I can live and die in impenitence without exposing my salvation to new risks. My fate is fixed and determined by an irrevocable Decree of God, and all that I could do for good or evil will absolutely change nothing in it.

This second Objection, like the first, is made to us by two different orders of persons. Some express by it their true thought. They admit equally the principle and the consequence. They believe on the one hand that God has fixed and determined everything by His eternal Decrees, and on the other that this determination makes all our care, and all our precautions useless, and puts us in the right to do what pleases us. The others on the contrary detest this consequence, and employ its absurdity to make more than suspect the absolute Decree, from which they deduce it, claiming that it is a necessary and inseparable consequence of it.

One must put in the first of these two ranks those Heretics, who have been called Predestinarians, or Predestined, if it is true that there have been such in the Church, as some ancient and modern Authors have assured. One must put there that Prince of whom I have spoken in the first Part, and who according to Caesarius of Heisterbach applied this reasoning to salvation and to damnation, as well as to the rest of things. Finally one must put there those of whom the Churches of Switzerland complain in Article X. of their Confession of Faith, and to whom they attribute roughly the same language, not to mention several who still hold it today.

One must put in the second rank the Semi-Pelagians of the V. century, who drew this consequence from the Principles of St. Augustine, and of his Disciples, who according to several very learned Authors would have been in this way the only Predestinarians that one has ever seen. One must also put there all those who make the same Objection to us to render our doctrine odious.

This difficulty appears very embarrassing, and the Response that one ordinarily makes to it does not remove it, as one will see in the sequel. But besides that I am persuaded that one can find better ones, it seems to me that the difficulty is not nearly as pressing as it appears, and that even if the idea that one has of the Decree

of God were correct, one could not draw from it all the consequences that one infers.

For first this Objection draws what it has most dazzling from a supposition that one makes, and that one is careful not to express, because if one expressed it each one would perceive its falsity. It is that there is no other motive than that of interest, which should move us, either to do good, or to abstain from evil.

Let us imagine indeed that there are other motives which move us as strongly, and as effectively as this one, to fulfill this double duty. Will it follow that it is permitted for us to neglect it from the fact that one of these motives loses its force by some particular consideration? Will the other motives not always subsist, and should they not always have their effect?

Now it is beyond doubt that besides interest there are other very powerful motives, which oblige us to do good, and to abstain from evil. Such is, for example, the good itself that there is in the one, and the evil that is inseparable from the other. Such is the respect that it is so just to have for the will of God. Such is gratitude for His benefits. Such is the disinterested love that we owe Him, etc.

Is this indeed a thing that is contested? Are not all Christians in agreement thereupon? Have not even the Pagans agreed on it? And what appears to me very considerable, do not the Deists and the Atheists profess to be persuaded of it? What trouble did Mr. Bayle not give himself during the whole course of his life to prove that several among them truly are so?

There will therefore be only monsters, who carry their brutishness further than neither the Pagans, nor the Deists, nor the Atheists, who could be shaken by this Objection. And is the effect that it will have on these as great an evil as one imagines? Will it be able to add much to this foundation of profanation and of impiety, which is contained in such a disposition? Is there even a very great difference between committing the crime, and abstaining from it only by a movement of fear, while still loving it with passion, and wishing to be able to commit it without being punished? The difference is assuredly very small: And in this way the Objection does not have nearly the force that one would say all at once that it has.

It still remains to it however a little, because indeed it seems that it annihilates the motive of interest, which although it is not the only one, nor even the most considerable of those which should imprint on us the love of piety, does not fail to have its utility and its efficacy; and which is moreover one of those which God Himself uses to engage us in the observance of our duty: witness so many promises and so many threats that one finds in His Word, and which visibly suppose that those to whom they are addressed, have some care for their interest.

One must therefore add secondly that the Objection does not even annihilate the motive of interest. It lets it subsist in several respects, and does not prevent it from being important for us to apply ourselves strongly to the study of piety. There will

always remain four motives of this order, capable of making an impression on the most impious and the most lost.

The first is taken from what I have shown in my Dissertation on the Love of God, and on Self-love. It is that holiness and innocence are not only honest goods, but also useful goods, and what is much more, useful immediately by themselves, and independently of their consequences, because they make us more perfect and more accomplished than we would be without them.

The second is taken from the consideration of the love of God. God can only love those who apply themselves with care to do what He orders, and hate those who abandon themselves without any remorse to all sorts of impiety. And who can doubt that it is very advantageous for us to be the objects of His love, and that on the contrary it is a very great misfortune to be the object of His hatred, even considering this love and this hatred only in itself, and abstracting from the other goods and the other evils that can be born from them?

The third is taken from the temporal blessings with which God rewards on earth itself the care that His children take to please Him and to serve Him; and from the scourges, also temporal, with which He crushes quite often the impious. This motive is without doubt a motive of pure interest which always subsists even if one would count duty for nothing.

The fourth finally is taken from the inequality that there will be in the life to come, either in the happiness of the Saints, or in the unhappiness of the wicked. In taking the brutal resolution, of which I have spoken, one gives up all the degrees of glory that one could procure oneself by acting otherwise, supposing that one is elect, and one subjects oneself to all that hell has most terrible, supposing that one is reprobate. In doing it does one have all the care that one should have of one's interests, and does one follow very exactly the rules of prudence?

It is therefore very bad reasoning to make the Objection that I have proposed, and to found thereupon the resolution to abandon oneself to all sorts of excesses. It is to put unworthily under one's feet, both the considerations of Justice, and those of interest, which are equally opposed to one's taking this detestable party.

Thus this Objection is far from having all the force that it seems all at once to have. One must without doubt reduce the most considerable part of it. But one must also admit that there always remains a little of it. If one opposes to it only what I have just indicated it will always be true to say that the consideration of salvation, regarded absolutely, and in the lowest degree, at which it is possible to possess it, and the consideration of damnation taken absolutely, and in the least harsh degree, at which one suffers it, will no longer have any force to restrain us; which can only be very grievous, since this motive is one of those that God Himself proposes to move us to do good, and to abstain from evil.

One must therefore see if one will not be able to preserve even this last motive, which it is not at all just to abandon. This is what one is going to investigate in the following Chapters.

CHAPTER II. That the Objection confined to the limits that one has just indicated, would be triumphant, if one supposed that God resolves only salvation and damnation, leaving us the freedom to do what pleases us.

I AM persuaded that the principal force of the Objection, to whatever subject one applies it, consists in the confusion of the ideas that one has of the Decree of Predestination. Those who do not look at it so closely imagine to themselves something similar to what is ordinarily attributed to the Turks. They join together two things very poorly matched; in God a Decree concerning the salvation and the damnation of men, so absolute, that it precedes all foresight; and in man a freedom of indifference so extensive, that not only can he do good, or evil, as he pleases, but even that he actually does it thus.

They imagine feeling and experiencing the second, and as for the first they conclude it from the epithet of absolute that they hear that we give to this Decree. That being posited this Decree cannot be expressed in a more natural manner than by making God say, Whatever such a man does, whether he repents of his sins, believes in my Son, and perseveres in Faith and in piety until the end of his life, as he has the power, either by the forces of nature, or by the help of a sufficient Grace, and subject to his will, or whether he is obstinate in unbelief and impenitence, I want absolutely to save him. I want on the contrary to damn this other, whether he believes and repents, or whether he lives and dies unbelieving and impenitent.

If one has such an idea of Predestination, I admit that one reasons consequently in saying that whatever it is that one does one cannot change one's destiny, and one will not fail, either to be saved if one is elect, or to be damned if one is reprobate. Thus whatever may be the case with the other motives that I have indicated in the preceding Chapter, the one that is taken from the consideration of the interest that we have in saving ourselves, will have no force, either to move us to do good, or to prevent us from doing evil.

Everything therefore reduces to these two questions. One is to know if this idea that one can have of the Decree of Predestination is correct and exact. The other if being as false as one will wish it is the one that the Reformed have of it.

I say on the first of these two questions that whether one judges by it by natural light, or whether one consults revelation, one cannot help rejecting such an idea, not only as absurd, but also as impious and blasphemous. What would be the Wisdom of God, what His Holiness, what His Justice, and what finally His Goodness, if He disposed in this way of the salvation, and of the damnation of men? Does not

all that sin has left us of common notions, and of natural sentiments, revolt to reject such horrors?

As for what concerns revelation, how many times has it not clearly, expressly, and formally attested the contrary? How many times has it not declared that crime, unbelief, and impenitence, can have as their share only damnation, and that on the contrary perfect happiness will be the gratuitous reward of those who will repent, who will believe in Jesus Christ, and who will persevere in Faith and piety until the end of their life? Should one amuse oneself with reporting the places of the sacred Writings, where one finds these decisions? Do they not present themselves on each page, with however little application one seeks them?

Does one have besides any proof, direct, or indirect, of such a strange imagination? Can one in particular found it on the immutability of the Decrees of God, and on the necessity there is that His Will be executed? Does one believe that it is impossible to reconcile the unshakeable firmness of His Decrees with the immutable truth of His word, which attests to us so formally that crime will be punished, and piety crowned and rewarded?

Let one posit what one will, either that God acts by antecedent wills, or that He conducts Himself by what He foresees. If it is the first, nothing prevents, either that He destine to His glory those to whom He wants to give Faith and perseverance, or that He resolve to give Faith and perseverance to those whom He has the design to save. If it is the second, nothing prevents, either that He resolve to save those whose Faith and perseverance He foresees, or that He destine to damnation those whose unbelief, and obstination in crime He foresees.

Whichever of these two things one posits, what danger is there that God be reduced to the shameful necessity of choosing between these two extremities equally unworthy of His Holiness, of His Wisdom, and of His Greatness, either to overthrow His Laws to execute His Decrees, or to revoke His Decrees to be able to observe His Laws? Will nothing be easier than to preserve for these two functions of His authority and of His Wisdom the firmness and the immutability which are so essential to them, and which are their principal character?

Is this finally our view, and can one dispute against us by this by this species of arguments, which are called arguments to the man, *Argumenta ad hominem*?

I know that there are some of those who do not make it an affair to impute this extravagance to us, on the pretext that one finds something that approaches it in the Ecclesiastical Exposition of Marlorat on St. John XV. 2.

But first even if something approaching should have escaped Marlorat, what justice would there be in imputing to a whole body the wandering of an individual? Especially if one considers that this body, not only rejects it, but also declares in the most express way in the world that it detests it? This is what the Synod of Dordrecht protests in the Conclusion of its Canons. It complains of the fact that the

Remonstrants have accused our Churches of teaching a doctrine, which is fit only to distance minds from piety, and to throw them into security and into license, maintaining that in whatever way the Elect live, they will not fail to save themselves, and that even if the Reprobate would do all the works of the Saints, they would not fail to perish. "That it renders men carnally secure, since they are persuaded by it [the doctrine] that the salvation of the elect is not harmed no matter how they live, and therefore that they may securely commit the most atrocious crimes. And that it does not help the reprobate unto salvation, even if they were to perform all the works of the saints truly."

There is the accusation with which one charges us. What does this celebrated assembly respond to that? It maintains that these accusations, and some other similar ones, are contrary to the truth, to equity, and to charity; and declares finally that far from admitting all these horrors, we detest them with all our heart. "Which the Reformed Churches not only do not acknowledge, but also detest with all their heart."

One can see something similar in the Confession of Faith of the Reformed Churches of Switzerland Art. X.

As for what concerns Marlorat, it is notable that this Theologian is not Author, but simple Compiler, of the Ecclesiastical Exposition. He has drawn it all from Protestant Writers, both Lutheran, and Reformed, who had appeared until then, expressly marking the name of each one, and never failing to indicate his own, when he adds from his own mind some particular clarification, which is quite rare. He even gives to understand in his Preface that he does not claim to be responsible for what he reports, since he admits that one will find in it things contrary to each other.

Following this method he reports the words that are objected to us, but in attributing them to John Brence (Brentius) celebrated Theologian of Tübingen, in whose work one still finds them today. This is what I can assure as an eye witness, having exactly compared these two places, and having used for the work of Brence, the edition of Haguenau published in 1532.

CHAPTER III. Where one examines the response of the Supralapsarians.

WHAT I have just said shows that it matters little to know if this first idea of the Decree of God gives some force to the Objection, since it is so false, and so universally rejected. One cannot say quite the same thing of that of the Supralapsarians, which does not lack partisans.

These Theologians hold that God has created the world only to procure for Himself this external glory, which is born from the exercise of His Virtues, above all from that of His Mercy and of His vindicative Justice, of which the first pardons, and the second punishes. They add that the first could pardon, nor the second punish, only

sin alone. From which they conclude that God wanting absolutely to procure this Glory, and not even being able to renounce it, it was necessary that He create intelligent Beings, alone in a state to receive pardon and punishment, and that having produced them in a state of innocence, He determined them invincibly to sin in order afterwards to be able to show grace to some, and punish the others.

That the design to do all that I have just indicated, joined to the choice of those who were to be received in grace, and to the designation of those whom it was necessary to punish, makes what one calls the Decree of Predestination.

As in putting it in this way God will have equally resolved the end and the means, on the one hand the salvation of the Elect, and the damnation of the Reprobate; and on the other the Faith and the perseverance of the first, the unbelief and the impenitence of the second, all that will happen infallibly, and with an equal necessity. All that consequently will be inseparable, and nothing will be more absurd than to posit one of these events, and to deny the other.

This is however what they say that the Objection does. It posits that the Decree that God has made to save an Elect is executed, and that the one to convert him remains without execution. It posits that it can happen that a Reprobate perish, as it is necessary from the moment that he is Reprobate, and that nevertheless he convert himself, although God has resolved to leave him in his natural corruption, or even to determine him invincibly to evil. That being impossible, they maintain that the Objection which supposes it, is so little solid, that it even has something ridiculous.

To say what I think of it I am persuaded that this response destroys the Objection, and that indeed if the idea that the Supralapsarians have of the Decree of God were correct, the Objection would roll on an impossible supposition, which suffices to make it rejected with reason. But also on another side the hypothesis, which serves as foundation for this Response has something so shocking, that nothing appears to me more strange than to see that it finds partisans.

I. By this account God will act for an end distinct from Him. For indeed this external glory, that one wants Him to seek, is not God Himself. It consists only in the thoughts and actions of intelligent creatures, who note in His works the vestiges of His perfections, who admire them, and adore them. It is therefore something distinct from God. And can what is distinct from God be an end that makes Him act? To make Him seek it is it to attribute to Him a manner of acting that does Him honor?

II. Taking it thus what proportion will there be between the end that God will have proposed for Himself, and the means that He will have employed to attain it? The end will consist only in the thoughts and the actions of some intelligent creatures, and consequently in something which before God is less than nothing. And the means will be, not only the actions of God, among which there is not one that is not of an infinite price, and does not demand to be done various perfections, all infinite, but also in particular this great, this incomprehensible mystery of Redemption, which contains a great number of others, each of which exceeds our intelligence.

Let one judge after that if the admiration and the praises of all that there has ever been of intelligent creatures could be put in the balance with all that one wants God to have done to attract this honor to Himself. Let one judge in particular if all that merited that the eternal Son of God abase Himself to the point of making Himself a man similar to us, cover Himself with shame and opprobrium, and suffer finally the cruel, the frightful death of the cross.

It is a maxim that no one disagrees with that the more the excellence of the end exceeds that of the means, the more there is wisdom, solidity, and good sense, in not sparing them; and that on the contrary the more the excellence of the means exceeds that of the end, the more there is imprudence in putting them to work. Let one judge by that of the honor that one does to God in making Him resolve, either Creation, or Redemption, only in the design of procuring for Himself a good as small as the admiration of some of His creatures, a good further of which He had so little need, that He did without it during the whole extent of an eternity.

III. All this supposes that the exercise of these two perfections was absolutely necessary to attract to Him the glory of them. And what can one imagine more false than such a supposition? Is it that the Blessed, is it that the Angels, have no other way to convince themselves of the Virtues of God than their exercise? Is it that they are not all contained in the idea of the sovereignly perfect Being, which is quite otherwise vast, and quite otherwise distinct, in their mind, than in ours?

Is it besides that they do not contemplate without veils and without clouds the face of God, and that this contemplation, which makes this species of knowledge, that one calls intuitive, is not incomparably more distinct, clearer, and more perfect in a word, than the abstractive, which discovers the causes in the effects, and which goes back from the works to the actions that have produced them, and from these actions to the perfections that are the principle of them?

Is it finally that these Angels, these Blessed, do not know this species of divine perfections, which are not at all active, and which consequently are not discovered by their exercise, such as are Unity, Simplicity, Eternity, Immensity, Immateriality, Independence, etc.? If they can know these perfections without their being exercised, why could they not know the two of which one speaks, even if they had never produced any act?

IV. Is it not besides something incomprehensible, and very directly opposed to all the ideas that we have of the Goodness, and of the Mercy of God, to say that He has drawn from nothingness so many millions of intelligent creatures, only to render them eternally unhappy, and to procure for Himself by their loss a good as small, as this glory, which is not even a good for Him, since it cannot render Him, either more perfect, or happier than He is without that?

True Goodness, far from seeking its own advantage at the expense of others, inconveniences itself to accommodate them, and never appears more worthy of admiration than when it sacrifices its own interests to those of others. It appears

even that this rule is not only for men, since the Son of God has followed it, subjecting Himself to the cruel death of the cross in order to save sinners.

Is it therefore to attribute to God a conduct conformable to the laws of this virtue, to make Him sacrifice such a prodigious number of victims, I will not say to his interest, but to an interest as small, and as little considerable with relation to Him, as the one that one wants to have made Him act?

V. On the other hand is it easy to persuade oneself that sin, the most horrible, and most detestable thing that there is in the world, is not only sovereignly useful, but absolutely necessary, for the production of the greatest of goods, which is, as is said to us, the glory of God? Is it easy to put in one's mind that this God so powerful, so sufficient to Himself, has need of this sin to procure for Himself a good which He cannot do without? For one assures us that as He necessarily loves Himself, it is not possible that He not work to procure for Himself the glory that is due to Him.

VI. But here is something more grievous. This sin so useful, and so necessary, could not be born of itself. One would never have seen it, not only if God had not produced those who have committed it, but also if He had done nothing to move them to it. But this gives rise to new difficulties, from which it is impossible to extricate oneself.

Indeed how is it that God could make man sin? This is on what the Supralapsarians divide. Some say that it has sufficed that God has permitted sin. Others maintain that it was necessary that He push the creature to it invincibly by what they call physical Premotion: And the last say that He put the creature in circumstances, where it was impossible that it not sin.

But none of these thoughts can subsist. For as for the first, simple permission is not necessarily followed by the permitted action except when the agent is determined by himself to this action. If he is indifferent to acting, and not acting, permission will not move him to the one rather than to the other. Thus innocent man having been equally able to sin, and not to sin, if God had been content to leave him master of his action, without pushing him either to one side, or to the other, he could just as well have persevered, as sinned, and in this way it could have happened that man not sinning, God would not have been able to procure for Himself this glory that He destined for Himself, which absolutely overthrows the system of the Supralapsarians.

Physical Premotion was not subject to this inconvenience, I admit, but it gives rise to two others that are no less. It is that on the one hand it makes God the author of sin, and on the other it ruins our Freedom, as I hope to show in the sequel.

And as for what concerns the circumstances, in which one claims that God had put the creatures who have sinned, one cannot say that they engaged them in an absolute necessity to sin, without taking from them this freedom, without which one does not sin at all. One even falls into the pernicious error of Spinoza, who maintains that external causes determine us.

VII. One can say further that this response does roughly the same effect as the Objection. It gives to the sinner the occasion to say, If God has resolved by an irrevocable Decree all the sins that I must commit, in vain would I try to avoid them. A secret, and absolutely invincible power will always move me effectively to them. Why therefore would I put in my mind the ridiculous design of resisting it?

As for what concerns conversion, and perseverance in Faith, I admit that one can say without absurdity that these are means which God uses to lead us to salvation. But besides that it is not necessary to come to that, as one will see in the sequel, this even does not exhaust in this respect the difficulty.

A prompt conversion is not an absolutely necessary means to save oneself, witness that of Manasseh and of the good Thief. It suffices not to perish that one convert oneself before the end of life. That being posited nothing will prevent an Elect from taking the detestable resolution, which makes the difficulty, and from executing it for twenty, or thirty years, after which Grace will not fail to convert him and to save him.

This, I admit, is not nearly as absurd as what the Objection induces, namely that an Elect is obstinate in impenitence during the whole course of his life, and does not fail to save himself by virtue of his Election. But it does not fail to be grievous enough to give us reason to persuade ourselves that the response which gives rise to it is not good. One must therefore seek some other.

CHAPTER IV. That the Objection falls if one posits that the Decree of Predestination is founded on the foresight of our actions.

IF there were no other absolute Decrees than those of the two species of which I have spoken in the preceding chapters, the difficulty that we are trying to clarify would be very embarrassing. But also it is certain that there are some of a third species, as one has seen in the first Part. There are Decrees which are, on the one hand absolute, not being suspended by conditions, and on the other founded on the foresight of what men will do, or will not do, such as was the one that God formed when He resolved to send His Son into the world, to which He would never have been moved if He had not foreseen that men would sin, and would lose themselves by sinning.

Let us suppose for a moment, and until we can investigate what the case is, as we will do in the sequel, let us suppose, I say, that the two Decrees of Predestination, that of Election, and that of Reprobation, are both of this last order. In this supposition the difficulty will vanish, and nothing will be easier than to find the resolution of it.

One has already seen the effect of this supposition in the first Part. One has seen that in admitting it one cannot dispense with taking remedies in illnesses, and with doing all that one will be able to avoid dangers. Why would this same supposition

not make a similar effect with regard to the care that it is so just to take of our salvation.

It seems to me even that this Response has more force against the Objection applied to the care that we should take of our salvation, than against this same Objection applied to the care that we should take of our life. My reason is that there is an incomparably closer connection between conversion and salvation, impenitence and damnation, than between remedies and recovery.

It is not impossible, it is not even without example, that God cures a sick person without any remedy. But it is both without example, and absolutely impossible, that He save a man who dies in impenitence, and that He damn another who dies in true faith.

The Law which makes the efficacy and the necessity of remedies, is only a natural Law, of which God suspends the observation every time that it pleases Him. But the Law which has joined perseverance and salvation, impenitence and damnation, is a Law so firm, so immutable, that God has never derogated from it, and will never derogate from it.

It is therefore to entangle oneself in diverse contradictions to posit an Elect who dies in unbelief and impenitence, and a Reprobate who dies in Faith, while recognizing besides that the two Decrees, that of Election, and that of Reprobation, are both founded on the foresight of what this Elect and this Reprobate were to do.

I go even further. I maintain that one falls into the same fault, if one recognizes with all our Infralapsarians that the Decree of positive Reprobation is of this order, even if one believes with most of our Theologians, both Supralapsarians, and Infralapsarians, that that of Election precedes all foresight. This being posited the Dilemma loses all its force.

A Dilemma, ACCORDING TO M. ARNAUD, is a composed reasoning, where after having divided a whole into its parts, one concludes affirmatively, or negatively of the whole, what one has concluded of each part. Art of thinking, Part. III. Chap. 13.

To make it good and convincing, it is not enough that one of the particular consequences that one draws, is necessary. It is necessary that they all be so equally, in whatever number they may be, and it would be a strange error to imagine that it suffices, that one be good, although the others may not be so. It suffices to make it rejected that one of these consequences is not correct.

And this is so true, that even if both were necessary, the Dilemma would be worth nothing, if it did not make an exact enumeration of the parts, and if besides the two that it rejects, one could indicate a third, or a fourth, of which it said nothing.

It is by this that M. Arnaud rejects the famous Dilemma, by which an Ancient wanted to prove that one should not marry. If the woman that one marries, he said, is beautiful, she gives jealousy. If she is ugly, she displeases. Therefore one should not marry. This Dilemma does not conclude, says M. Arnaud, because there can be

women who will not be so beautiful, that they cause jealousy, nor so ugly that they displease.

He gives another example of it that he takes from Montaigne. But as each one can imagine a great number of them, it is not necessary to report it.

If therefore a Dilemma is worth nothing when the two particular consequences that it contains are necessary, if there is a third member that one omits, what regard should one have for the one that has only two members, of which one admits that one concludes badly?

What regard would one have for the reasoning of the one who to dissuade one of his friends from marrying would say to him, If you marry, one of two things will happen. Either the woman that you will take will be a spendthrift, or she will have all the necessary care of her household. If she is a spendthrift, she will ruin you, and will throw you into indigence. If she is Economical, she will be the know-it-all, and will give you grief.

The first of these two consequences is correct, and the inconvenience, to which it makes one see that one exposes oneself, merits that one try to avoid it. But it is not the same with the second. It is not necessary. For how many women does one not see, who are at the same time gentle, reasonable, and perfectly good Economists. Does this defect not suffice to make this reasoning vicious.

Let us suppose therefore that it is the same with the Dilemma that one opposes to us. Let us suppose that there is nothing to say against the part that concerns Election. Is it not enough to overthrow it that the one that concerns Reprobation cannot be maintained. This suffices without difficulty provided that one proves it solidly. Thus it only remains to see if one can.

CHAPTER V. That according to us the Decree of positive Reprobation is founded on the foresight of actual sins.

IT is not properly a question here of knowing if the Decree of Reprobation is founded on the foresight of sin, and particularly on that of unbelief and of final impenitence. It is only a question of knowing if this is our view.

This objection that one makes is one of these arguments that one calls to the man, and which are founded on the sentiments of those to whom one opposes them. This is at least the only means of giving it some force and some color. Let us see therefore if what one accuses us of believing is effectively the doctrine that we maintain.

But beforehand let us note that one distinguishes in our Schools a double Reprobation, one negative, the other positive, of which the first resolves to leave man in the state of sin and of misery where it finds him, the other resolves to punish him for his sins, and to render him in this way eternally unhappy. Let us begin with the positive, which is the only one of which it is spoken in the Objection.

Let us remember secondly that it is not a question here of the sentiment of the Supralapsarians. They have their system apart on this question, which I will not undertake to defend, and which it would be much to be wished that all Christians condemn unanimously. It is only a question of the belief of the Infralapsarians, who have always made the greatest number among us.

I say on their subject after M. Le Blanc de Beaulieu, who knew so well the history of opinions, that they agree that this Decree is founded on the foresight of sin. "Omnes in eo conveniunt quod Deus neminem eterno suo Decreto damnationi addiderit, nisi ex previso illius peccato, & propter ejus peccatum futurum." [All agree in this that God has not by His eternal Decree assigned anyone to damnation, except by their foreseen sin, and because of their future sin.] De Reprob. thes. 4.

The Synod of Dordrecht whose decisions are so revered among us, makes Reprobation consist in the fact that God has resolved to leave some in the common misery to all, where they have precipitated themselves by their fault, to condemn them, and to punish them eternally, not only because of their unbelief, but also because of all their other sins. "Tandem non tantum propter infidelitatem, sed etiam propter caetera omnia peccata, ad declarationem justitiae suae damnare, & aeternum punire." [Finally not only because of unbelief, but also because of all other sins, to declare His justice to condemn, and eternally punish.] Art. I. Can. 15.

The Theologians of England, who held such a considerable rank in this assembly, pronounce in the 5th thesis of their judgment on Reprobation, that God damns no one, nor destines him to damnation, except in consideration of sin. "Deus neminem damnat, aut damnationi destinat, nisi ex consideratione peccati." [God damns no one, or destines to damnation, except from consideration of sin.]

The Theologians of Hesse Deputed to the same Synod are not content to say the same thing, but they also prove it by three reasons, which one can see towards the end of their judgment on the I. Article.

The Confession of Faith presented at the Conference of Thorn in 1645 by the Churches of Poland, and of Lithuania, is still very express on this subject. It states expressly that final unbelief and impenitence foreseen and permitted, have been the meritorious cause of the desertion and of the condemnation of God. "In reprobatione verò non tantum peccatum originale, sed etiam, quoad adultos, infidelitatem & impœnitentiam contumacem, non quidem à Deo preordinatam, sed in ipsis reprobis, ut causam desertionis & damnationis meritoriam praevisam, atque permissam, justissimoque judicio reprobata esse statuimus." [But in reprobation not only original sin, but also, with regard to adults, unbelief and stubborn impenitence, certainly not preordained by God, but in the reprobates themselves, as the meritorious cause of desertion and damnation foreseen, and permitted, and by most just judgment reprobated we establish.] Cap. V. art. 18.

The four Professors of Leiden in their Synopsis of the purest Theology de Pred. thes. 52. maintain the same thing. "Unde," they say, "necessariè infertur, quemadmodum

praeteritio praesupponit commune peccatum, ita praedamnationem in divina praesentiâ praesupponere insuper omnia quoque reliqua peculiaris peccata, tam adversus legem, quam adversus Evangelium committenda, quae ejusmodi poenam erant commeritura." [Whence is necessarily inferred, that just as passing over presupposes common sin, so pre-damnation in the divine presence presupposes in addition also all the other particular sins, both against the law, and against the Gospel to be committed, which were about to merit such a punishment.]

I do not report the testimonies of individual Authors, who have explained themselves thereupon. That alone would make a volume. I content myself with saying that they could not understand it otherwise, if they have paid even the slightest attention to three things, which are very certain.

The first is that positive Reprobation does not consist simply in resolving to render certain intelligent creatures eternally unhappy, but also to render them such by punishing them, and to exercise thereby, not His absolute power, but the severity of His vindictive Justice. And can one conceive a punishment without conceiving a sin punished? God therefore resolving punishment sees the sins that merit it. And as it is actual sins that He has the design to punish, it is necessary that He foresee them, and that He think of them in forming the Decree that we call of Reprobation.

The second thing to which they had to pay some attention, is that according to all Theologians when God reprobates someone He does not destine to him damnation in general, and in an abstract and metaphysical idea, but in particular such a species, such a precise and determined degree of unhappiness and of damnation, and, what is considerable, a degree always equal and proportionate to the crimes of the Reprobate.

From where could come this equality if not from the justice of God, which proportions the punishment to the offense, and which consequently foresees this offense and even foresees it in all that it has most singular?

Finally it is good to note that there is only the consideration of sin that can reconcile the design of making suffer evils as terrible as those of hell with the natural inclination to Goodness, especially to an immense and inexhaustible Goodness. This consideration put aside this treatment appears directly opposed to this high perfection, which even the Pagans have attributed to the supreme Being, calling Him Very good, even before calling Him Very great.

Thus those who want God to have resolved the loss of such a prodigious number of intelligent creatures, without being moved to it by the sins that He saw they would commit, take away from us by that the means of justifying His conduct, and leave Religion without defense against the insults of unbelievers.

All this shows clearer than day that the Infralapsarians effectively believe, and cannot even help believing, that positive Reprobation is founded on the foresight of sin, and that according to them God has resolved to overwhelm with His vengeance

only those whose excesses He has foreseen, principally unbelief and final impenitence.

Let one judge after that of the exactitude of this part of the Dilemma, which concerns Reprobation. If I am reprobate, one says, whatever I might do I could not save myself. Whatever I might do, that is to say, even if I did what one presses me to do, even if I detested my past sins, even if I renounced them, even if I repented of them sincerely, and in good faith, even if I truly believed in Jesus Christ crucified. Notwithstanding all that I would be damned. All these acts would be useless to me. The inflexible Decree of my eternal Reprobation would not fail to be executed, and my loss would be no less inevitable.

Who does not see that in supposing our view, on which alone one is founding oneself, the Objection associates two incompatible things, Reprobation on the side of God, and repentance on the side of man? Reprobation according to us is uniquely founded on the foresight of sin, and of final impenitence. And notwithstanding such a Reprobation the sinner believes and repents. That is to say that he does what God has foreseen that he will not do. And as God foresees only what will happen in its time, it will be true to say that the same thing will happen, since God foresees it, and that it will not happen since one supposes the contrary.

Another impossibility. A man who believes, and who repents, is damned, because he is reprobate. And that being the case what becomes of the general, perpetual, and fundamental Law of the new covenant, which holds that whoever will believe, and will repent, will be saved?

Let one add to all that I have just indicated the enormous abuse that one makes of one's Reason in concluding from the fact that God resolves to damn a man, only because He foresees his obstination in evil, that He would not fail to destroy and to damn him, even if this man would truly repent.

Let one gather all these things, and let one see next if it is easy to imagine an Objection less reasonable than this one.

CHAPTER VI. That one can say in our principles that Election to Glory supposes the foresight of Faith, and of perseverance which ruins entirely the Objection.

IT is therefore not necessary to satisfy this Objection to maintain that the two Decrees, which compose that of Predestination, I mean that of Election, and that of Reprobation, are both founded on the foresight of the actions of men. It suffices that one can say it of one of the two, and particularly of that of Reprobation, as one has seen in the two Chapters immediately preceding.

But although that suffices for me, I add by superabundance of right that what I have said of Reprobation can also be said of Election, without moving away in any manner

from our belief. This is what I am going to show, after which this Objection will be fully resolved.

But before undertaking it it is important to note that what I say can have three meanings. One can imagine three sorts of actions of each Elect, that God has foreseen before destining to him the glory of heaven. The first are productions of nature, which acts by its forces alone, and without any help of Grace. The second are actions produced by the help of a sufficient Grace, and subject to the will, which can render it efficacious, or inefficacious, as it pleases. The third are actions produced by the help of a Grace efficacious by itself, and which infallibly produces its effect.

To say that our Election is founded on the foresight of the works of the first order, is to proclaim pure Pelagianism, and to abandon the most constant doctrine of our Churches. To say that this Decree is founded on the foresight of the actions of the second order, is not to go quite so far, but it is still to distance oneself considerably from our belief. But to reduce oneself to the third, and to say that God destines to the possession of His Glory only those whose Faith and perseverance He foresees, which He has resolved to give them by an all-powerful operation of His Spirit, is to say nothing opposed to our sentiments, and which several of our most celebrated Theologians have not expressly maintained.

I admit that they do not agree, either on the order, in which one should arrange the Decrees of God, or even on the rule that one should follow to determine what this order is. Some are guided by a maxim of Aristotle, which says that what is the last in execution, is the first in intention, which is why they place the Decree which resolves the end before the one which chooses the means. The others want on the contrary that God resolve what must precede before resolving what must follow, and that thus He resolved the death of Lazarus before resolving his resurrection.

One will be neither shocked, nor surprised by this diversity if one considers that it is not a question here of the order in which God Himself arranges His acts, but only of that in which we arrange what we think of the acts of God. One agrees on both sides that God resolves at the same time, and by a single act, the end and the means, what precedes and what follows. But as we are out of a state to understand clearly this, we are constrained to divide into diverse acts what is very simple, very unified, or better said, perfectly one in God. This is why it is only a question of the order in which we should arrange these imperfect and defective ideas, that we make in place of this unique, and at the same time complete, idea, that would be necessary to make of it, if one could.

This, as one sees, is of a very small importance. This is why also M. Claude, this wise, this judicious Theologian, without preferring one of these orders to the other admits both, and says that they are equally good. *Opusc. posth. Tom. IV. page 450. 451.*

The four Professors of Leiden declare themselves for the first, but they recognize that the second is very orthodox. *Syn. pur. Theol. disp. 24. thes. 34. 35.*

Several have declared themselves for the second, as M. Holfus shows it in his Treatise on Predestination page 115. 116. and I can add to it some, of whom this learned man does not speak.

Indeed Twisse, who has worked so much on this matter, recognizes at the end of his second Digression that this was the last sentiment of Piscator. He shows further that it was that of Ursinus, and of Pareus. One can add to it Cameron, who in one of his Letters, which one finds in the III Volume of his works of the Saumur edition, says expressly that God considers rather man as believing, than as having to be saved. "Prius Deus considerat hominem ut credentem, quàm consideret ut servandum. Itaque in decreto prior est fides quam salus." [God considers man as believing first, rather than considering him as one to be saved. Therefore in the decree faith is prior to salvation.] pag. 570.

Finally M. Pictet, whose orthodoxy is so recognized, speaking of the order of the Decrees, and proposing the one that pleases him the most, makes them consist in seven acts, by the last of which God has resolved to give Glory to those whom He has elected, to whom His Son will have acquired salvation by the merit of His death, and whom His Spirit will have sanctified. Theol. Chrét. liv. IV. Chap. 4.

I add that this is the constant doctrine of St. Augustine, as Jansenius proves it very strongly in the whole of Chap. 7. of the IX book of Gratiâ Christi Salvatoris [On the Grace of Christ the Savior]. He shows there that this Father often brings the Foreknowledge of God into the Decree of Election, but that he brings it in as having for its object, not what men will do of themselves, but what His Grace will operate in them.

I will produce to justify him only a single place of the works of this holy Doctor. He explains what St. Paul says Rom. XI. 2. God has not rejected His people, whom He has foreknown beforehand. He says that there is no doubt that this Foreknowledge is Predestination itself. "He has foreknown," he says, "the remnant, which He Himself was to form According to the Election of Grace. To predestine," he adds, "is to foresee what He had the design to do Himself." "Nullus igitur, qui haec intellexit, negare, vel dubitare permittitur, ubi ait Apostolus, non repulit Deus plebem suam, quam praescivit, praedestinationem significare voluisse. Praescivit enim reliquias, quas secundum electionem gratiae fuerat ipse factururus. Hoc est ergo, praedestinavit. Sine dubio enim praescivit si praedestinavit, sed praedestinasse est hoc praescivisse quod fuerat ipse factururus." [Therefore no one, who has understood these things, is permitted to deny, or to doubt, where the Apostle says, God has not rejected His people, whom He foreknew, he wanted to signify predestination. For He foreknew the remnant, which according to the election of grace He Himself would make. This therefore is, He predestined. For without doubt He foreknew if He predestined, but to have predestined is to have foreknown this which He Himself would do.] Aug. de bono persev. cap. 14.

St. Fulgentius says the same thing. "God," he says, "has predestinated to reign those whom He has foreseen would believe by the help of His preventing mercy, and who would persevere by the help of His subsequent mercy." "Praedestinavit ad regnum quos à se praescivit misericordiae praevientis auxilio credituros, & in se misericordiae subsequentis auxilio mansuros." [He has predestined to the kingdom those whom He has foreknown would believe by the help of His preventing mercy, and would remain in Him by the help of His subsequent mercy.] Fulg. ad Monim. lib. 1. cap. 24.

In supposing this system this part of the Dilemma has the same defect as the one that concerns positive Reprobation. It makes an impossible and contradictory supposition. For if God predestines to glory only those whose faith and perseverance He foresees, it is clear that to say that if one is elect, one will not fail to save oneself, even if far from believing and persevering in the faith, one is obstinate in unbelief and impenitence, is to posit and to overturn the same thing. It is to say on the one side that one will live and die in faith and piety, since one knows that God destines to His glory only those in whom He knows that His Grace will infallibly produce these effects; and on the other that one will die without faith and without piety. Thus here is a new contradiction as palpable as the preceding ones.

CHAPTER VII. Where one begins to consider the Objection with respect to Election to Grace, and to negative Reprobation.

WHAT I have just said shows that the Objection is not very pressing, when one takes it only from the consideration of Election to glory, and of positive Reprobation. As one can without moving away from our belief maintain that these two Decrees suppose the foresight of our actions, that alone takes away from it all that it has proper to dazzle, and discovers entirely its weakness.

But one cannot say the same thing of another use that one could make of it. It will be incomparably more embarrassing, if without speaking of Election to Glory, and of positive Reprobation, one is limited to negative Reprobation, and to Election to Grace, by which God resolves to refuse the Grace of conversion to certain sinners, and to grant it to others.

Here is how one can propose it in this last sense. One can introduce a sinner who says, Either God has resolved to convert me one day, or He has resolved to let me die in impenitence. If He has resolved to convert me, the most enormous crimes that I will commit with the most pride and obstination will not prevent Him from executing His Decree. Thus whatever I do during all the time that must precede my conversion, I will convert myself infallibly at the precise moment that He has marked for that, and in this way I will save myself. If on the contrary God has resolved never to convert me, I would in vain do well. I could strive to change my life, I could work at it. All my efforts will be vain, and of no effect. Thus considering only the sole interest that I have in saving myself, it is indifferent whether I live well, or badly,

whether I constrain myself, and do myself violence, or whether I abandon myself to my most criminal inclinations. It will be neither more nor less, neither my salvation, nor my conversion will be, neither more impossible, nor more unfailing.

This Objection thus proposed appears of a great force, and I am surprised to find in none of our Theologians what they believe that one should respond to it. I do not remember at least having read any who have appeared to me to have paid the least attention to it.

It seems on the other hand that it is sheltered from the responses that one opposes to it, when one applies it to other subjects. One would say all at once that they become, not only vain and useless, but also evidently false if one wants to use them on this occasion.

Can one say here, as elsewhere, that the Decree in question is founded on the foresight of what we should do, or not do? Can one in particular on the subject of Election to Grace? Do we not constantly hold that as this Grace is the principle and the source of all the good that we can do, it is impossible that God discover any in not a single one of those whom He chooses to grant it to them? And to maintain the contrary would it not be to abandon our belief in a capital point, and which is not at all susceptible to relaxation?

We are not quite so united on negative Reprobation. Some want it to suppose the foresight of original sin, others that it follow it. But all, or nearly so, want it to precede the foresight of actual sins, which are those of which it is a question presently, since they are the only ones of which one accuses us of authorizing the practice.

Can one say here, as elsewhere, that this Objection rolls on an impossible and contradictory supposition? What contradiction, what impossibility, neither metaphysical, nor physical, nor even moral, can there be in saying that an Elect not yet regenerated, such as Manasseh could be in the time when he carried himself with so little remorse to the greatest excesses, makes the reasoning that one opposes to us, takes the resolution which is the consequence of it, and executes it during all the rest of the time that must precede his conversion?

Can one say that the same God who resolves the end, resolves also the means? How can one apply this to negative Reprobation? Where will one find in this respect, either the means, or the end, or the necessity of these means? And as for what concerns Election, cannot God have resolved the conversion of a sinner, and the internal and external means, of which He has the design to make use to produce it, without preventing the sinner from making this reasoning, from taking the resolution to which it leads, and from executing it during all the time that must precede his conversion, which can go to several years?

Thus neither the Supralapsarians, nor the Infralapsarians being able to employ except these three responses, and not one of the three removing the difficulty thus proposed, one does not see what, either the ones, or the others, can oppose to it.

One does not even see what the Congruists can say to defend themselves from it. Here indeed is what one can say in their hypothesis, Either God has resolved to grant me congruous Graces, or He has resolved to give me only incongruous ones. If it is the first, I will convert myself infallibly at the precise time, where it will please Him to give me this help. Thus while waiting for it I can plunge myself into vice, without exposing thereby my Salvation to any new risk. If He wants to give me only incongruous Graces, it is sure that I will not convert myself, neither presently, nor ever. Why therefore would I amuse myself working at it?

This Objection being so embarrassing each one sees to what point it is important to resolve it well. I am going to work at it with all my strength. May God be pleased to give me the grace to succeed in it.

CHAPTER VIII. That it is not certain that Election to Grace, and negative Reprobation, precede the foresight of actual sins.

EACH one sees well enough that this Objection thus proposed, and reduced to this last sense, draws what it has of force from the fact that one supposes that it is not the case with Election to Grace, and with negative Reprobation, as with the other Decrees, which, as one has seen, suppose the foresight of what we can do, or not do. For after all if these two last supposed it, like all the others, one could apply to them the same response, and what removes the difficulty in the other respects, would also remove it in this one.

But what makes the embarrassment is what is commonly believed among us that these two Decrees precede the foresight of all that we can do of good and of evil, and suppose at most only the foresight of original sin alone, which even not all admit. For this being posited all that one will be able to do in the sequel cannot break, either the Election, or the Reprobation already made, and determined, nor prevent them from being executed. Thus the judgment that one should make of this Objection depends on knowing if what it supposes is quite certain. For if it is, I admit that I do not see what one can respond.

I have thought about it more than once with all the application of which I am capable, without anything presenting itself to my mind that satisfied it. On the other hand if all that is doubtful and uncertain, one is very well founded to despise it, for what regard should one have for a reasoning that is founded only on a perhaps?

Everything therefore reduces to knowing if what one supposes is quite certain. But before pronouncing thereupon one must distinguish. Is it a question of the foresight of good, or of that of evil?

With regard to good it is beyond doubt, that neither Election to Grace, nor a stronger reason negative Reprobation, suppose in us the foresight of any good. The reason for it is that there can be none that the Grace conferred by virtue of Election, has not put there. How therefore could the view of this good precede the resolution to give the Grace that produces it?

But it is not the same with the evil that is in us. It is not at all certain that, either the Decree of Election to Grace, or that of negative Reprobation, precede the foresight of this evil, whatever it be, original, or actual. It is not even true that our Theologians agree on it.

It is true that those that one calls Supralapsarians put these Decrees before the foresight of sin, both original, and actual. It is also true that most of the Infralapsarians place them after the foresight of original sin, and before that of actual sins. But it is true also that there are others who make these Decrees be preceded by the foresight of the sins of these two orders, of the original, and of the actual.

It is in this rank that one must put M. du Moulin in his Anatomy of Arminianism chap. XXVI. The Authors of the Confession of Faith of the Churches of Poland and of Lithuania presented at the Conference of Thorn, and several Theologians of Brandenburg cited and followed by M. Holsfus in his Treatise on Predestination chap. III.

This diversity alone, and without adding any other consideration to it, shows, it seems to me, that what is the subject of it is very little certain. For after all if it were so, Theologians as wise as those that I have indicated, would not contest thereupon. They would all yield to the evidence, which would accompany this certainty. Thus this same fact that one does not agree thereupon justifies well enough that all that one says of it is little assured.

Moreover one agrees that if there is in Theology some question that it is impossible to decide with certainty, and without fearing to be mistaken, it is the one that has for its subject the order in which one should arrange the Decrees of God. None of our Theologians has entered into these thorny disputes as far as Twisse. This is what he has made his greatest efforts on. But after having exhausted all that he knew of Metaphysics, and which was his forte, he was constrained to admit that it is impossible to see even a little clearly among these shadows, and that there is no thread that can give the means of getting out of this Labyrinth. Here are his own words:

"Quoties privatis lucubrationibus tentata mihi series decretorum divinatorum, sive à Scholasticis, sive à nostris Theologis contexta, toties in ejusmodi Labyrinthos inductum me esse comperi, ut ex iis exitum invenire, aut tolerabili aliquâ cum satisfactione expedire me vix potuerim. Adeo ut ἀκυλα prorsus ista sacraria, nostrique ingenii viribus inaccessa professus aut iis ulterius pertentandis supersedendum judicaverim, aut saltem posterioribus cogitationibus ea

reservanda." [Every time I have privately tried to work out the series of divine decrees, whether compiled by Scholastics or by our Theologians, I have found myself led into such labyrinths that I could hardly find a way out of them, or extricate myself with any tolerable satisfaction. So much so that I have professed these sanctuaries to be completely impenetrable and inaccessible to the powers of our intellect, and have judged either that further attempts should be abandoned, or at least reserved for later thoughts.]

If this matter is so shadowy, how could one claim that what one says on this subject is certain? Everyone knows that the foundation of certainty is evidence. How therefore could be certain that which is so obscure?

To prevent one from taking my thought badly, and to put all this in a greater light, I note that there is a double evidence. One that one calls intrinsic, and which has its source in the things themselves; the other that one calls extrinsic, and which comes from the testimony that God, who cannot lie, can render to the most obscure truths in themselves.

I do not claim that intrinsic evidence is absolutely necessary to give rise to certainty. I admit that the extrinsic suffices. I maintain only that one or the other indeterminately is necessary for this effect; and I add that neither one, nor the other is found in what one tells us concerning the order of the Decrees of God.

What one says of it does not have intrinsic evidence. How would it be possible to find it in things so sublime and so little proportioned to the weakness of the human mind? In things further, which have depended in several respects on the free will of God?

One finds there just as little the evidence that one calls extrinsic, and which is born from the testimony of God, that is to say from some formal decision of Scripture. Where to find such decisions on this matter? And was it indeed necessary to expect that the Holy Spirit would lower itself to these subtleties, not to say these minutiae of Metaphysics? Has He told us anything concerning these instants of reason, where it has pleased the Theologians to place the diverse acts that they have attributed to God? Are these not productions of the School, and not truths attested by the holy books? And if someone undertook to prove them by this great rule of our Faith, would it not be easy to make him see the weakness of his proofs?

This is what Valæus recognizes in so many words. He says that this subject is very difficult, and very elevated above the sense of the flesh. "In hoc tam arduo, & à sensu carnis remoto articulo." [In this so difficult and from the sense of flesh remote article.] He adds that Scripture has not explained itself distinctly thereupon. "De quo ordine diximus S. Scripturam ita perspicue non agere." [About which order we have said that Holy Scripture does not speak so clearly.] And he concludes that provided that one moves away from Pelagianism, one should not dispute on this subject.

But let us pass to something more pressing. How could be certain that which is founded only on fictions, of the falsity of which the whole world agrees? Everything reduces to knowing how it is that one must arrange the Decrees of God, which are those that precede, and which those that follow. However the whole world agrees on two things. One is that there is no order, no anteriority, nor posteriority in things sovereignly one, simple, and indistinct: The other is that this is the idea that one should have of the acts of God.

Considering them such as they are in themselves, they are not distinct acts. It is only a single act terminating in diverse objects. It is therefore impossible that there be an order; that one act precede, and that another follow. And if that is so as the whole School agrees, how could it be certain that such a Decree precedes, and that another follows?

Nothing therefore is more frivolous, nothing emptier than the Disputes that one stirs up on this subject. Thus to build on whichever it is of the opinions that one maintains on this matter, is to build in the air, and to take chimeras, and beings of reason for realities.

CHAPTER IX. That one can be assured that the Decrees in question do not precede the foresight of actual sins.

WHAT I have just said clearly shows that it is not at all certain that Election to Grace, and negative Reprobation precede the foresight of actual sins, which suffices for me to destroy the Objection that I examine. But as abundance of right harms no one, I will add something much stronger. I maintain that not only what is opposed to us is not certain, but also that one can positively assure oneself that it is false, and that indeed these two Decrees, of which one speaks, do not precede the foresight of actual sins.

I do not say that they follow it. That is another question, which one will be able to touch in the sequel. I say only that they do not precede it, and here is how I prove it.

I. If there were someone whose Predestination preceded the foresight of actual sins, it would be without doubt children, who die before coming to the age of knowledge, especially those of this order, who have not received Baptism. It is however beyond doubt that when God predestines several of these children, whatever it is that He resolves on their subject, He sees a great number of actual sins, not in truth that they will commit, but that others will commit on their occasion. How many of these children are there, who are the fruits of an illicit conjunction, of an incest, of an adultery, etc. How many again who lose their life by parricides, by abortions, and by other similar crimes, which God sees very distinctly when He resolves what must happen to them. And if He sees then these sins, who can doubt that He sees all the others, of whatever order they may be, and which have no less objective reality than the first?

II. But here is something that approaches a little more our subject. I maintain that when God resolves to convert an adult, or to refuse him the Grace of conversion, He sees very distinctly the actual sins of this man, and that not only because this view accompanies this resolution, and is done at the same instant, but principally because it is formally, and essentially contained therein.

Nothing is easier than to prove it. I begin with the Decree of Election to Grace, and I ask how one can say that it precedes the foresight of actual sins, since in making it God resolves to pardon these actual sins to those whom He chooses in this way.

By the Decree of which we speak God resolves to grant His Grace to certain sinners. This Grace that He resolves to grant them is double. It is on the one hand that of the remission of sins, and on the other that of conversion. And what are these sins that He resolves to pardon them? Is it the sole original sin? Did God, for example, resolve to pardon only this single sin to Manasseh, when He resolved to show him Grace? This is what no one will say, and which indeed would be ridiculous.

If therefore God resolves to pardon actual sins, He foresees them all, He knows them very distinctly, and in all their most singular circumstances. Consequently this Decree, far from preceding the foresight of actual sins, supposes it, and contains it.

Let one not imagine indeed to be able to elude this proof by saying that God resolves by a confused act to pardon, not such and such sins, but in bulk, and without distinction, all the sins that it will be found that this man will have committed, whatever they may be. For besides that to say this, is to abandon, at least in part, what is opposed to us, besides that, I say, it is to cover one absurdity with another absurdity, which is no less. Indeed all the Theologians of all the Sects, with the exception perhaps of the Socinians, maintain unanimously that God makes no confused Decrees. Mares. Hyd. Soc. to. I. p. 269. Burm. Syn. Theol. lib. I. cap. 37. n. 28. Vittich. Rom. IX. 6. pag. 405.

But to return to my subject, the foresight of actual sins is again contained in the resolution that God takes to regenerate certain sinners. Indeed this regeneration consists, at least in part, in the total, or partial, destruction of the habits of vice, of which these sinners are slaves. When therefore God resolves to convert them, He resolves to free them from these habits. Consequently He knows these habits. He knows by what actual sins they have been contracted. How after that can one say that this Decree precedes the foresight of actual sins?

When on the contrary God resolves to refuse to someone, either the remission of his sins, or the Grace of conversion, He sees these sins, that He does not want to pardon him, He sees these bad habits, in which He wants to leave him. Thus this Decree, no more than the preceding one, does not go before the foresight of actual sins.

III. But here is a consideration that appears to me worthy to be well weighed. I hope to show in the sequel that there are certain sins that God punishes by the refusal of

the Grace of conversion. And as God does nothing in time that He has not resolved from eternity, that alone shows that from all eternity He has resolved to punish in this way these sins.

But this being posited how can one contest that in taking this resolution, and consequently in reprobating these sinners He does not see very distinctly these sins, which He wants to punish in this manner.

IV. To say that God resolves what He will do with certain sinners before knowing all that these sinners must do, is to make Him act in a manner that corresponds little to the idea that we all have of the sublimity, and of the perfection of His Wisdom. He will begin in this way to resolve before having all the knowledge, which can be of use in this occasion. He sees only the original sin with which one is soiled, and does not yet see the actual sins that one must add to it. Without waiting for what will be the case, He forms two irrevocable Decrees on this imperfect knowledge, instead of a moderately wise man who would begin to resolve only after having made all the researches of which he is capable, and being persuaded that there is nothing to add.

V. Finally it seems to me that what I posit puts the glory of the Mercy and of the Justice of God in a quite different light than the one in which the opposed sentiment puts it. It is certain that the glory of Mercy is to be gratuitous, and that of vindicative Justice to have been provoked. The less one merits a grace, the more the Goodness which grants it is worthy to be admired. On the contrary the more one is worthy of a punishment, the more it is just that one suffer it.

Thus actual sins being quite otherwise worthy to be punished than the original, to say that God foresaw them all when He elected some, and reprobated others, is to give a quite different idea of the marvels of His Goodness, and of the exactitude of His Justice, than to say that when He formed His Decrees He had before His eyes only the human race soiled with the sole original sin.

As therefore it is our duty to heighten as much as we can the glory of these two Virtues, this alone makes a favorable prejudice for the sentiment that I posit, and should make it regarded with a secret desire to find it true. What will it be therefore if one joins this consideration to the others that I have touched on?

CHAPTER X. That there are actual sins, which make God not convert those who commit them.

WHAT I have said in the preceding Chapters is more than sufficient to destroy the objection that is made to us, since it overturns its foundations. Thus I could remain there, and content myself with what I have said. But as I can add something much stronger, there will be no harm in doing it. This will be the means of putting this Objection in a greater light.

I say therefore that not only does God see the actual sins of those to whom He resolves to grant, or to refuse, the Grace of conversion, but that there are sinners to

whom He refuses it only because they have committed certain sins, which He punishes by that. One will see in the following Chapter the effect that this truth has on the Objection. Here I content myself with indicating the proofs that one finds of it in Scripture.

The first is taken from what is said of this great sin, which one calls the sin against the Holy Spirit, and which is represented to us in various places as unforgivable. In particular St. Paul says that there is no grace for those who come to commit it, and that there remains no sacrifice to make their peace with God.

But how? Is it that if they converted themselves truly and sincerely God would reject them? That is not conceivable, and appears directly opposed to so many general promises, and without exception, which make hope for Grace and Glory to all those who will come to repent.

The unforgivability of this great sin comes without doubt from the fact that it is impossible that it be followed by repentance. This is the reason that St. Paul gives for it. It is impossible, he says, that they be renewed to repentance.

But this same from where can it come? Is it that Grace, which has so many attractions, does not have enough to triumph over the obstination of these hearts? That would be ridiculous. For what can there be impossible to the one who can absolutely everything? It is solely from the fact that God has obligated Himself by a perpetual, and irrevocable Law, to never grant this Grace to not a single one of those who will render themselves guilty of this great sin.

Those whom Scripture calls hardened, and of whom it says that God has blinded the mind, and fattened the heart, furnish us a second example of what I say. Indeed one must be very careful not to believe that God executes this judgment by a positive, and immediate action of His power, by adding a new degree of hardness and of obstination to what these unfortunates have contracted by their bad conduct. This terrible execution of the Justice of God consists principally in the fact that He refuses them the Grace of conversion, which could have softened them.

God, says St. Augustine, hardens, not by producing malice, but by not spreading His mercy. "Non enim obdurat Deus impertiendo malitiam, sed non impertiendo misericordiam." [For God does not harden by imparting malice, but by not imparting mercy.] Epist. 105.

It is by this that one must explain what is said of the children of Eli I. Sam. II. 25. that they did not profit from the reprimands of their father, because God wanted to put them to death. For as one has seen in the I. Part, the meaning of these words is that these unfortunates having carried crime to its summit, God resolved to punish them for it by a violent and precipitated death, and in this design did not grant them the natural help of His Grace, which could have made them avoid this punishment.

Their impiety was therefore the true reason that made God not grant them this help, which has appeared so true to M. Martin, that he has found in it one of the rules,

that he believes that God ordinarily follows in the distribution of His Grace. That, he says, makes see clearly three things. The first that repentance is a gift of God. The second that God does not ordinarily make this gift to those who by a pure contempt for His word violate His laws, and deliver themselves to the disorder of their passions. The third, etc.

The same truth appears in what God says to the Israelites Ps. LXXXI. 12. 13. My people has not listened to my voice, and Israel has not been pleased with me. This is why I have abandoned them to the hardness of their heart. There is this indocile people abandoned by God, that is to say without difficulty deprived of His Grace. But why is it so? It is because it has not listened to the voice of its Creator. It is for this reason that it has been abandoned.

One can note again the same thing in these so lively, and so animated words, that Jesus Christ formerly addressed to the city of Jerusalem, Oh if you also had known, indeed at least in this your day, the things that belonged to your peace! But now they are hidden from before your eyes, because you have not known the time of your visitation. Luke. XIX. 42.44.

It appears by that that the things that belonged to the peace of Jerusalem, were hidden from its eyes. But how hidden? Is it that Jesus Christ, and that His Apostles had ceased to announce them to it? Is it that they no longer performed miracles to confirm them? Not at all. It is that God no longer accompanied them with the efficacy of His Spirit. And why did He not accompany them with this efficacy? It is, says Jesus Christ, because this people had not known the time of its visitation. The unworthy and insupportable manner, in which this unhappy nation responded to the honor that God did to it, made that in permitting that His word continued always to be preached to it, He did not make it effective, as He could have, by accompanying it with the all-powerful operation of His Holy Spirit.

The same truth appears in what St. John reports in chap. XII. of his Gospel. He says that although Jesus Christ had performed so many miracles before the Jews, these wretches did not believe, because God had hardened their heart. As this hardening contained the refusal of regenerating Grace, it is clear that their unbelief drew this punishment on them, and that thus actual sins of an extraordinary atrocity can prevent us from receiving this help.

St. Paul says something similar concerning the Pagans of his time. He assures that these people having in some way known God, and not having glorified Him as God, He has delivered them to the lusts of their own hearts, and to a spirit devoid of all judgment. Rom. I. 21.

The least that these words imply is that God had refused to these infidels the Grace of conversion, which could have effectively prevented the disorders, into which they threw themselves in the sequel. But why is it that God refused them this Grace? It is because they had voluntarily stifled the lights that the inspection of the works of

nature had spread in their soul. This is why He delivered them to the lusts of their own heart.

This Apostle says again something quite approaching in another place. Speaking of those whom the Antichrist must seduce, he says that God will send them an efficacy of error so that they believe in falsehood II. Thess. II. 10. 11. But why will He do it? It is, says this Apostle, because they have not received the love of His truth. The unworthy treatment that they have done to the truth is therefore the cause of the severity that God exercises on them, and of which the principal part is the refusal of the Grace which could have enlightened them, and converted them.

CHAPTER XI. That if certain actual sins make God refuse in time the Grace of conversion, these same sins foreseen could have made Him resolve from eternity to refuse it.

AFTER all that I have just said, I believe that one can hold for certain that there are sins which make in their way, I mean as occasional causes, that God does not grant the Grace of conversion to those who have committed them, and that on the contrary He abandons them to themselves, and lets them fall into spiritual hardening.

But if God follows this law in time, I do not see why one should doubt that He did not have some regard for it in eternity. If He has willed something in eternity, and if He wills it in time, these are not two distinct acts, these are not two different volitions. It is a single, and same act, a single and same volition, which lasts and which subsists always, and which does not suffer the slightest change.

On the other hand foreseen sins should have the same efficacy to make take the resolution, that the sins actually committed have to make it execute. This at least is what one sees in men, and I do not see what could prevent the same thing from happening with regard to God.

Moreover most admit that the foresight of actual sins is the cause and the foundation of positive Reprobation; and their principal reason is that these same sins actually committed are the cause of damnation, which is executed only in time. If that is so why would the same thing not happen with regard to negative Reprobation? Especially if one considers that nothing is more natural than to believe that there is a perfect conformity between the Decrees of God, and their execution.

This is indeed the great principle of our Theologians, who prove by it that positive Reprobation supposes the foresight of actual sins. See those of Hesse Deputed to the Synod of Dordrecht towards the end of their judgment on the I. Article, Du Moulin in his Anatomy of Arminianism chap. 26. Rivet in his Dispute on Reprobation thesis 12. Hoornbeck in his Summary of Controversies page m. 607 etc.

If this reason is good being applied to positive Reprobation, I do not see why it would cease to be so, being applied to negative Reprobation. What difference indeed can

there be between these two consequences? Actual sins make in time, that God damns those who commit them. Therefore they have made from all eternity that He has resolved to damn them, and this one, Actual sins make in time, that God does not grant the Grace of conversion to those who have committed them. Therefore they have made that He has resolved not to grant it to them.

What can one say against the second, which does not fall back on the first. Thus the first being so generally received, I do not understand how, and under what pretext, one can reject the second.

Besides that I have shown in another place that according to all our Theologians if God chooses, or reprobates, Peter rather than Paul, it is because He has good reasons to do it. If that is so, on what can one base oneself to maintain that none of His reasons is ever taken from the consideration of some one of these sins, of which we have just spoken?

Indeed if that were so it would be necessary to say one of two things, either that in choosing, and in reprobating men, God would have acted without reason, or that having had some, it would be quite different from the one which makes Him act when in time He converts one and abandons the other.

The first is contrary to the sentiment of all Christians, as I have already noted, and the second would be the strangest thing in the world. For in whose mind could it fall that God having a reason to resolve, would have another to execute? Who will believe that He has no regard in the execution to what has made Him form the design. Who will believe that He has not thought in forming the design of what moves Him to execute it?

Here is another consideration, which appears to me worthy to be well weighed. When some one of the sins, of which I have spoken in the preceding Chapter, makes God refuse the Grace of conversion to those who have fallen into it, it is beyond doubt that God punishes them by that very thing for these sins. This is what cannot be contested to me. But if God punishes them actually in this way; cannot one assure oneself that He had resolved it from all eternity. For who does not know that God does nothing that He has not resolved? And what difference can there be between saying that God has resolved to punish these sins by the refusal of His Grace, and saying that these sins have made God resolve to punish them in this way?

It seems to me indeed that as these two propositions, God punishes certain sins by not converting those who commit them, and, These sins actually committed make in their way that God does not convert the Authors of them, as, I say, these two propositions greatly resemble one another, and whatever may be the case are very closely linked together, one can say the same thing of these three, God has resolved to punish these sins by not converting those whom He has foreseen would commit them. The foresight of these sins has made God resolve not to convert the Authors of them. These foreseen sins have made God resolve not to convert those who were to fall into them.

Finally I cannot persuade myself that if negative Reprobation preceded the foresight of actual sins, Scripture would have said that there are actual sins which make God not grant the Grace of conversion to those who have committed them. How could these sins be the cause of this effect, if this effect had already been produced beforehand by another quite different cause?

From the moment that a sinner is reprobate, it is impossible that the Grace of conversion be granted to him. The privation of this Grace is a misfortune that he could no longer draw on himself, since he is already subjected to it by the eternal Decree of negative Reprobation. How therefore can one assure that he throws himself into it by his actions? He could, I admit, if he were not reprobate. But being so from all eternity he is out of a state to do it, by the law which wants it to be impossible to do what is already done.

CHAPTER XII. That there are very few sins for which we have more just reason to believe that their foresight caused the reprobation of those who committed them, than the one committed by those who use the reasoning that is opposed to us.

Nothing then should prevent us from believing that there are sinners from whom God has resolved to refuse the Grace of conversion, because He has foreseen that they would commit certain sins. If this is granted to me, I believe I can add that if there is any sin which should operate this effect, it is apparently the one committed by those who engage in the reasoning, and take the resolution that is opposed to us. I said apparently, because I do not claim to give this as certain. It is enough for me that one admits there is likelihood. It has even been seen that I could be satisfied with less, and that I have all I need provided that one grants me that what I pose is not impossible. But in effect there is something more, and the least one can say is that this has one of the most eminent degrees of likelihood.

Indeed, it has been seen in one of the preceding chapters that God has several times acted with this severity on the occasion of certain sins, whose atrocity did not approach that which is remarkable in this procedure. Four considerations make it appear extraordinarily horrible.

The first is that this reasoning supposes that one is persuaded that one must conduct oneself only by interest, and that all the motives one takes from justice, from gratitude, from submission to the will of God, etc. should have no force on our mind, which reveals a foundation of profanation to which it appears difficult to add anything.

The second is taken from the extent of the resolution that one takes. One does not form the design to commit one sin, or two, but generally, and without exception, all those which can procure some honor, some utility, or some pleasure, which is horrible.

The third is that one takes this resolution in cold blood, and with a calm head. It is not in the transport of a violent passion, which leaves only a very small remainder of liberty. It is by reasoning calmly, and coldly weighing the reasons for and against, that one takes this course, which shows that there is not at all infirmity, or ignorance, but much profanation, and a desperate malice.

The fourth is, that not only does one take this resolution, but one also executes it, which can even last for a considerable space of time, and shows that the soul is entirely determined to evil, and that thus the depravation is extreme.

What do we see equal in the procedure of those Pagans, of whom St. Paul speaks, nor in the most part of the other examples, which I have produced? If then lesser sins have several times made God refuse the Grace of conversion to those who were guilty of them, is it not very believable that this one will have this effect, and that thus those who commit it will close for themselves the door of heaven?

Nothing then is more consistent with all the notions of Religion, and with the purest lights of nature, than what I say. It is very believable that God who sees all that this procedure has that is most horrible, will treat all those who will carry themselves to such excesses with all the severity they deserve, and whatever the case may be, will abandon them to their own blindness, will let them fall into the precipice, where they throw themselves in such a senseless manner, and will refuse them the help of His regenerating Grace, which could have protected them from this great misfortune.

And if He treats them in this way in time, is there not reason to persuade oneself that He has taken the resolution from eternity, and that thus as these sins actually committed cause in their manner that God does not grant the Grace of conversion to those who outrage Him so unworthily, these same sins foreseen have caused Him to form the design?

Now that being established, one clearly sees two things. One sees firstly that the Objection applied to the Election to Grace, and to negative Reprobation, has no more force than being applied to the Election to Glory, and to positive Reprobation. One imagined seeing a considerable difference there. One said that there is nothing absurd in posing that Election to Glory, and positive Reprobation, suppose the foresight of what we must do in time, which suffices to resolve the Objection thus applied; but that it is not the same with the application that one makes of it to Election to Grace, and to negative Reprobation, which precede the foresight of actual sins.

But if these two latter Decrees, far from preceding the foresight of actual sins, suppose it, and include it, as I have just shown, does it not clearly appear that the Objection has no more force in this second respect than in the first, and that to whatever subject one applies it, one can always oppose the same answer to it?

One sees secondly that nothing is more false than what is claimed, that by making the reasoning that is opposed to us, by taking the resolution that is the consequence of it, and above all by executing it, one does not worsen one's condition. How can one think it, if as has just been seen, one deprives oneself thereby of the Grace of conversion, which alone could remedy the evils that threaten us? How can one think it, if by using thus one throws oneself into a spiritual hardening, which makes our loss certain and infallible?

That is not to be feared, if one is elected, someone will perhaps say, and is inevitable, if one is reprobate. Thus whatever it is of these two suppositions that one makes, one does not worsen one's condition.

I answer that if there is a law which states that the Grace of conversion will never be granted to any of those who will carry themselves to such excesses, to suppose that one carries oneself there, and that one is elected, is to suppose an impossible and contradictory thing. And if Reprobation can be founded on the foresight of this sin, this sin may have attracted this Reprobation itself, and be in this manner the source of all the evil.

CHAPTER XIII. Where one applies to the Objection all that has been said so far.

Let us now suppose that all that I have just said is true. Let us even suppose that it is certain, and beyond dispute. In this supposition I say that the Objection that I examine falls of itself, and has absolutely nothing that should embarrass us.

It is taken from the fact that the two Decrees in question, that of Election to Grace, and that of negative Reprobation, have preceded the foresight of actual sins; from which one concludes that each of us having been elected, or reprobated independently of all that we could do, we cannot change our destiny by our actions.

But if it is not true that these two Decrees have preceded the foresight of our actions, if it is true on the contrary that they suppose it, it is clear that this objection is founded on a false supposition, and consequently has nothing that should cause the least difficulty.

Let us imagine secondly that what I have said not being certain, it is on the contrary so doubtful, that it is equally possible that it is true, and that it is not. In this supposition even I say that the Objection that is made to us has no force. For finally what force can an Objection have, which is supported only on doubtful and uncertain principles? Does not all the earth agree that a reasoning cannot be convincing and demonstrative, if all the propositions that it contains are not certain, and consequently evident? Have I not shown it clearly in my Response to the two Objections of Mr. Bayle?

Thus to be able to reason thereby solidly against us it would be necessary that it was, not simply possible, but certain and incontestable, that these two Decrees have

preceded the foresight of our actions, which not being the case, this Objection has nothing that should embarrass us.

What will it be then if one adds that far from what one supposes must pass for certain, the contrary is very nearly so? Indeed the reasons that I have produced to show that these two Decrees suppose, and include, the foresight of actual sins, appear considerable to me, and I am persuaded that several will make the same judgment as I, and will find that they are not to be despised.

But, as I have already said, it is not necessary that I prove the falsity of what one supposes. It suffices that one cannot prove the truth of it, and it is this that I do not fear that one will do.

All that I have just said would be true of whatever matter it was about. But it seems to me that it has a particular force on our subject. It is not a question of knowing if it is just, if it is even permitted, to plunge oneself into vice, but only of knowing if the rules of prudence want us to do it. One claims to prove that they permit it, and to show it one says that it is prudent to procure for oneself all possible advantages, provided that in seeking them one risks nothing. One adds that one risks nothing in carrying oneself to the greatest excesses, since these excesses, however great they may be, will change nothing in the Decrees that God has made on our subject; and one proves it by this reason, that these Decrees have been formed independently of what we can do.

If this last proposition is doubtful, what one concludes from it, that one risks nothing in carrying oneself to the most enormous excesses, cannot be sure: And if this is not sure, one risks everything, and consequently one acts very imprudently in hazarding one's salvation on such light foundations. And can prudence allow one to do it? Would it allow it even if it were a question of much less than salvation, when, for example, it was only a question of life?

If it is equally possible that negative Reprobation precedes the foresight of actual sins, and that it follows it, it is equally possible that in making this reasoning one loses oneself, and that one does not lose oneself. And can one doubt that it is not exposing oneself to a very great danger, and consequently acting against the rules of prudence, to put oneself in a state, where it is equally possible to lose oneself and not to lose oneself?

A danger passes for great, not only when it is equally possible that the evil arrives, and that it does not arrive, but also when the possibility is so unequal, that there is less subject to fear than to hope. Let us imagine three soldiers, who draw lots to know which of them must die to be punished for a crime that they have all committed. It is twice more probable that each of the three will escape, than it is that he will perish. Who can however doubt that the danger is not great for each of the three?

If therefore the danger is great even when the possibility of the evil that one fears is less than that of the good that one hopes for, what will it be if all is equal? Above all what will it be if there is more place to fear than to hope, as I have just shown that there is in our subject, in showing that it is very probable that negative Reprobation supposes the foresight of actual sins? And if prudence does not permit exposing oneself without necessity to a danger, even when it is less probable that the evil with which it threatens will arrive, how would it permit exposing oneself to the danger of suffering the greatest of evils if it is more probable, as I pose it, that one will be overwhelmed by it, than it is that one will avoid it?

CHAPTER XIV. Manner in which one can conceive that negative Reprobation Supposes the foresight of actual sins.

Here one will doubtless ask me what system I can build on such a hypothesis, and what idea I can form of Predestination, by posing as I do, that the foresight of actual sins precedes both Election to Grace and negative Reprobation. To this I answer that in posing this one can conceive this mystery in two different manners, which will have nothing but what is reasonable, and will not at all shock the analogy of Faith.

Here is the first. Let us imagine all mankind fallen in Adam and thereby stained with original sin. Let us imagine that this original sin will be infallibly followed in all adults by an infinite number of actual sins of different kinds, which will render all those who commit them worthy of hell, and of eternal death.

God sees very distinctly all this. He sees this original sin, and all these actual sins. He sees them, I say, distinctly, and in all their circumstances. If He followed no other rules than those of His Justice, He would take the resolution to destroy all these sinners. But as He is infinitely merciful, He does various things in favor of these miserable ones.

First, He opens to all a way of salvation, making a Law which states that whoever believes and repents, will be saved. Thus the salvation of sinners is no longer as difficult, or to put it better, as impossible, as it was naturally, and as it would still be if God wanted to treat men with the same severity with which He treated the Demons.

But that is not all. God sees that if He does only what I have just said, no one will be saved, because in effect no one will truly believe. He can give faith to whom He pleases. He could give it to all, and in this way prevent anyone from becoming lost. But He has good reasons not to do so. It is true that these reasons are unknown to us, but although unknown they are nonetheless very solid.

This goes so far, that it is commonly believed that in the great body of the Reprobates there is not a single one whom God did not have some good reason to leave in the sad state, where the sin of the first man has put him, and not to give him the help, which could have drawn him out of it.

Is it impossible that one of these reasons is taken from the consideration of certain extraordinarily atrocious sins, where God has foreseen that some of these sinners would fall one day? Is it impossible that this foresight has been the cause of negative Reprobation, not of all those who are its objects, not of most, but of some as small a number as one would like? Does one have any certainty that this is not the case?

I say much more. I maintain that if these sins actually committed can merit that God refuse His grace to those who do Him this outrage, those who not having committed them yet for lack of occasion, are always ready to commit them, and have all the wickedness, and all the profanation necessary to not make any scruple of it when the occasion presents itself, are no less worthy of such treatment, than if they committed them in effect. If there is any difference between these two states, it is so small, that it cannot make it so that one meriting this refusal, the other does not merit it.

It is by this that I answer an objection that one could make to me. One will perhaps say that truly these sins can merit that God refuse His Grace to those who have actually fallen into them, but that it is inconceivable that they merit the deprivation of the help necessary to avoid them. But in effect all this is nothing, since as I have just said, the disposition where one is to commit these sins can attract this punishment as well as these sins themselves.

One will say secondly that it appears clearly that God does not always follow this rule, since we see that He converted Manasseh, who had carried crime so far, and has let perish so many reprobates, who have never done anything approaching it.

I answer that this Objection would be triumphant, if I said that in the comparison of two sinners God always prefers either the most worthy, or the least unworthy. But I am very far from this thought. I am persuaded that God acts quite differently whenever He has good reasons to do so. I believe even that it is so far from impossible that He has such reasons, that although there is perhaps nothing of which we have less knowledge than of what makes Him act, it is not impossible to imagine very good ones.

Would one depart in the least from likelihood by saying, for example, that God converted the impious Manasseh I. to bring to full light the entire extent of the liberty He has to do with His goods what He pleases II. To show to what point His Grace is gratuitous. III. To make felt how far His mercy can go, and of what miracles, what prodigies, it is capable. IV. To remove all pretext from those who despair of being able to make their peace with Him, etc.

If then we, whose lights are so short, and so limited, can give good reasons for this conduct, how much more should we believe that God has reasons to do all that He does?

It is however good to take note of one thing, which is very certain. It is that there is such a reason which suffices to determine to act on certain occasions, and which

does not suffice on others. It suffices when it is not counterbalanced by stronger ones, and it does not suffice when the contrary happens.

If to not grant regenerating Grace God had regard only to the unworthiness of sinners, Manasseh would not have been preferred to so many reprobates, whose depravation has not approached that of this impious Prince. But as this reason is not the only one that makes Him act, as He can have several others stronger and more pressing, nothing prevented Him from preferring Manasseh, although more unworthy of all support, to others who were less so.

On the other hand, from the fact that such an excess of unworthiness does not always have its effect, it does not follow at all that it never has it. It can not have it being counterbalanced by other stronger considerations, and have it when nothing presents itself to the penetrating eyes of infinite Wisdom, which more strongly demands the contrary.

One will say thirdly that to advance this is to contradict St. Paul, who represents to us the elect and the reprobate as making part of the same mass before God discerns them by His Decree. The potter of clay, says he, does he not have power to make from the same mass of clay a vessel for honor, and another for dishonor? One will say that I depart from this decision by posing sinners more and less wicked than each other, which suffices to make reject all that I say.

I answer that I do not see under what pretext one could deny that there are sinners, who carry crime, impiety, and wickedness further than a great number of others. That appears too visibly by experience to be able to be contested, and besides Scripture confirms it in several ways. Witness what it says that Jerusalem has justified Samaria; that those of Chorazin and Bethsaida will be more rigorously treated than the Tyrians and the Sidonians, etc.

One must not then contest this truth under the pretext that St. Paul represents the elect and the reprobate as making part of the same mass. This is found very true by posing that the least wicked of sinners are absolutely incapable of doing of themselves the least good, that they are strongly determined to evil, and thereby unworthy of all support, and worthy of being eternally the victims of Justice. Is this not sufficient to give place to represent them as making the same mass of corruption and impurity, which God Just and Holy, as we know He is, regards only with horror?

Finally one will say that if certain foreseen sins can be the cause of negative Reprobation, certain good movements foreseen can be the cause of Election to Grace, which overturns all our system, and brings back Pelagianism.

But I deny this consequence. There is nothing contrary, either to Scripture, or to Reason, to say that God abandons wretches who carry themselves to frightful excesses. But there is absurdity in thinking that God chooses anyone for some good that He discovers in him, since there is none, nor can there be any, however small it may be, in the least criminal of men, if His Grace does not produce it there.

CHAPTER XV. Another manner in which one can conceive that Predestination was made.

I believe that one can receive the idea of Predestination, that I have proposed in the preceding Chapter, and I am even persuaded that it approaches a little more to the truth than any of the others that one has made of it. But it has a defect, which in truth is not particular to it, but which is nonetheless great. It is that it supposes the distinction of Decrees, which is a chimera. All Theologians agree that although God resolves various things, He resolves them by a single act, and that if we put there some distinction, and arrange the whole in a certain sense, it is a natural consequence of our weakness, and of our imperfect manner of conceiving which makes that we cannot imagine the most simple things, and the most indivisible, except by distinct acts, which our mind does one after the other. Thus the order that we put there, and the distinction that this order supposes, are less in the object itself, than in our mind.

But as one would wish to know, not what we think of the Decrees of God, but what it is, many Theologians have applied themselves to finding a means of explaining this in a manner which has more relation to the thing itself than what one ordinarily says of it. But whatever effort they have made there, I know none who have succeeded. The only one of my knowledge who has worked on it with some appearance of success, is a Spanish Jesuit, named Jacques Granados, who as I have remarked in another work, has believed that to succeed in this design it was only necessary to reduce all that God has done in predestinating men, to the single preference that He has given to the plan that He has followed over the other plans that He has rejected.

Here is what his thought is. When a skilled Architect wants to build a magnificent Palace, he first makes all the plans of this edifice that he can imagine. He then compares them one with the other, and finally determines for the one that pleases him the most, prefers it to the others, and executes it.

This Author believes that God has done something similar wanting to build the universe, He has had before His eyes all the different forms that He could give to this great work, all the parts of which He could compose it, all the manners by which He could govern it after having made it, in a word all the plans that He could make of it, and all the orders that He could, either follow Himself, or establish there.

He saw all the consequences that each of these diverse orders, of these diverse plans should have if He preferred it. He saw in particular what would be the fate of the intelligent creatures that He would produce there, supposing that He found it appropriate to make such.

He saw that there was such of these orders, where all men would have been saved, and such another where they would have all been lost; some where half would have perished, and the other half would have been saved; some others where the same

thing would have happened to the third, the fourth, the fifth, etc. There would have been found some of those in which all those who are saved presently would have been lost, and all those who are lost would have been saved; others where the contrary would have happened, either to all, or to some.

One understands well enough that it takes God only a single act to perceive all these different objects. One even knows that this act is necessary, and makes part according to some of this science, which is commonly called of simple intelligence, and according to others of that which is named middle.

To this act of knowledge succeeds an act of will, which is nothing other than the preference which it has pleased God to give to one of these plans over all the others, which He perceived very distinctly, and which solicited, if I dare say it, His choice.

That alone has made the salvation of a very great number of persons, who would have perished, if it had pleased Him to prefer to this plan a quantity of other similar plans that He could choose. That alone again has made the loss of a very great number of other persons who would have been saved if other plans had been preferred. That consequently has the same effect as an assembly of distinct Decrees, such as one ordinarily figures them. Thus this preference alone can pass for a true Predestination, and it is not at all necessary to imagine any other.

One cannot deny that this turn is ingenious, and appears much more reasonable than all that has been said to remove the difficulty which is born from the sensible opposition that there is between the distinction of acts that one attributes to God, and the perfect unity that all recognize in what He does. There is however something with which it is impossible for me to accommodate myself.

It is certain that these diverse plans, that this Jesuit imagines, are principally destined to regulate the sharing of these two sorts of Graces, which he calls with all the rest of the Molinists, Congruous and Incongruous, and which he conceives more or less like them. As we do not admit this distinction it is clear that this explanation thus proposed cannot be of any use to us on this subject.

But cannot one rectify it by changing something there? One can without doubt, and the thing appears easy to me. Here is the manner in which I would like to go about it.

One can imagine two principal manners by which God can govern the world, either in the order of Nature or in that of Grace. He can act by general Wills, and by particular Wills. I take these two terms in the sense of Fr. Malebranche, and by general Wills I understand Wills, which in truth do not stop at what their objects can have in common, but go to the last differences, and to the most particular circumstances, but act similarly on all objects, which are perfectly similar among themselves, because in effect they follow certain constant and uniform laws: And by particular wills I understand wills which have no rule, and can act directly on objects which resemble each other the most.

One has seen in the first part the reasons which prevent me from believing that God acts by particular wills taken in this sense. Thus I am persuaded that there are certain Laws that He follows in His actions. I believe even that there are of two orders, and that some are natural, and necessary, the others positive and arbitrary.

The first differ in nothing from His Perfections. Thus His Veracity prevents Him from ever attesting anything false, His firmness from changing resolution, etc.

The second are the effects of His free and independent will. Such is for example the Law which wants that whoever believes and repents be saved. In effect the example of the Demons makes it clear that if God had wanted it, He could have not established this law, and even established another quite contrary.

I am persuaded that God governs the world by Laws of these two kinds, and one agrees enough for nature, as one has seen in Part I. I have proven there even with regard to the end of our life. I have made it seen again, on the subject of salvation and damnation, and I have even indicated several of these Laws. Thus there is reason to believe that it is more or less the same for the distribution of the Grace which converts us. In effect God is too similar to Himself to let me believe that governing Himself in all the rest by general Laws, He acts otherwise in this sole regard.

It is true that there is some difference. For as I have remarked, we know most of the Laws that He follows for the rest, but we are ignorant of those that He observes in the distribution of His Grace, and Scripture far from discovering them to us, makes us clearly understand that we will be ignorant of them during all the time that we will remain on the earth.

But it is also true that this is not as general as it appears at first. This same Scripture discovers something to us on this subject. I admit that what it discovers of it is very little in comparison to what it hides. But it is also certain that this little that it says of it, can be of some use to give us the means of imagining, at least confusedly, a part of the rest.

As has been seen, it indicates to us very clearly, one of these rules, which is the one that excludes from participation in Grace those who have committed the sin of which it is spoken. Matt. XII. Heb. VI. and X. and I. John V.

In telling us that there are sins distinct from the one of which I have spoken, which He punishes by what one calls with Scripture Spiritual blindness and hardening, it indicates to us a second Law distinct from the first. It is true that what it says of it is very general, and can give us only a very confused and very imperfect knowledge of it. But it is nonetheless true that this little that it tells us on this subject, does not permit us to doubt that there is a Law, which excludes from participation in Grace a certain order of sinners, of whom we know only one thing, namely that it is distinct from the first.

St. Augustine, and a great number of Authors after him, have believed that the conversion of St. Paul was an effect of the prayer of St. Stephen reported Acts VII.

60. I would not dare, neither to enter into this thought, nor to reject it. I would fear that there would be rashness in one and in the other. What I believe is that the fervent prayer of a Righteous person can be of some utility and of some efficacy for the conversion of a sinner. If that were not, it would not be easy to understand why Jesus Christ would have ordered us to pray for those who persecute us, nor with what faith we could make this prayer. There is then some connection between these two things, there is some Law which is the source of it. But how far this connection goes, and what exactly is the tenor of this Law, or how many restrictions there are to add to it, is in my sense a thing that one will never know on the earth.

It would perhaps not be impossible to find in Scripture some other rule, and some other similar restriction, if one applied oneself strongly to looking for them there. But this does not appear necessary to me, and I believe that this little that I have just touched on suffices to give us reason to believe that there are effectively general Laws that God observes in the distribution of His Grace, and which being, either natural consequences of His Perfections, or immediate productions of His Wisdom, can only be worthy of Him.

One can imagine two diverse orders of these Laws, ones which demand that God grant His Grace to certain orders of sinners; the others which demand on the contrary that He not grant it to some others. I believe that the second are in great number. But for the first I am persuaded that there are very few, and that in particular there is none that makes the communication of Grace depend on some good, however small it may be, that there is in those whom it pleases God to choose. How would this be possible, if one supposes what is so certain, that there is no other good in us than that which Grace puts there?

I suspect only two of this first order. I believe that by the first God has obliged Himself to convert generally all those whom no particular reason prevents from receiving this Grace. I believe that by the second God has obliged Himself to convert even those whom good reasons would want Him to abandon, whenever He would have better ones to help them.

It is to this second Law that I would be tempted to attribute the conversion of Manasseh. Few reprobates have carried crime as far as him. Few deserved better to be abandoned. But has one not reason to suspect that it was that same which made his salvation? For who can doubt that it is very good that there is in the History of the Church an example as striking as that of his conversion, of the immense extent of the mercy of God; and a means as efficacious to prevent the greatest sinners from falling into despair?

It seems that St. Paul attributes his own conversion to something similar, when he assures that he has obtained mercy, so that Jesus Christ made appear in him His clemency for an example to those who would believe in Him in the future. I. Tim. I.

CHAPTER XVI. Continuation of the same subject. Advantages found in forming this idea of Predestination.

After all that I have just said, I hope one will admit to me that it is very likely, or at least very possible, that God has imposed Laws on Himself to regulate Himself in this regard in the distribution of His Grace.

That being supposed, let us imagine first that these Laws being for the most part arbitrary, God could establish completely opposite ones, or at least very different ones from those He follows, and that thus there were various equally possible systems, which could be formed by the different combinations of these Laws. This appears certain to me, and I do not see under what pretext one could contest it.

Let us imagine secondly that these different systems would have had very different consequences, and that such a sinner, who in one would have received regenerating Grace, would have been deprived of it in another. This again is something that suffers no difficulty.

Let us imagine thirdly that God saw very distinctly all these consequences, and all these effects, and in this way knew who would be those who would be converted in each of these systems, and who would be those who would not receive this help.

All that being posed, it appears evident to me that to prefer one of these systems to all the others, is the same thing as to resolve that such and such will be converted, and that such and such and such will not be. Thus it is beyond doubt that this preference of one of these systems, this unique and indivisible act, is a true Predestination, equivalent in every sense to that which one ordinarily poses, and which one makes consist in a great number of distinct acts.

It is more or less the same with what I say, as with what one finds in Sacred History. God had two principal ways to reduce Gideon's army to those three hundred men, whom He destined to defeat that of Midian. He could designate them by their name, and by their surname, and command Gideon to retain them, and to send back all the rest. He could secondly take the detour that He actually took, ordering to send back first all those who would be afraid, and secondly all those who would bend down to drink. As He knew very certainly that these two ways would have the same effect, and would reduce Israel's army, not only to the same number, but also to the same persons, it was indifferent in the substance to take whichever of the two, everything having to come to the same thing.

It is the same with our subject. Whether God has chosen His Elect by particular Wills, or following general Laws, it is the same thing. The same persons will be saved, the same will be lost, and the outcome in a word will be absolutely the same.

If that is so, someone will perhaps say, why do you prefer to take this detour, than to say simply that God has chosen such and such, and rejected such and such?

It is, I will say, that I find great advantages in the method that I propose.

The first is the one that I have already indicated. One thereby escapes from that kind of contradiction, into which one falls by maintaining on one side that there is in God only a single act, and by posing on the other several acts, several Decrees, in what God does in this regard. As this has no place in the hypothesis that I propose, it seems to me that that alone should make it preferred to any other, especially if one considers that, as one will see in the sequel, it does not shake any of the Truths that we maintain, and which it is so right to preserve.

The second advantage is that of escaping from another embarrassment, which is not small. As has been seen, those who pose several Decrees in Predestination find themselves very hindered to arrange them well, and to decide which should precede, and which should follow. This alone makes contestations that never end, and moreover has difficulties so inexplicable, that Twisse himself has despaired of getting out of them. As therefore one absolutely frees oneself from this by this hypothesis, it is clear that that alone gives it a great advantage over all the others, and must make it preferred to them.

It still has a third, which is not at all to be despised. It is that which it draws from Analogy. Everyone knows that God's conduct is very uniform, which is not at all strange, this conduct being the expression, and the image of His Nature, which is unity itself. That being so, is there not reason to believe that God distributes His Grace according to certain laws, since as I have already remarked it is in this manner that He conducts Himself in every other regard?

One has even seen in what precedes that one can indicate some of these laws, which He follows in the distribution of the Grace which regenerates us, although one can only say very general things about them. And if there are some, on what could one base oneself to maintain that there are no others?

I do not even believe that this sentiment differs from what all our Theologians say, that if God has preferred each Elect to each Reprobate, He has had good reasons to do so. For finally from where can one think with more likelihood that these reasons are taken, than from the Laws of which we speak?

I see only two sources from which these Theologians can claim that these reasons must be taken, His own perfections, and positive and arbitrary laws. I have difficulty persuading myself that His perfections suffice to give reason for all that He does. If they determined Him to all that He does, there would remain to Him no shadow of that kind of Liberty, which one names of indifference, for it is certain that He cannot act in a manner opposed to His perfections. Thus nothing appears more reasonable to me than to think that in truth He acts conformably to His perfections, every time that these perfections determinedly demand that He do certain things, but that when they leave Him the liberty to do what He pleases, He voluntarily imposes on Himself certain laws which He follows constantly.

God, it is said, has His reasons to prefer Peter to Paul in the distribution of His Grace. But, I will say, if these same reasons demand that He prefer James to John, Anthony

to William, and so on for the rest, will they not have the same effect? Who can doubt it? And if that is so, do we not see there a manner of acting constantly, and uniformly, which differs in nothing from a law?

Besides, this hypothesis has nothing which in the least shocks what we believe on this subject, namely that the Grace which converts us is, effective by itself, and produces infallibly its effect; that it is purely gratuitous, and is not at all merited, that its distribution depends on the free will of God; that He disposes of His goods as He pleases, and that as St. Paul says, He has pity on whom He wants, and hardens whom He wants. All that subsists in this hypothesis, and is found as true, as in any other. Thus I do not see under what pretext one could reject it.

It seems to me even that it furnishes us an easy means of conceiving clearly in what consists this general Goodness that God has always had for all men without distinction, and which one has so much difficulty perceiving in the other hypotheses, whatever they may be. Nothing is easier than to say conformably to ours that this Goodness consists in two things. One is that being able to let all men perish, God has opened to all a way of salvation, which is that of Faith and Repentance. The other is that not one of men being able, neither to believe, nor to repent without His Grace, He is so disposed in their regard, that He would grant to all this Grace, if good reasons did not oppose it. That alone suffices to make us conceive a true Goodness, and is such besides that no one contests it.

Finally this hypothesis furnishes us an easy means of fully resolving the difficulty which is the matter of this Writing. For if there are laws which exclude from participation in Grace all those who will commit certain sins, what certainty can one have that the one that one will commit in making this reasoning is not of this number? Let us pose in effect that it is. It is clear that in this supposition he who will commit it will put a new obstacle, but insurmountable, to his conversion, and consequently to his salvation. He will throw himself into a total and absolute impossibility of drawing himself out of the abyss where he finds himself naturally. Thus having no certainty that the sin which he commits is not of the number of those which produce this fatal effect, having even reason to believe positively that it is of this order, nothing could be less reasonable than what he says that in committing this sin he will not worsen his condition, and will do nothing which is opposed to his interest. Nothing consequently is less solid than the Objection which has only this single foundation, and of which all the force depends on the certainty of this principle.

ADDITION. Where one examines the Dogma of physical Premotion.

CHAPTER I. Occasion and design of this Addition. What physical Premotion is.

I have nothing to add to what I have just said on the subject of the difficulties that I had charged myself with clarifying. But as all that I have said for this design would fall, if the Dogma of physical Premotion had place, as besides this Dogma lacks neither partisans, nor defenders, I hope that one will not find it wrong that I stop a little to examine it.

For this effect I am going first to try to make understood what it consists in, and to give the true sense of the terms which one uses to express it. Then I will indicate in few words who are those who maintain it, and who are those who reject it; and I will finally propose what I believe one should think of it.

To well execute the first of these three designs, I believe that it is necessary to take the thing from a little higher. It must be remarked that one is not at all in agreement on the activity of creatures. Theologians and Philosophers are divided on this into three different opinions.

Some, like Durand, and Louis de Dole, hold that the active qualities, with which God has provided creatures, put them in a state to act, without any other help. Others, like Fr. Malebranche, throwing themselves into the opposite extreme, maintain that creatures are capable of nothing. They say that they have no efficacy properly said, and are at most only simple occasional causes of what God does. But the majority and almost all, maintain that creatures act really and physically, but that they would not be able to do so if God did not join Himself to them for the production of the action, and did not give them that kind of assistance, which one ordinarily names His Concurrence.

That God, without violating the most active of His creatures, and without positively preventing them from acting, contents Himself with refusing them His concurrence, and with remaining on His side in inaction, they will never act; and the most devouring fire, for example, destitute of the concurrence of God, will never burn a wisp of straw, that one will throw into it.

In order therefore that an action be done it is necessary that these two causes, the first, and the second, join together, and each influence on its side the effect which will be produced: And that is also what never fails to happen when the action must be done.

But from where can come this concert? From where comes it that each of these two causes is always ready to act as soon as the other is in movement? Is it that one of them in determining itself determines the other? And this posed, as it necessarily

must be, which is the one that has this power? Is it the first? Is it the second? It is on this that one is divided.

The Lutherans, the Remonstrants, the Jesuits, and several others, attribute to God only an indeterminate concurrence, which they name simultaneous, and which they believe to be determined by that of the creature. They conceive it more or less like the heat of the Sun, which although it acts uniformly on an entire garden, does not produce the same flowers on all the plants with which it is adorned, but makes a tulip be born on one stem, and a carnation on another, so that its action is determined to the production of an effect by the particular nature of the plant which receives it.

On the contrary those who are named Thomists, such as the Dominicans, the Discalced Carmelites, some Trinitarians, and some secular Doctors, like Estius, Sylvius, etc. want it to be the concurrence of God, which determines the creature, and puts it in the necessity, either to act, or to do such action rather than such other. That is what they call physical Premotion, and predetermining Concurrence.

They call it first a Premotion, as one would say a motion which precedes, and which goes before, because they do not believe at all that the first cause waits for the effort, or the action of the second. They persuade themselves on the contrary that it prevents it, not in truth by a precession of time, but by an anteriority of nature, of causality, and of efficacy. And they say that this Premotion is a physical Premotion, to make understood that it does not consist in proposing objects, which is particular to that sort of causes, which one names moral; but in a real influence, such as is that of causes properly said, which one ordinarily calls physical.

They call this operation a predetermining Concurrence to distinguish it from that other, which one names simultaneous, and to make understood that if the first cause, and the second cause concur to the same action, it is not that the second determines the first, but it is on the contrary that the first determines the second.

They hold that this help is absolutely necessary to all sorts of causes, both contingent and necessary, both free and destitute of liberty, both spiritual and corporeal. They believe them all equally incapable of producing the least action, of making even the least effort if God does not excite them, does not move them efficaciously, and does not determine them not only to act, but also to do precisely such action.

They say it in particular of the Will for its acts, good and bad, and they hold in a word that there is no created cause, whatever it may be, which can do the least action without such assistance from the Creator.

If one believes them this help from God has always been necessary to all second causes, and particularly to intelligent ones, in all kinds of states, in the state of integrity and innocence, in that of sin, in that of grace, and in that of glory. And in effect if one made the least exception to this rule, one would overturn the

foundations of this dogma, above all the two principal ones, the dependence essential to the creature, and the impossibility where one claims that God would find Himself of foreseeing certainly our actions.

They believe secondly that this impulse of the first cause is so strong and efficacious, that it is absolutely impossible that one resist it. They regard as an insupportable absurdity the sentiment of those who claim that it can happen that God pushing the creature to one side, it goes to another. Not only do they believe that this never happens; they hold for certain, that the thing is absolutely impossible.

The Jesuits have greatly exclaimed against this sentiment. They have combated it with all their forces, and have maintained that it has two unfortunate effects, one that it ruins our liberty, the other that it makes God the author of sin.

The Jansenists, whom the interest of their cause seemed to have to make lean toward this opinion, since they found there what they seek principally, I mean to say much facility to defend the insurmountable efficacy of the Grace which converts us, have nonetheless rejected it. It is what one can see in the first two Chapters of the VIII. Book of Jansenius de Gratia Christi. It is true that since recently his Disciples reduced to the last extremities, not by the reasons of the Jesuits, which do not give them much pain, but by their intrigues, which have attracted to them all the thunderbolts of the Vatican, and all the aversion of the Powers, and not seeing any other means of saving Grace efficacious by itself, which they cannot resolve to abandon, seem to resort to physical Premotion, as to an asylum, where they flatter themselves to be able to enjoy a little repose. But I have not learned that they have explained themselves clearly enough on this for us to give place to assure that that is their thought.

It would be to be wished that this contestation had not gone out of the Schools of the Roman Communion, where it took birth. But by a misfortune that one could not deplore enough, it has passed even into ours, although with some difference. In effect in the Roman Church there is no one who has not taken sides on this, while in ours few Writers have paid attention to this dispute, of which the matter is in effect quite metaphysical. When one reads the works of most of our Theologians one has much difficulty perceiving that they have even heard speaking of it.

The others, to whom this contestation has not been unknown, have divided themselves on this. Most have declared themselves for Premotion. This is what have done among the Supralapsarians Piscator, Maccovius, Voetius, Twisse, Rutherford, and others, and among the Infralapsarians Rivet, Maresius, Turretin, etc.

Several have said things quite opposed to this sentiment, like Junius, Pareus, the Theologians of England Deputies to the Synod of Dort, H. Alting, P. Ferri, M. Amyraut, M. Morus, etc. Some have explained themselves more clearly, and have positively rejected this dogma, like four of our Philosophers, Gockenius, Rutgersius, Jacchæus, and Burgersdijk. Some even have refuted it amply and solidly, like Rob. Baronius, Strangius, Baxter, Heidegger, and M. Holsius.

That alone makes it clear that it is more or less the same with the Roman Church as with ours, at least in this regard, that in one and in the other Premotion has Adversaries and partisans. From which one can conclude what is the injustice of the reproaches that the Missionaries make to us on this in such an insulting manner. For finally if it is wrong for us to suffer the Predeterminants in our Communion, by what right do the Pope, and his Councils, suffer them in theirs?

Let it not be said in effect that there is a difference between the sentiment of the Predeterminants of the Roman Church, and that of ours. Fr. Annat has manifestly shown the contrary at the end of one of his works, which has for title, *Scientia media contra novos ejus impugnatores defensa*. He has strongly proved, and by a great number of passages of these two sorts of Authors, that they all say the same thing, and that there is in this regard no diversity in their sentiments.

This question having so much connection with those that I have treated here, and elsewhere, I have believed that I could not pass it over in silence, and that I should try to spread there some little light. It is true that it seems that the three excellent Authors that I have just named, have exhausted it. But besides that they have omitted a quantity of good reasons that they could produce, they have employed others which are not of the best. That is what has persuaded me that there would be no harm in treating this question again, by cutting out what these Authors have said that is useless, by adding what they have omitted that is necessary, and by employing what they have said that is best. It is what I propose to do presently with the help of God.

Before nevertheless undertaking it, I believe I should warn my Readers that my design is not to treat this question in relation to natural and necessary actions, but only in relation to the free acts of intelligent Beings, because that is what there is on one side of most difficult, and on the other of most important in this matter. In effect that one is mistaken on all the rest, the error into which one will fall thereby, will not have very unfortunate consequences. But it will not be the same if one moves away from the truth with regard to what God does for free acts. If one is mistaken in this one will throw oneself into prodigious errors. It is then to this part of the question that one must principally attach oneself.

CHAPTER II. That the Dogma of Premotion must be extremely suspect to us.

The least that one can say of this Dogma, is that it must be suspect to us, and that it is to be wished that it proves false. This is what several considerations clearly show.

I take the first from the close and indissoluble connection, which I believe I see between physical Premotion, and the hypothesis of the Supralapsarians. Among us one is quite far from this hypothesis. One commonly holds to the decisions of the Synod of Dort, which did not follow it at all. However, I do not see how it is possible to be a Predeterminant without being a Supralapsarian.

A Predeterminant is persuaded that physical Premotion has had place, has, and will have in all sorts of states, and that in particular it is this which made men and Demons pass from the state of innocence to that of sin and damnation. This passage was made, as everyone knows, by the first sin of both of these creatures, and this first sin, whatever it may be, was a necessary and inevitable consequence of physical Premotion, which determined to commit it, either man, or Angel, as it determined the rest of the Angels to persevere.

I ask now if one can doubt that to determine an innocent creature to sin, and what is much more, to determine it in knowing with the utmost certainty that this sin to which one pushes it will render it eternally criminal, and eternally unhappy, is not, I will not say an act of hatred, but the most violent act of a hatred carried to its height. I ask if it is possible to add anything to it.

As it is impossible to contest it, I ask secondly what is it that there can be more harsh and more shocking in the sentiment of the most extreme Supralapsarians, than what one cannot separate from that of the simple Predeterminants. What is it that the first say stronger than what the second cannot disavow, namely that God has hated with all His strength some very innocent creatures, and has voluntarily done them the greatest harm that it was possible for them to suffer?

On the other hand I would like to know if when God resolved to determine men and Demons to the sins which have lost them, He did not have some goal, and some design. This is what no Predeterminant will deny me. What honor would one do to infinite Wisdom, if one made it act without knowing why it acts?

But, I will say, what could be this goal? Nothing is more ordinary in the mouth and in the Writings of these Theologians than to say that all that God has done, He has done uniquely for His glory. Let them be asked thirdly what is this glory that God could propose as a goal in determining men and Demons to sin. They will say without doubt that it is that which comes to Him from the manifestation of His mercy in pardoning sin, and of that of His justice in punishing it.

Gathering then these three answers together, the sense of the Predeterminants will be that God wanting to manifest His mercy, in pardoning sin, and His justice in punishing it, and not being able to if men and Demons always remained innocent, He resolved to determine them efficaciously to sin. That will be the sentiment of these Theologians. But being such in what will it differ from that of the Supralapsarians? I look for the difference, but it is impossible for me to find it.

That being so I am extremely surprised to see that very able people declare themselves at the same time for physical Premotion, and against the sentiment of the Supralapsarians. How can it be that they do not see that one of these opinions leads them to the other? If they do not see it, what is in this their blindness? And if they see it why do they not teach us how it is that they can separate things which appear so closely united? That is my first consideration.

I take the second from the invincibility of the obstacles that this hypothesis cannot but oppose to a work for which people of good will have always made, and still make today, very ardent wishes. I speak of the entire reunion of Protestants, of which one has happy beginnings in Poland, in Hesse, and recently in Prussia, but of which the consummation is traversed by great difficulties. And from where come the most insurmountable of these difficulties if not from the Dogma of which we speak? For finally what hope can one have of succeeding in this design, as long as one will be persuaded that we make God the author of sin? And how will one be able to destroy this prejudice, as long as one will see that a great number of our Writers maintain this Dogma, which has a connection so close, so immediate, and so manifest, with this blasphemy?

That makes me understand nothing in the conduct of some Predeterminants, who at the time that they do not want to relax anything of this hypothesis undertake to write to show that the Lutherans, who regard it with so much horror, should unite with us.

III. This Dogma still has this unfortunate aspect, that it strengthens the objections of the enemies of Christianity, and gives them a new degree of likelihood which they did not have. For example it opens the flank to the reasonings of Mr. Bayle, and absolutely ruins the answers that one opposes to them. When this Author has maintained to us that it is to reduce to nothing the Goodness and the Holiness of God, to say that He could permit evil, we have answered him that there is much difference between doing evil, and permitting it; that the first in truth would be contrary to the Goodness and to the Holiness of God, but that the second is not. We have maintained to him with all Theologians that God is so free in the exercise of His Goodness, and of most of His perfections, that if He does not have in this regard the liberty of contrariety, He has that of contradiction.

But what will become of this answer if it happens that God, not only suffers, and permits evil, but even pushes to it, and determines the most innocent creatures to it? Does it not appear clearly by that that we attribute to Him, both the Liberty of contradiction, and that of contrariety, and that thus we absolutely annihilate these two perfections? Do we not give place to say that if God can act in a manner so opposed to His Goodness and to His Holiness, He will be able to act just the same in a manner opposed to His veracity, to His Fidelity, to His Immutability, to His Wisdom, to His Justice, which is frightful?

I know well that one claims to elude the whole by the consideration of this absolute, and unlimited right, that God has of Himself over all things, and which permits Him to treat His creatures as He pleases, without them being able to complain that He does them wrong. But I know also that to allege this is to respond to what one does not object, and to leave without response what one does object.

This response would have some force if the objection that it undertakes to repel was taken from the consideration of Justice, and if one claimed that God did wrong to

those whom He treats in this manner. To produce thereupon the absolute right of God is to respond directly, and solidly, I want it. But that is neither the sense of the Objection nor the thought of those who make it. One does not oppose to us Justice, but Goodness. One does not say that God does wrong to those whom He determines to sin. One says only that He treats them with a harshness directly opposed to all the rules of Goodness. And who doubts that there can be harshness in the conduct of those same who do not violate Justice? Is that a thing which can be contested?

For example in the countries where the Laws permit those who have acquired their property to dispose of it as they please, someone, who is in the case, gives in dying all that he possesses to a stranger, and deprives of it his own Son, who has always honored him, and of whom he has no subject to complain. This action has nothing contrary to the Laws. But can one deny, that it has something barbarous, unnatural, and opposed to the affection that a good Father should have for good children? If the Son complained of this harshness, would the Father annihilate this complaint, by saying that he does him no wrong? Responding thus would he not defend what is not attacked, and would he not leave without defense what is attacked? It is the same with our subject, and everyone sees the conformity.

IV. Finally this Dogma reduces to nothing the strongest proofs which we use to convince the Spinozists that we are free, without which there can be neither piety, nor probity, nor Religion, nor in a word anything which distinguishes us from beasts.

For example one of the best of these proofs is the one that we take from the intimate feeling that everyone has of his liberty, seeing by experience that he can resist every time that he wants to the impression of the causes which determine us according to Spinoza to will, and to act. He responds, as one will see in another work, that we know well that we will, which is very true, but that we are ignorant of what it is that makes us will, and that from there comes that we attribute to ourselves what comes from elsewhere. What can one oppose to this response if Premotion has place? If that is it is it which determines us, but we do not perceive that it does it. We feel only our own action. If therefore we are not founded to conclude that we determine ourselves from the fact that we feel the power that we have to determine ourselves, without feeling the action of God, which makes that we determine ourselves, how will we be so to conclude from the fact that we do not feel the action of external causes, which carry us to will; that we are the first cause of our volitions.

According to Spinoza external causes make that we determine ourselves to will. According to the Predeterminants it is God who does it. We feel that we determine ourselves, and feel neither the impulse of God, nor that of external causes. By what right can we press against Spinoza this feeling that we have of what passes in us, and oppose ourselves to what they press it against physical Premotion?

In a word what difference can there be between this proof applied to Premotion and this same proof applied to the dogma of Spinoza, which makes that being decisive

against Spinoza, it has no force against Premotion? For myself I admit that with whatever care I look for this difference, it is impossible for me to discover it.

CHAPTER III. That if physical Premotion had place, it would ruin our Liberty.

The considerations that one has just read make it clear to see that it is to be wished that the dogma of physical Premotion be false, and that it would be a very great misfortune if it were true, and above all if it were unanimously received. But all that does not suffice to give us the right to reject it. The most odious truths deserve to be revered, and the harm that they do does not authorize us to refuse them the homage which is due to them, and which is nothing other than acquiescence and persuasion. Here then are direct proofs, but convincing ones, which will show without detour that this dogma is false.

I take the first from the fact that if physical Premotion had place, the liberty necessary to act morally would be only a vain imagination, which, as I show in another place, entails no less than the total extinction of Religion. This consequence is necessary, and nothing is easier than to prove it. One can even say that I have proved it in another work, in establishing the principles which put its necessity in its light.

I have shown in that other place that physical impotence, and metaphysical impossibility, absolutely ruin liberty. I have shown that physical necessity and metaphysical do the same effect, and that there is no other necessity, other impossibility, nor other impotence than the moral which lets subsist this great privilege. So that if physical Premotion establishes whatever it may be of these two first kinds of necessity, of impossibility, and of impotence, it ruins liberty, not of some of our actions, but of all, without excepting a single one, and not only that of our actions, but still that of our omissions, so that there is absolutely nothing that we do, or from which we abstain freely, which does not go less than to say that we never do anything good, anything bad, and that in all the mass of our actions, and in that of our omissions, there is not a single one which has some goodness, or some moral malice.

All therefore reduces to knowing if physical Premotion establishes necessity, impossibility, and impotence, either physical, or metaphysical. For the physical, I do not believe that there is a single Thomist who contests it to me. They will all admit to me that it is at least physically impossible, either to do anything without the Premotion of God, or to resist His impulse. This truth is so certain in their principles, that it would be useless to prove it. However it suffices me, for as one has seen, necessity and simply physical impotence destroy liberty.

But that is not all, and I can say something much stronger. I am persuaded that there is none of these Theologians who does not go further. They all hold that one of these two things is more than physically impossible, and the other more than physically

necessary. They build the necessity of predetermining concurrence on two principal foundations. One is the dependence essential to the creature in relation to its Creator; the other is the certainty of the foresight of God in relation to the free acts of the human will. Each of these foundations must be firm and unshakeable, and to say all in a word, have a metaphysical certainty, and which cannot fail without contradiction.

When one asks them if God could not produce creatures, which would determine themselves to act, without having need at every moment that He intervened by particular acts, they respond without hesitating that He could not, and that there would be contradiction in posing it. God, they say, in as many words, with His omnipotence, could not prevent that the creature be creature, that it continually need to receive from God its existence, and its movements. Thus there is a metaphysical necessity, and which one cannot overcome without contradiction.

I say the same thing of the foresight of God. There is not only a physical impossibility that He be mistaken in His prescience. There is an absolute and metaphysical impossibility. Physical impossibility is subjected to the will of God, who overcomes it when it pleases Him, witness the resurrection of the dead, and the other miracles that He operates when He finds it appropriate. But a God in error would be a monster composed of parts a thousand times more unalliable than the Chimera of the Greeks. It is an assemblage of two subjects the most contradictory, and the most incompatible, that it is possible to imagine.

The impossibility therefore that there is, either to act without premotion, or to not act when God determines us to it, is an impossibility more than physical. It is absolute, and metaphysical. If therefore the physical alone annihilates liberty as I have justified in another work, what will the metaphysical do, and how will one be able to regard as free any of our omissions, any of our actions, which are all metaphysically necessary, and among which there is not one whose contrary is not absolutely impossible, and does not imply contradiction?

Let one judge in effect what prodigy of absurdity it would be to say that an action depends on us, and that it is in our power, as all our Theologians maintain that one can say it of every free act, when one cannot do it without contradiction. Let one judge what absurdity it would be to say that God can forbid us and command us acts of which some are metaphysically necessary and the others metaphysically impossible, or what comes to the same thing, render metaphysically impossible and necessary, acts that He has commanded and forbidden before making them become such? If He can, He can order us to make that one and one be three, that a whole be less than one of its parts, that the same thing be, and be not. And after having ordered it to us He will be able to punish us for not having done it.

But I grant that the impotence to act without divine premotion, and that of resisting it efficaciously, are only physical. That suffices me, it is beyond doubt that such an impotence ruins without reserve liberty.

I do not even understand how, in admitting that the sentiment of Spinoza which I examine in another place, destroys liberty, one can claim that physical Premotion does not wound it at all. What other difference is there between these two sentiments, if it is not that one attributes to created causes what the other attributes to God?

Spinoza believes that created causes determine us to do, to resolve, and to will, what we do. The Predeterminants say the same thing of God. They make Him do all that the Spinozists make creatures produce. The same necessity, the same efficacy, the same power, that these attribute to the action of the causes which determine us, the Predeterminants attribute to the Premotion of God. How then is it possible that everything being done on both sides with the same necessity, liberty is wounded in one, and remains entire in the other?

CHAPTER IV. That the Dogma of physical Premotion absolutely ruins the certainty of our Faith.

No one is ignorant that nothing is more necessary to make a Christian than divine Faith. Without this virtue one will be at most only a kind of Deist, or Pyrrhonian. One agrees further that nothing is more essential to Faith than certainty, from which comes the maxim of Canon Law, "Dubius in fide infidelis est" [He who doubts in faith is an unbeliever]. It is to be an unbeliever to doubt the truths of Faith.

That being so, one could not give a more frightful idea of the dogma of Premotion, than by maintaining that it absolutely ruins the certainty of this virtue. However, the thing is certain, and nothing is easier than to prove it.

It requires for that only two remarks which cannot be contested. The first is that the sole foundation of divine Faith is the absolute impossibility that there is that God lies in what He attests to men. In effect if it were possible that God lied, His testimony would not be a sufficient motive to carry us to believe what He would tell us, since one could be mistaken even when one would rely on His word. From which comes what St. John says, that he who does not believe makes God a liar, and that on the contrary he who believes seals that He is truthful.

It must be remarked secondly that God can speak to men in two manners, mediately, and immediately. He spoke to them immediately in the first times, when manifesting Himself to the Patriarchs, and to some others by sensible symbols, He made them hear His voice. He spoke to them mediately when He used the ministry, sometimes of Angels, sometimes of Prophets, sometimes of Apostles, and inspired them with what He wanted them to say on His behalf to men.

When I say that if the dogma of Premotion subsists it will be true to say that God has lied very often in speaking to men, I do not speak of what He has told them in speaking Himself immediately. I speak only of what He has told them by the ministry of His servants. That suffices me, for it is on this kind of divine revelation that our

faith is supported. God no longer speaks to us immediately. He no longer explains Himself except by the Writings of the Prophets and of the Apostles, whom He has inspired to attest to us on His behalf, and in His name, the truths of salvation, conformably to what the Apostle St. Peter says, "Prophecy was not brought by human will, but the holy men of God being pushed by the Holy Spirit have spoken."

If therefore God can lie in speaking to us in this manner, there is no more faith in the world, and what bears this name is only a vain credulity.

He could do it however, or to put it better He has done it an infinity of times, if the dogma of Premotion is true.

This dogma once posed it will be very true that God has inspired the Prophets, and the Apostles to announce to us the truths of salvation. But it will also be that He has inspired the Doctors of falsehood to spread the errors that they have taught, and by means of which they have poisoned minds.

To go before certain quibbles that one could make to me, let us distinguish two sorts of false Doctors. Some are persuaded of what they say, the others know its falsity. Let us stop presently at the first. We can then say a word about the others.

I ask what difference there can be in supposing the dogma of Premotion, between the inspiration of the Prophets and of the Apostles, and that of these false Doctors, which engages us to reject one, and to receive the other.

That of the Prophets and of the Apostles consisted in three things. The first is that God made be born in their mind the ideas of certain things, of which they had in this manner, what one calls a simple perception. The second is that He determined them to join together these ideas by affirmations, or to express the same thing in another manner by interior judgments, by which they pronounced determinately in themselves that such and such propositions, which resulted from this union were true. It is in that that consists what one calls persuasion. The third, that He pushed them to publish externally, by voice, and by writing these same truths, of which He had convinced them internally.

Who can doubt that He has done the same thing with the false Doctors of whom we speak, if what one tells us of Premotion is true?

He has first made be born in their soul the simple ideas of the subjects designated by the terms which have composed the impious and extravagant propositions that they have spread. For whatever may be the causes which have produced, or excited these ideas, one learns that they could neither act, nor produce any effect without the Premotion of God.

Secondly He has determined them invincibly to assemble these ideas, and to regard as certain the propositions which resulted from this assemblage. For one wants that there not be any interior judgments, true or false, that we pronounce except in consequence of Premotion.

Thirdly He has pushed them invincibly to publish by voice, and by writing, all the errors of which He had persuaded them in the manner that I have indicated. For one wants that we be incapable of resolving anything, and of executing anything without the permission of God.

There then is a perfect conformity, and I do not see how it could happen that God being the author of one, He would not be of the other, how consequently the first puts us in the necessity of receiving as certain and indubitable what it proposes, without the second imposing on us the same obligation.

I want indeed that there be some difference. One gains nothing in producing it, unless it be such that we can know it, and know with certainty, on one side that it has place in the subject in question, and on the other that it makes that being obliged to receive one of these inspirations, we are held to reject the other.

For example it is very true that the inspiration of the Prophets and of the Apostles carried them to announce only the pure truth, and that on the contrary that of the Fanatics puts in their mouth only falsehoods. But one cannot decide by that which is that of these inspirations that one must receive, because one still ignores which of these inspirations is the one which discovers to us the truth. That is the question that must be decided, and of which consequently the decision cannot yet serve as principle.

By a similar reason one must guard against saying that one must reject those of the false Doctors who speak against their conscience. To be able to conduct oneself by this rule one would need to read in this conscience, and see all the thoughts of these seducers.

I see therefore nothing which can teach us to discern the inspirations that one must receive with respect, from those that one must reject, if the dogma of Premotion subsists. And if that is what certainty can one have of the truth of what one believes? Have I not had reason to say that this sentiment annihilates all the certainty of divine Faith?

It still does the same effect in another manner, which in truth is not nearly as efficacious as the preceding, but is nevertheless not to be despised. It reduces to nothing one of the proofs which we use with the most success to establish the truth and the Divinity of the Christian Religion.

This proof is taken from the manner in which Christianity established itself in the world. The personal qualities of its first founders, the multitude and the greatness of the obstacles that they had to surmount, and the manner in which they succeeded in this high enterprise, all that strongly proves that it is impossible that God did not act in this occasion, and the most incredulous cannot prevent themselves from saying thereupon with Pharaoh, "For certain this is the finger of the Lord."

And if the conversion of the world is the work of the Divinity, can one not conclude from it by a second consequence as necessary as the first, that the Christian Religion is very true?

This reasoning appears very strong to us, and is in effect. But let us put it in the mouth, or in the Writings of a partisan of Premotion; it loses by that same what it has of force. An unbeliever will answer him, "I admit the first of your consequences, but I deny you the second. I admit to you that it is God who has determined the minds of this great number of Jews and of Gentiles who have believed, to receive the dogmas that one preached to them. But does it follow from that that what one preached to them was true? Can you deny that God has determined the minds of this prodigious number of Pagans, of Jews, and of Christians, who have embraced Mohammedanism, to receive it as revealed from God? Can you deny that the same thing has happened every time that false Prophets and false Doctors have had followers in the world? If therefore this does not induce that what all these blind ones have believed was true, why will it induce that what the Christians have received is it?"

I do not see what one could oppose to this Objection while retaining the opinion of physical Premotion.

CHAPTER V. That the sentiment of physical Premotion is only apt to weaken all the acts of repentance, or even to prevent them from forming in the heart.

Repentance is no less necessary to sinners than Faith. Without the first one could not make one's peace with God. Without it in a word no one can save themselves. It is however certain that the dogma of Premotion is very apt to prevent the sinner from repenting, and whatever the case may be to weaken the acts of his repentance. This is what it is easy to prove.

One of the principal of these acts is to judge ourselves, on our actions, as the Apostle St. Paul speaks, it is to condemn ourselves, and to put ourselves on trial with the last severity. And what can one imagine more opposed to this act than to render unjust and ridiculous all the reproaches, that one makes to oneself after sin, and quite the contrary to render not only plausible and specious, but even good, solid, and legitimate, the excuses which the flesh uses to color its excesses?

Can one however doubt that the thought of Premotion does this double effect?

For the first let us imagine the most infamous scoundrels, the poisoners, the sacrilegious, and the parricides. Let us imagine that they reflect on what they have done. What reproaches can they make to themselves if they are persuaded of Premotion?

No one makes any to oneself for not having done what one could not do, or for having done actions that one could not avoid. If lightning falls on a house, and sets

it on fire, if the wind overturns another, if the sea floods an entire quarter. Is there anyone who makes it a crime for oneself not to have prevented it?

If therefore all our faults were as inevitable as these misfortunes, as they would be without difficulty, if what one says of Premotion were true, no one would be founded to reproach oneself for those that one commits. Each one should say to oneself, "I could not act otherwise. I could not prevent myself from doing what I have done. I have therefore nothing to reproach myself with." Thus this first act of Repentance will no longer have place.

But let us imagine that the sinners, of whom I speak, being very content with themselves, someone takes it upon themselves to censure them, and undertakes to make them see that they were wrong to carry themselves to such excesses. Will they not have good reasons to justify themselves? What do they have for that but to say that they have done nothing to which God did not push them by an action to which it was impossible for them to resist?

What will one be able to oppose to this manner of defending oneself, which is even slightly solid?

Will one say that in truth God has determined them to what they have done, but that they cannot deny that they have consented voluntarily to His determination?

They will respond that this consent even of their will has been a necessary and inevitable consequence of the Premotion of God, which is not only the principle of external action, but also that of interior movement, and what is much more, of the judgment which has preceded this movement itself. In a word one could not reproach them with anything of which they do not find the cause in an impulse of God, which has preceded all that they have done, and which has put them in an absolute necessity to do it.

I ask again what is it that one could respond to a sinner who would say, "I cannot do the least action, neither internal, nor external, if God does not determine me to it. Without this impulse it would be impossible for me to execute any resolution, to form it, to even have the thought of it. This impotence comes, neither from my fault, nor from that of the first man. It is not an effect of the depravation of our nature by sin. It has its source in the principles of this nature, such as it was when it came out of the hands of its Creator; and besides it is common to me with the purest, and the most sublime of the Angels. Besides all that it is impossible for me to resist this impulse, to elude it, to suspend it, to weaken it, to try even to do it, to wish it, to think of it. Finally this impulse does not wait for the movements of my heart, or of my spirit. It precedes them, and acts independently of me, and of all that is in me. What can I therefore do more reasonable than to abandon myself absolutely to it, and to remain in repose, without thinking, neither of correcting myself of my vices, nor of applying myself to the practice of my duties? Or rather what other thing could I do, if this abandonment itself depended on me, and if it were excepted from this general Law, which submits everything to the Premotion of God?"

Here in effect is an inexplicable labyrinth. Here is the source of a Quietism much more general than that of Molinos. According to this visionary it depends on us to plunge ourselves in Quietude, or to continue to act as before. But if Premotion has place, there is absolutely nothing which is in our power, and in going back from external action by all its causes up to the first thought, one will find nothing which is not a necessary and inevitable effect of the Premotion of God. To what therefore can our cares end? Or rather what cares can remain to us, I will not say to take, but to resolve, or to imagine? This resolution, this imagination, themselves are they in our power?

Above all this Objection has a particular force when one applies it to omissions. When, for example, a poor person asks alms of a rich person, what is it that the first could reply if the second said to him, "I cannot, neither do what you demand of me, if God does not determine me to it, nor prevent myself from doing it if He pushes me efficaciously to it. Do not amuse yourself therefore any more with pressing me. Address yourself to God, and pray Him that He inspire me with what you want me to do. All the rest will be useless to you."

What is it again that this poor person could reply if the rich person said to him, "I cannot assist you if God does not push me to it interiorly. Now that is what He does not do, for if He did it I could not prevent myself from helping you. Do not complain therefore of my harshness, and as it is not permitted to you to complain of God, who does all that we see happen: do not complain of anyone, and suffer your indigence without murmuring about it."

When a Father makes reproaches to his child, or a master to his servant, for not having done what had been commanded to them, what is it that this Father and this master could reply, if the child and the servant responded, "It would be as easy for us to transport mountains, and to stop the Sun, as to do without the Premotion of God what you have demanded of us. It is however true that we have not had this Premotion, for if we had had it we would have done it. You have therefore as little reason to complain about what we have not executed your orders, as you would have to find it bad that we had not done the most impossible things, if you had commanded them to us."

It will perhaps not be useless to add that it is necessarily the case that Eve, Adam, the Demon himself, Cain, David, the Jews who put to death the Savior of the world, all sinners in a word, to whom Holy History teaches us that their excesses have been reproached, were ignorant of this Theology, since if they had known it the first two would not have had recourse to the miserable and frivolous excuse that they alleged to extenuate their sin, and the others would not have been reduced to the forced silence, which showed their interior conviction.

They all had only to say that they had done nothing to which God had not pushed them strongly and invincibly. This excuse was very plausible, and presented itself by itself, supposing that one was instructed in the system of Premotion. From the

moment therefore that all these sinners did not make use of it, one can assure oneself that they did not know what furnished it to them: And if they had no knowledge of it must one not hold for certain that the thing is not true?

The second act of Repentance is the sorrow that one must have for the evil that one has done. This duty is just, as I have shown amply in the 1st Treatise of my abridged Morality. We must even try to render this sorrow the most lively, and the most durable that we can, as I have proved in this same place.

But what can there be more apt to prevent us, either from working at it, or from succeeding in it, than Premotion?

Who does not know in the first place that it is our duty to acquiesce at the very least in the Will of God, when it is known to us, either by the event, or by some revelation, or otherwise? I speak of the Will of Decree, and say nothing of the Will of precept, which obliges us to much more. One believes even that it does not suffice to acquiesce in this Will of Decree, but that it must always give us joy: And in effect it is difficult not to enter into this thought if one considers that this Will is always a good, agreeable, perfect Will, as the Apostle calls it.

Who can doubt on the other hand that if Premotion has place, our sins are so many executions of the Will of the supreme Being, who has first resolved them, who has then determined us to them, and who has done, neither the one, nor the other except wisely, and for reasons very worthy of Him. Is it not therefore our duty to acquiesce in them, and perhaps even to rejoice in them? And this posed how can we have sorrow for them, above all a sorrow as lively and as profound as must be that which makes the base of Repentance?

The third act of this virtue is the resolution to correct oneself and to live better. Let us suppose that Premotion lets this act subsist. It will reduce to so little thing, that nothing will prevent the most impious from doing it, provided only that they do not doubt at all this dogma. It will reduce in those who convert themselves truly to saying, "I will correct myself, if God determines me invincibly to it." And who can doubt that the most lost, provided only that they are persuaded of Premotion, cannot say the same thing? Can they even prevent themselves from it without renouncing their hypothesis?

Who does not see after all that what obstacles this sentiment opposes to the conversion of sinners, and what misfortune it would be that everyone was imbued with this thought, and above all that one penetrated well its consequences, and that in penetrating them one acquiesced in them? Who does not see that in this supposition there would be just as many impenitent as there are sinners?

CHAPTER VI. That there are other duties that Premotion renders impracticable.

The duties that have been spoken of in the preceding Chapters are not the only ones whose observance the Dogma of physical Premotion prevents. There are still some others to which it opposes similar obstacles.

Such is firstly the one whose necessity and justice I have proven in the third Treatise of my abridged Morality. I speak of the obligation where we are to work with all our strength to advance ourselves in piety. How in effect will one be able to fulfill this duty, if being persuaded of Premotion, one pays attention to one of the most natural, most necessary, most immediate consequences of this Dogma, and which two of its partisans, Piscator and Maccovius, have drawn from it, and maintained expressly and formally? This is that there is neither any righteous person, nor any sinner, who can do, neither more, nor less, either of good, or of evil, than he actually does.

In effect will a man well penetrated with this maxim excite himself, will he make effort, either to do good, or to abstain from evil? Who does not know that the hope of succeeding is what animates us the most, and inspires us with the most ardor and firmness in our undertakings, and that on the contrary nothing is more apt to slow our efforts, to even make them cease, than to know with certainty that they will lead to nothing?

I say the same thing of another duty, which Scripture recommends to us very strongly, and which is visibly necessary for us to persevere in piety, and all the more reason to advance ourselves in it. This is Vigilance. What appearance in effect can there be, that we watch attentively over ourselves, and over our actions, if we are persuaded that it is useless that we do it? And how can we doubt this uselessness, if we are persuaded of physical Premotion? In effect are we in a state, either to prevent God from determining us to evil, or to resist Him, in case He determines us to it? And this posed to what will all the cares, and all the precautions of Vigilance lead?

Even when this virtue could be of some use to guarantee us from sin, its exercise would become impossible by the great maxim of the partisans of Premotion, which holds that when God resolves the end, He resolves also the means, and obliges Himself to remove, or to overcome the obstacles which could oppose themselves to it. That being so, in resolving that we will sin, He resolves to remove, and to render vain and useless all that could prevent it, as would be the cares of Vigilance. Thus one can make this Dilemma, Either vigilance is fit of itself, and of its nature, to prevent sin, or it is not. If it is not, what use can it be to practice it, and why must one recommend it? If it is, God, who has resolved that we will sin, will infallibly do one of two things; Either He will prevent us from practicing it, or He will render its cares, and our efforts, useless.

Finally the greatest and most indispensable of our duties, is the love of God. And can one not say that the Dogma of Premotion well conceived, and well penetrated,

renders its observance impossible? For finally to love God one must know very distinctly what makes Him lovable to those who must love Him, one must feel it, and be touched by it. What however makes Him as lovable as His Goodness? And what idea can one make oneself of this Goodness, if one persuades oneself that in the sole design of procuring for Himself this external Glory, which it was so easy for Him to do without, and which consists only in the thoughts, and the sentiments of some intelligent creatures, He has thrown into crime and misery, not for some time, but for all eternity, a prodigious number of other creatures of this same order, without these latter having done anything to attract this misfortune?

Let one say of it what one will. For myself I am persuaded that such a procedure is directly and positively contrary to all the rules of true Goodness, and I am persuaded that an infinity of persons will be in this of my sentiment.

All that makes one see what havoc the Dogma of Premotion would be capable of making in Religion in general, and in the Morality of Jesus Christ in particular, if it were universally received, and above all if it were so with all its consequences.

Let one not tell me in effect that experience makes one see that there is nothing to fear from that side, since it is certain that among the Predeterminants there are persons of a distinguished piety, and who show by their example that it is not impossible to ally this opinion with the purity of morals, and the regularity of life.

I admit the fact that one produces, and I am very far from having the least thought of contesting it. I believe it certain, and I praise God for it. But I do not admit the consequence that one draws from it. I maintain that one must not judge the relation of conformity, or of opposition that the doctrine of Premotion can have with piety, by the morals of those who believe it. So that one could reason justly from one to the other, it would be necessary to pose three facts, which far from being indubitable, are very certainly false. The first is that the Predeterminants perceive distinctly all the consequences of their hypothesis, and generally all that one can deduce from it by good and solid reasons. The second that they admit these consequences, not only as linked with their principles, but still as true in themselves. The third that they make of these consequences the perpetual rule of their conduct. If these three facts were confirmed, this manner of reasoning would be just, and there would be nothing to oppose to it. But as they are all equally false, one can conclude nothing from them with certainty.

CHAPTER VII. That the Dogma of Premotion destroys all that we maintain on the depravation of nature by sin, and on the necessity of Grace.

[The dogma of Premotion is] not only apt to ruin Religion in general. It is still apt to destroy ours in particular. It overturns all that we believe touching the depravation of nature by sin, and touching the necessity of an efficacious Grace to reestablish it.

We believe firstly that there is this difference between the state of innocence and that of sin, that in the first man could do equally good and evil, persevere in his integrity, and fall from it by crime; while since he has once fallen he is determined to evil, and no longer has this indifference, and this equal power to carry himself to good and evil, which made the essential character of the state where God had put him.

We believe that since sin we have all that we need to do evil, that not only can we carry ourselves to it, but that we are still determined to it by an extremely strong inclination, inclined to do evil, as our Liturgy speaks.

We believe thirdly that we have a full and perfect liberty for indifferent actions, that we can, for example, speak and be silent, walk and stop, etc.

We believe finally that it is not the same for good. We believe, that we are incapable of doing it since sin, unless it pleases God to help us by His Grace, and to give us for this effect forces that we do not have naturally.

That is, as everyone knows, the belief of the Reformed Churches. But how is it possible to reconcile it with the doctrine of Premotion?

That to show that one cannot, let me permit me to suppose that Premotion to a good work, and the efficacious Grace which carries us to do this same work, are in the foundation only the same thing. I have difficulty persuading myself that any of our Predeterminant Theologians reject this supposition. If they did it, they would engage themselves by that same to indicate the difference which separates these two actions, and I believe that difficult. Besides if these two impulses were different, one or the other would be useless. Let us imagine in effect that efficacious Grace determines us to a good work, for example to an act of love of God. What need will we have of Premotion to do it? Let us imagine that Premotion determines us to it? We will easily do without Grace, and I do not see what it could serve us for.

Besides all that one claims that these two helps have this in common, that they are both necessary, both efficacious. That supposed let us imagine that Premotion alone, and without Grace, pushes us to a good action. What will happen? Will we do it? If we do it, it will appear that Grace is not necessary, since we actually do good without its help. If we do not do it, Premotion is not as powerful, and as invincible as one represents it, since we do not do the good to which we suppose that it pushes us, and determines us.

To not throw oneself into such absurdities one must say that Premotion and Grace are in the foundation the same thing, the same impulse of God, and that all the difference that there is, is that this impulse is called a Grace when it carries us to do good, and a Premotion when it carries us to something criminal, or indifferent.

That supposed I say that the dogma of Premotion thus understood overturns all that I have just said that we believe on the matters of Nature and of Grace.

If this Dogma has place, there is no difference between the state of integrity and the state of sin, where we find ourselves. Neither in one, nor in the other of these two states has man been able, nor can he, do good without Grace. Without it he could do nothing during innocence. Without it he can do nothing since sin. With it he could do everything. With it he can still do so today. Is that not a complete conformity? And where can one find something which puts a difference in it?

If this Dogma has place the necessity of Grace does not have its source in the depravation of Nature by sin, as one has believed until now, but in Nature itself, and in the weakness essential to the creature in all sorts of states. In effect one believes that predetermining concurrence, has always been necessary, and always will be. The corruption introduced by sin has made in these regards no change, which is quite different from what one has always believed among us touching the necessity of Grace.

If this Dogma has place Grace, will not be less necessary for parricides, for sacrileges, and for incests, than for the best actions. For finally in this supposition Grace is not different from concurrence, and concurrence is no less necessary for the greatest crimes, than for the best actions.

Let us pose even that Grace is quite another thing than concurrence. Is it not always an insupportable absurdity to say that one has as much need of the help of God, whatever it may be, for evil as for good, for the most enormous crimes, as for the most heroic actions?

It will even be true to say that man needs a greater help to do evil than to abstain from it. In effect so that we abstain from evil it is only necessary that God not determine us to it, and that He remain in this regard without action. But so that we do it, it is necessary that He act positively, efficaciously, and invincibly in us. Is it however easy to digest such a Paradox?

Finally nothing will be more false than what Scripture tells us, and which is so conformable to experience, that we have an extremely strong inclination for evil, and that we are reduced to an absolute impotence to do good. In this hypothesis we are of ourselves as incapable of evil as of good, not being able to do, neither one, nor the other without the Premotion of God, and being able to do both with this help.

I have spoken until now only of the opposition that one remarks between Premotion and actual Grace. However there is no less between this same Premotion, and this Grace that one names habitual. One commonly believes among us that sanctification consists in the infused, and supernatural habits, of faith, of hope, and of charity, that God spreads in hearts. That is what they understand by this new man, by this image of God, that the Holy Spirit produces inside of us.

But what is it that these habits will be able to serve for, if it is true that physical Premotion, on one side is absolutely necessary to us, and on the other is so efficacious, that nothing can prevent its effect?

The use of habits is to facilitate actions. But what facility can those of which I speak give to those who would not be able, neither to act without physical Premotion, nor to prevent themselves from acting when they are determined by this impulse.

Let us imagine two men, one provided with all the supernatural habits that Grace spreads in souls, the other who has none of them. Let us imagine then that God determines them both to believe, to hope, to love. They will believe, they will hope, and they will love both with the same facility. Let us imagine on the other hand that He determines, neither one, nor the other to any of these acts. Neither one, nor the other will do them. Thus these habits will serve for nothing to the one who has received them, and the one who is deprived of them will lose nothing whatsoever from it.

As therefore God never does anything useless, one must say one of two things, either that these habits are chimeras, or that physical Premotion is a pure imagination. To say the first would be to contradict all our Theologians. One must therefore reduce oneself to the second, and no longer defend this Dogma, which contains so many absurdities, and entails so many unfortunate consequences.

CHAPTER VIII. That physical Premotion makes God the Author of sin.

What appears most insupportable to me in the sentiment that I examine, is that it visibly gives place to say that God is the true author of sin, which all Christians regard with reason not as a simple error, not as a simple absurdity, but as a blasphemy.

As this is the most triumphant of our proofs, and as it seems that several of those to whom one opposes it, far from feeling its force, do not even understand its sense, I believe that it is my duty to make my efforts to express it as clearly as will be possible, and for this effect to make some remarks, to which I pray my Reader to pay attention.

I. I declare therefore in the first place that when I say that the Dogma of physical Premotion makes God the author of sin, I am very far from thinking that the defenders of this sentiment, believe, or maintain, expressly this impious, and blasphematory proposition. God forbid that I have such thoughts. I am persuaded that all the Predeterminants, without excepting any, have horror for this impiety, and that if they saw that it is a necessary consequence of their hypothesis, they would renounce it with pleasure, and with all their heart. I am persuaded that far from the principle making them receive the consequence, on the contrary the consequence would make them abandon the principle.

My sense therefore is uniquely this, that if physical Premotion had place, it would be necessary to recognize that God is the author of sin. It is that this consequence, although disavowed, although rejected with horror, does not cease to be natural, and very closely linked with its principle. That is all that I claim, and which, as

everyone sees by itself, induces indeed in truth that the Predeterminants do not have all the penetration which would be to be wished, and do not perceive all the consequences, which are born from their principles, but does not induce at all, neither that they admit these consequences, nor that they lack respect for the Creator.

II. Secondly this expression, "To be the author of sin," is an equivocal expression, and which can receive two senses. By being author of sin one can firstly understand to sin, to violate the law, to do an action which renders sinner the one who does it. One can understand secondly to make it so that others sin, to push them to it, to incite them to it, in whatever fashion one does it.

It seems that some Predeterminants give the first of these two senses to our Objection. In effect they are accustomed to respond to it that it is impossible that God be the author of sin, since He has no law, that He can violate, nor Superior, to whom He can disobey. Everyone sees that this response would not be to be despised if we maintained that physical Premotion renders God a sinner. But as that is not our thought, it is necessarily necessary of two things one, either that the Predeterminants do not understand us, or that understanding us, they skillfully divert the issue, by defending themselves on one side when they are attacked on another.

Whatever the case may be I declare here once and for all that when I maintain that the Dogma of Premotion makes God the author of sin, my sense is not that this Dogma induces that God sins. I claim only that it gives place to say that God induces men and Demons to sin, that He pushes them to it, and that thus He is the author, and the cause, not of some sin, where He falls Himself, but of those that He makes commit to others than Himself.

III. This itself is equivocal, and needs a new remark to be clarified. One can imagine two manners, by which God pushes us, or induces us, to some action. He can firstly do it in the manner of moral causes, whose activity consists in proposing motives, and which act only in commanding, in counseling, in exhorting, in praying, in promising, or in threatening. He can secondly do it in the manner of physical causes, in acting really and immediately on the will, as He does in an infinity of occasions, and particularly when by this Grace, which one calls internal, He puts us in a state to do good actions.

We do not accuse the Dogma of physical Premotion of inducing that God pushes men to evil in the first of these senses. We do not say that it follows from that that God commands us, or counsels us to crime. No one has ever had such thoughts, and it is very inappropriately that some Predeterminants excuse themselves by that, maintaining that they have never said that God commands evil. What we say is that if the Dogma of Premotion has place, God will push us physically, really, and invincibly to sin, and that thus He will be the physical cause, and properly said.

We do not claim moreover that this explanation of our thought weakens in any manner the accusation that we bring against the Dogma of Premotion. We claim on the contrary that it aggravates it and strengthens it. In effect no one is ignorant that the activity of physical causes is much greater than that of moral causes. These latter act only in proposing motives, which one can despise, which makes it so ordinary to see that they are absolutely without effect. Witness the laws of God Himself, which are so often violated. But physical causes produce more surely their effects, and the Premotion of God in particular is always efficacious and insurmountable.

Let us imagine a man who in finding two others on the edge of a precipice, throws one in, and persuades the other to throw himself in. Who can doubt that he is more properly, more literally, and more truly the author of the death of the first, than of that of the second? But why is he it, because he is the physical cause of the first of these effects, and he is only the moral cause of the other?

But here is an example which has more relation to our subject than the preceding. God is at the same time the physical cause, and the moral cause of the conversion of sinners. He is the moral cause of it, because He exhorts them to it, and proposes to them powerful motives to carry them to it. He is the physical cause of it, because He operates it by the all-powerful efficacy of His Spirit. But which of these two manners of acting is the one which contributes the most to making Him recognized as the cause and the author? Is it the first? How happy the Pelagians would be if one made this admission! But the Orthodox will never make it. And in effect men themselves, whose power is so limited, act morally in these occasions. They exhort, they press, they beseech sinners to convert themselves. They propose to them all the motives which can carry them to it. But because they act only morally St. Paul counts them for nothing, and on the contrary, counts God for everything. "Neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase."

I say much more. There are occasions where moral operation does not give the quality of cause, or of author, and others where physical operation gives it without the moral. For example God commands the reprobates to convert themselves, and He is not for that the author of their conversion, because they do not convert themselves in effect. However He is the author of the regeneration of children, on whom He acts only physically. So true is it that these terms, of cause, and of author, designate much more clearly physical operation than moral.

I claim therefore to say something much stronger in maintaining that the Dogma of Premotion makes of God a physical cause of sin, than if I contented myself with saying that it makes of Him a simple moral cause. Thus certain Predeterminants show that they delve little into this matter, when to weaken our proof they say that Premotion does not entail that God commands crime. One admits it to them without repugnance. But one asks them if it does not follow from their opinion that He is the physical cause of it. It is to that which it would be to be wished that they would want to respond clearly and precisely.

IV. Here is another remark which will narrow our question more, and which by that same will put it in a state to be decided more easily and more surely. I am persuaded, that there is absurdity in saying that of whatever order an intelligent creature may be, and in whatever state it finds itself, God pushes it, and determines it to sin. Whether it be a man, or an Angel. Whether this man, or this Angel, be innocent, or criminal, whether it be even, if one wants, a righteous person raised from his first fall by repentance. There is always something insupportable in thinking that God pushes him physically and efficaciously to evil.

But as this absurdity appears such principally on the subject of man and of Angel still innocent, as besides in restricting myself to these two subjects I will be dispensed from the obligation to examine diverse responses, which one can use only on the subject of sinful man, which will spare me long discussions, I am going to limit myself to Premotion considered uniquely in relation to the innocent creature and even to this creature considered, not in all the time that its innocence lasted, but in the sole moment of its fall. This will be the means of rendering our question clearer, and easier to decide.

Let us imagine therefore the first man, and all these apostate Angels, who revolted at the beginning against God. Let us suppose next that their first sin was, either pride, or incredulity, or rebellion, or what one wants; for whatever it may be of these sins which made them lose innocence my proof will always have the same force. I say that in this supposition they committed this first sin only because God pushed them to it by an action, to which it was impossible for them to resist. I say that without this impulse of God they would have never committed this sin. I say finally that if God had pushed them to the action contrary to that which made their apostasy, to Faith, to obedience, to humility, they would have believed, they would have obeyed, they would have lowered and annihilated themselves before God, and in this manner they would have persisted in their innocence.

They were of themselves undetermined to what made their fall, and to what could make them persevere. They were equally incapable of taking whichever it may be of these two sides, and they would have remained eternally in this state of suspension and of equilibrium if God had left them there. But He found it appropriate to draw them out of it. He determined the first man, and a great number of Angels, to the action by which they fell into sin. Can one after that doubt that He is the true author of their fall?

That appears quite clear to me. But it seems to me that one can add a new clarity to it by these three considerations.

The first is that one cannot deny that God is the author of the fall of the apostate Angels, if it is true that He is the author of the perseverance of the faithful Angels. For finally in this hypothesis He has not done for ones more than for others. He has determined ones to the action which has struck them down, and the others to that which has fixed them, and strengthened them in good. Consequently if this

determination has made Him be the author of the perseverance of these latter, it will have made Him be the author of the fall and of the apostasy of the first. As therefore everyone admits that He maintains the first of these qualities, and that He is in effect the Conservator, and the Confirmer of the good Angels, it is evident that one cannot prevent oneself in this supposition from attributing to Him the second, and from saying that He is the author and the instigator of the apostasy of the Demons.

Secondly, one is deemed the author of actions to which one contributes only by simple counsels, and consequently in quality of moral cause. How therefore could one deny that God is the author of sin, both of men and of Demons, if it is true that He determines them all to it by a physical action, by a real impulse, and absolutely invincible? For as I have already remarked, the efficacy of moral causes is not comparable to that of physical causes, and among physical causes there are none as powerful as the first of which one would not be able to prevent the action.

Thirdly one is deemed the author of a sin that one makes commit without wanting, and without even knowing that it is a sin. Thus the Sacrificers and the Pharisees were the authors of the crime that the Jews committed in demanding the death of our Savior, although these Sacrificers and these Pharisees did not know, nor wish that this demand, which they inspired in the people was a sin. How therefore can one doubt that the Dogma of physical Premotion does not make God the author of sin, since if it has place, He pushes voluntarily men to actions, which He knows to be criminal, even since He pushes them to them only because they are criminal? For if they were innocent, they would be useless for His designs.

This proof thus proposed appears very strong to me. I know that they defend themselves, and that they oppose to it two different responses, which they believe very solid. But I believe them both false and useless, and I hope with the help of God to make clearly seen their uselessness and their falsity. It is to that which I am going to work in some of the chapters which must follow this one.

CHAPTER IX. First response that one opposes to the proof contained in the preceding Chapter. First reflection on this response.

ONE says firstly that there are two things in each sin, the material, and the formal. By the material one understands the substance, if I dare say it, or the very foundation of the action, with all that it has of physical; and by the formal the deregulation, the malice, of this action, its opposition to the Law of God.

One says therefore that God would be the author of sin if He determined to the formal of each bad action, but that it is not what He does; that He determines only to the material, and consequently to something good, there being nothing real and positive, which is not good, and of which God cannot be the author, without wounding in the least the world His purity and His holiness.

But there are diverse reflections to make on this response.

The first is that it confuses two kinds of goodness very different one from the other, the metaphysical and the moral.

One ordinarily distinguishes three kinds of goodness, and one opposes as many kinds of malice, metaphysical goodness, physical goodness, and moral goodness.

Metaphysical goodness is an attribute of Being taken in general, and in all its extent. The reason for it is that it pleased Aristotle, and his Disciples to say that Being in general has three attributes, unity, truth, and goodness. Thus all real Being is good, as it is one, and true. Even the most deadly poisons are good in this sense, because they have their reality. There is only nothingness which is bad in this manner.

Physical goodness is found in things which suit nature, and which procure for it some advantage. Thus health, strength, life, and generally all that which conserves them, and which augments them, all that, I say, is physically good. On the contrary illness, weakness, death, and what attracts them, is bad.

Moral goodness is the conformity of our actions with the Law of God, which is their rule, and to take this term in this sense the actions that God has commanded are good, and those that He has forbidden bad, whether they have physical, or metaphysical goodness, or they do not have it.

When one tells us that the material of the action that God has forbidden is good how does one understand it? Does one understand that it has a metaphysical goodness, which is nothing other than its reality? If that is the sense of what one says, I will not amuse myself with contesting it. I will not say that it is a great question to know if our actions are simple modes; and another, which is no less, to know if the three attributes of Being belong to modes, as well as to the beings that they modify. I will not say that omissions, which are only simple privations, do not cease to be morally good and bad. I leave, I say, all that, which is good only to uselessly fatigue the mind, and I stop at a single thing.

It is that to say that the material of the action is metaphysically good, is to say the most useless thing in the world, and the least appropriate in this occasion. It is a question of overturning our proof, which consists in saying that if God determines us to bad actions, He is the author of the evil which is found there. To annihilate this proof what use is it to say that God determines only to the material of the action which is good in terms of metaphysics? Let it be as much as one wants, we will retort, provided that one admits that it is not so morally. For finally we do not accuse the Dogma of physical Premotion of making God the author of metaphysical evil, which is nothing other than nothingness. We accuse it of making Him the author of moral evil, of sin. Thus to say that that to which He determines is metaphysically good, is to say nothing. It is to defend a place which is not at all attacked.

I say the same thing of physical good. The material of sin is not always good in this sense, witness poisonings, assassinations, etc. which are so fatal to those who suffer

them. Witness above all the fury of those who kill themselves, and which being exercised on those who are the authors of them, harms them in such a way, that it does good to no one. But that is not what I am pressing presently. It is a question here as little of physical goodness as of metaphysical. It is a question only of moral.

Here therefore is a question that I would like to make to the partisans of physical Premotion. This material of sin, to which one says that God determines, and of which this Dogma makes Him the author, is it something good, bad, or indifferent? I understand good, bad, or indifferent morally. It is to that alone that I attach myself, and I do not trouble myself with the rest.

If it is morally bad, if it is criminal, by how much has one advanced to flee the difficulty? This posed it will always be true to say that God is the author of moral evil, of sin. And is that not all that we induce from the dogma of Premotion? is that not all the evil with which we charge it?

To say that this material is morally good, is firstly to say that it is morally good in itself to hate God, to blaspheme, to believe that He does not exist, which causes horror. It is to say further that God was wrong to condemn all these acts, for what justice can there be in condemning good and holy actions?

To say that this material is indifferent is to say firstly that God can command it, for He can command every free act, which is not bad of itself. Thus He can order us to believe that He does not exist, to persuade ourselves that His Gospel is only a fable, that all that He attests is false. He can command us to disobey Him, to despise Him, to blaspheme Him, to hate Him, etc. Secondly to say that this material is indifferent, is to say that one can do it with good intention; and by the same sanctify it. For who does not know that one can do with good intention, not in truth what is criminal, either of itself, or by the prohibition of God, but what is indifferent, and that in doing it by this principle one makes it change nature, one makes it become good and holy? If someone doubts it, he can convince himself of it by taking the trouble to read what I have said of it in the first volume of my Essays on Morality, in the Discourse on Intention. If therefore the material of sin is indifferent, one will be able to sanctify it, and in this manner hate God, and blaspheme Him in a holy way. What prodigy of absurdity!

Finally how can one think that the material of sin is indifferent, if it is true that it is forbidden? And how can one doubt that it is not, if one considers that the Law does not say "You will not hate God criminally," but simply, "You will not hate Him"? When God forbids us to hate Him, this prohibition falls, either on the material alone, or on the formal alone, or on both together. One will not say that it is on the formal alone. If that were so God would not forbid us to hate Him. He would forbid only to hate Him badly, which is ridiculous. If this prohibition falls, either on the material alone, or on the material and the formal conjointly, I have what I ask. The material will always be forbidden by God, always criminal.

All that makes one see that this material itself to which one claims that God determines, being morally bad, this response does not prevent that the dogma of physical Premotion makes God the author of moral evil, of sin, which suffices to oblige all persons who have piety to reject it with horror.

CHAPTER X. Second reflection on the response proposed in the preceding Chapter.

The equivocation that I indicated in the preceding Chapter is not the only one that is contained in the response that I examine. There is a second, which does not make a better effect.

One can understand in two senses what one tells us that God does not produce the formal of sin, to which He determines the one whom He pushes to it. One can understand first that He does not produce it by a particular action, which ends directly and immediately in the existence of this effect. One can understand secondly that He does not produce it, neither mediately, nor immediately; neither directly, nor indirectly.

If one understood it in this second sense, one would say the most false and the most absurd thing in the world. For what is it to produce mediately and indirectly a thing, if not to produce another, to which the first is so attached, that it is impossible to separate it from it? And is that not what will happen in our subject, if one poses Premotion? For how can one deny, neither that the malice of the forbidden action does not result necessarily from the production of the action posed in all its circumstances, nor that God does not produce in this manner the action itself, and does not determine invincibly the sinner to it?

If one understands in the first sense what one tells us, as in effect I do not doubt at all that this is the thought of those who use this response, what one says is true, it must be admitted, but it is also very useless.

I admit that God does not produce the malice of the action by a particular operation, which ends directly and immediately in this malice. But does it follow from that that God is not, in this hypothesis, the author of sin? If this consequence were legitimate, it would follow that when men and Demons induce someone to sin, one could not say that they are the authors of the sin that they make him commit. For finally they do not produce, nor can they produce, the malice of his action, by a particular operation, and which ends directly and immediately in it. They determine the sinner only to the material of the action.

If this consequence were good, the sinner himself would not be the author of his crime, for it is certain that he does not produce the malice of his sin by an action distinct from that which produces the material. He produces it only in that, in doing the material of the action in the circumstances where it is forbidden, the formal results from it necessarily.

If this consequence were good, God would not be the author of the good that His Grace gives us the strength to do, for it is certain that He does not produce the conformity of our actions with His law, which is that which makes their goodness, He does not produce it, I say, by an operation distinct from that which produces the action, but because in producing the action in its circumstances, the conformity of this action with His Law results from it necessarily.

The source of the error consists in that one does not want to give oneself the trouble to consider three things, which are very certain, and which present themselves quite naturally to the mind.

The first is that as the moral goodness of our actions is properly nothing other than their conformity with the Law, which is their rule, also their malice is nothing other than the opposition that they have with this same Law, conformably to what the Apostle St. John says that sin is, "that which is against the Law." And in fact from the moment that an action is conformable to the Law, it is good. From the moment that it is contrary to this supreme rule, it is bad.

The second thing that it would be important to consider is that both this conformity, and this opposition, are relations, that our actions have to the Law, as to their rule. These are not absolute beings, which subsist, and which remain the same, although the Law is changed. These are simple reports of convenience and of inconvenience, which are destroyed by the change of their term.

The third finally is that relations are not produced by particular actions, which end directly and immediately in making them exist, as happens in the production of absolute beings, for as Aristotle has remarked, "Ad relationem non datur motus" [No movement is given to a relation], but that they result from the production of their foundation, so that this foundation being produced by the action which makes it be born, the relation results from it naturally, necessarily, in the moment itself, without a new action being necessary to produce it.

For example to render a white wall similar to a black wall, and dissimilar to another wall, which I suppose white, one must not amuse oneself by looking for the means to produce directly and immediately these two relations. Nothing other is needed than to try to produce their foundation. One must only blacken the first of these three walls, by means of which the resemblance and the dissimilarity that one wanted to produce, will be born by themselves, and will result from the production of their foundation, which is the blackness of the first wall.

These are so many indubitable truths. Consequently the authors of relations are not those who produce them directly and immediately. There are none such in the world. They are those who produce their foundation.

Thus sinners producing the foundation of the malice of their actions, themselves, in the circumstances where they are forbidden, men and Demons inducing these same sinners to these actions, God determining us by His Grace to all that we do that is

good and holy, all these diverse agents are reputed with reason the authors, not only of the material of these actions, to which they determine, directly and immediately, but still of the formal, which they produce only mediately and indirectly.

Thus God doing the same thing with regard to evil, if what the Predeterminants maintain is true, there is no doubt that He must be reputed its author.

Here therefore is our proof proposed in a manner which will put it above all exception. There would be something insupportable in saying that God is the author of evil in the same manner in which He is the author of the good that we do by His Grace, in the manner in which men and Demons are the authors of the evil that they carry and that they induce to do, in the manner finally which is the only one, in which it is possible to be, at least physically, the author of this evil.

It is however beyond doubt that in posing Premotion it will be found that God is the author of our crimes in the same manner in which He is the author of our good works; in the same manner in which men and Demons are the authors of our sins, at least of those to which they push us physically, in the manner finally which is the only one, in which one can be the physical cause of relative beings, like this one.

Therefore the opinion of physical Premotion is a false, absurd, and insupportable opinion.

To make all this felt in a more lively manner, I pray my Reader to consider the perfect conformity which is found between what God did in this hypothesis with regard to the faithful Angels, and the apostate Angels, when the first persisted in their innocence, and the second fell into sin?

To relieve the imagination, which tires easily of considering abstract things, let us take two of these Angels, one faithful, the other apostate, and let us name the first Michael, the other Beelzebub. Let us suppose secondly that the first persevered by an act of humility, and that the second fell by an act of pride. What I am going to say will have place, whatever other act one puts in the place of these two.

Let us imagine that these two Angels being equally incapable of doing whichever it may be of these acts without the Premotion of God, and of preventing themselves from doing it if God pushes them to it, God by a free, absolute, and independent will, has determined, Michael to humble himself, and Beelzebub to become proud. I say that in this supposition, which is precisely that of physical Premotion, God will have done for one of these Angels all that He has done for the other.

He will have determined both directly and immediately to the material of the action, one to that of humility, the other to that of pride. For the formal, I mean for the conformity, and the opposition of these acts to His holy Law, He will have done neither that of the one, nor that of the other except indirectly, insofar as He will have produced the foundation of this double relation, in producing the action conformable, or opposed to the rule. For finally this action being once posed in all its circumstances, it was impossible that this conformity, and this opposition did not

result from it, as it is impossible that two quantities being produced they are not equal, or unequal, to a third.

Therefore if God is the author of the perseverance of Michael, as everyone agrees that He is, He will be the author of the fall of Beelzebub.

That is what appears to me of the utmost evidence, and to which I do not believe that one has responded.

Let one not tell me in effect that God has done more to carry Michael to humble himself, than to carry Beelzebub to become proud, since He has commanded the first of these two acts to these two Spirits, and has not commanded the second, neither to one, nor to the other.

This response would be good if it were a question of knowing if God is the moral cause of sin? As it is only a question of knowing if He is the physical cause of it, it is clear that this objection is not appropriate. What will it serve in effect, if one conceives thus our proof? It is absurd to say that God is as truly, and as properly, the physical cause of evil as of good. It is however true to say that He will be it, if Premotion has place. Therefore the Dogma of Premotion is an absurd Dogma.

I add that if a man, who finds another on the edge of a precipice, said to him, "Hold yourself well," and at the same time pushing him with all his strength made him fall and perish, he would not cease to be deemed the author of this fall, and of the death which would have followed it. I am persuaded that in all the Tribunals of the earth he would be punished with the same rigor as if he had not spoken.

God in the same way will not cease to be reputed the author of the fall of Beelzebub, if it is true that He has determined him to hate Him, although by His Law He had forbidden him to carry himself to such an excess.

It seems to me even that to forbid an action, and to push at the same time to do it, is a procedure which corresponds very little to the idea that we have of the perfect Being. I am sure that one would not tolerate it in a man. That being so I would like one to guard against attributing it to God.

I say finally that physical Premotion makes God just as well moral cause, as physical cause, of our sins, since in posing it it will be He who will have determined all the impostors who have boasted of acting by His order, to command all the crimes that they have made commit to the peoples that they have seduced.

Let us imagine a trickster, who having found the means to make a speaking statue, like that which one attributes to Albert the Great, and having placed it in a Temple, would make it pronounce false Oracles, which would command acts of superstition and of idolatry. Who doubts that this impostor would be the moral cause of all the sins that a deceived people would commit to obey these false Oracles!

Why therefore could one not say the same thing of God, if it were true that He had determined all the impostors who have ever appeared in the world to boast of being

sent on His behalf, and to command in His name a hundred things contrary to His Will? What difference will one find between what He will have done, and what this trickster of whom I have spoken would do?

I have said above that men and Demons can act physically on us to carry us to sin, and I fear that what I have said of it be taken badly. I fear that confusing two very different things one makes me say that men and Demons can act immediately on our soul, under the pretext that I say that they can act physically on us. I am going therefore to explain myself a little more distinctly than I have done.

I am persuaded with all Theologians that there is only God who can act, either immediately, or invincibly, on our soul. But I believe also with these same Theologians that Demons can act directly and immediately on the body, and indirectly, and mediately on the soul. They can excite in bodies certain movements, which in consequence of the laws of the union of the body and of the soul will make be born in the latter thoughts, which will be able to be criminal.

For what regards men they do not have in this regard as much power as Demons, but they do not cease to have some of it. Medicine has inventions to excite in the blood and in the spirits a part of these same movements which can be followed by the thoughts of the soul, which suffices me.

CHAPTER XI. Third reflection on the first response.

There are certain composite actions, where what holds the place of form is criminal, and what holds the place of matter is innocent. This is what happens in actions good, or indifferent of their nature, but which become bad when one does them badly, such as are these two for example, to give alms out of vanity, to speak falsely. In these sorts of actions God could determine to the material, without determining to the formal, and consequently without being author of sin. He could, for example, excite a man to give alms, without carrying him to do it out of vanity. He could push him to speak without doing anything to engage him to lie. And if the one whom He would excite in this manner to give alms and to speak, mixed vanity in what he would do, and falsehood in what he would say, it would be his fault, and it would be to him alone that one would need to impute this double sin, and not to God.

But this does nothing for the defenders of Physical Premotion. This is what two things show clearly. The first is that we press principally against them the sins which are such of themselves, and of their nature, being condemned expressly by the Law of God, not only for the manner in which one commits them, but still with regard to the foundation, so that it is impossible to do these sorts of actions otherwise than badly; for example, to lie, to hate God, to blaspheme Him, to disobey Him, etc.

Secondly these Authors do not content themselves with saying that when a man speaks falsely, or gives alms out of vanity, God determines him simply to speak, and to give alms leaving in his liberty to give alms by such motive as he will want, and to

speak with truth, or with falsity, as it will please him. Nothing could be more opposed to their system than this thought. At this rate the concurrence of man would determine the concurrence of God, which appears so insupportable to them. At this rate again God would be ignorant of the manner in which man would determine this concurrence, for they claim that God foresees only what He resolves, and that He resolves only what He executes in His time.

It is certain also that they are very far from this thought. They hold that the determination of God goes to the last differences, to the smallest particularities of our actions. Here are the very words of Voetius. "Deus influit, non tantum in effecta, sed etiam in ipfas causas secundas, eas pramovendo, in actum deducendo, applicando ad opus, & pradeterminando, ad singularitatem, & ad specificationem actûs, hoc est faciendo eas ex agentibus potentia agentes, actu, & ut hoc loco, hoc tempore, circa hoc singulare objectum agant." [God influences, not only on effects, but also on the second causes themselves, by premoving them, by bringing them into act, by applying them to work, and by predetermining them, to singularity, and to the specification of the act, that is by making them from potentially acting agents, actually, and so that in this place, at this time, about this singular object they act.] Voet. de term. vit. pag. m. 239.

If that were not their true sentiment, it would be necessary that they believed that there are actions to which God does not determine those who do them. In effect there are two in what the one who gives alms out of vanity does, one to give it, and the other to wish to be esteemed for it. If God did not determine him to the second as to the first, He would not determine to everything, and man would act in this regard independently of God. God again would know well that this man will give alms, but He would be ignorant by what principle he will give them, which would overturn the system, and would strip it of its proofs.

But let us attach ourselves to the sins of the second order, such as is, for example the hatred of God. One can remark five things in this great sin. It is I. an internal action. It is II. an action of that particular order that one calls hatred, and which is contrary to love. It is III. a hatred which has for object, not men, not Demons, but God Himself. It is IV. an action condemned by the Law of God, and consequently not at all conformable to this supreme rule. It is V. a very bad and very criminal action.

I could remark in it many other things, but as they do nothing for our subject, and would serve only to uselessly fatigue the mind of the Reader, I will pass them over in silence. I will not examine even if the two last are distinct one from the other. All that does nothing for our question, and does not merit that one stop at it.

I say only that if when one maintains that God determines to the material of the action, by which one hates Him, one understood only the first, or even the two first, of the five things that I have indicated, it would be necessary to admit that this response absolutely destroys our proof.

In effect if God contented Himself with determining man to act, leaving him in liberty to do such action as it would please him; or if determining him to hate, He left him the choice of the object, that he would want to give to his hatred, it would not be true to say that He determined him to sin, even if in consequence of this general impulse this man carried himself to this frightful excess of hating God.

The reason for it is that one can, either act, or even hate, without sinning. Thus God determining him only to that alone, He would not determine him to anything bad and criminal. It would be man who would determine himself voluntarily himself to it.

But that is not the thought of those whom we refute. They say that God determines the sinner who hates Him, not only to act, not only to hate, but to hate Him Himself, rather than other objects that he could give to his hatred. For as one has just seen, Voetius teaches us that God determines, not only to the action, but to its species, and to all its circumstances, making it so that one produces it in such particular place, in such time on such an object, and not on another. "Ut hoc loco, hoc tempore, circa hoc singulare objectum agant." That is precise, and goes before all quibbling.

It is impossible even that they understand it otherwise. If that were so they would overturn their own system. For as one has seen they make the foresight of God depend on His Decree, and on the execution which is made of it in time by Premotion. Thus if God determining man not only to act, but still to hate, left to his choice the liberty of hating what he pleased, He would indeed know that this man would hate, but He would not know what would be the object that he would give to his hatred. Thus He would not know, neither if this man would sin, nor even supposing that He knew it, what would be the sin where he would fall.

I admit further that if it were possible to hate God without sinning, as it is possible to speak without lying, and to give alms without doing it out of vanity, God could determine man to hate Him without determining him to sin. But it being impossible that one does not sin if one hates God, above all in supposing, as one has so much reason to do, that this is an excess that His Law condemns, and there being a manifest contradiction in posing the one, and in denying the other, it is evident that it is to determine to sin, to determine to hate God.

In this supposition I maintain that there is nothing that one can impute to man. To convince ourselves of it let us go through the five things that I have distinguished in this sin, and let us begin with the last, to go back from there to the first.

If one asks from where comes it that the hatred of God is a criminal action, whoever it may be will not take it upon oneself to respond that that comes from the fact that it has pleased man that that should be. Whether man wants it, or whether he does not want it, whether there are even men, or whether there are none, to hate God will always be a sin, and a great sin.

I say the same thing of the fourth of these five things. If one asks from where comes it that to hate God is an action contrary to His Law, there would be something ridiculous in thinking that it is because man has wanted it. That comes visibly from the nature of things themselves, God having forbidden to hate Him it was impossible that this hatred not be an action contrary to His Law.

For all the rest one admits that it comes from the determination of God. One admits that if man acts, it is because God determines him to act, that if his action is that which one calls hatred, it is because God has determined him to hate rather than to love; that if this hatred attaches itself to God, rather than to the Demon, it is because God pushes him to that side, and not to this one.

Thus we find nothing in this detestable action that one can impute to man. Everything comes from God, or from the nature of things themselves.

In this supposition again I would like well that one would teach me why it is that God punishes the sinner. Why, for example, does He punish the one who hates Him? Is it because he acts? Not at all. To act, if one adds nothing to it, is something very innocent. Is it because the action that he does is that which one calls hatred? Just as little. To hate simply is not a sin. Is it therefore because wanting to act, wanting to hate, he takes it upon himself to choose God to make of Him the object of his hatred? This is true in the foundation, but the defenders of physical Premotion cannot say it. The reason for it is that it is not man who has determined himself to this choice. It is God who has determined him to it, and what deserves to be well weighed, who has determined him to it invincibly.

If God punishes him for this, it is necessary that He punish him, either for one or for the other of these two reasons, either because God has determined him to what he has done, or because God having determined him to this action, man has yielded to this determination powerful, and has not resisted it efficaciously.

And can one allege, neither one, nor the other of these two reasons without absurdity? For as for the first, what strange perversity of mind would it be necessary to have to imagine that God, who is so just, punishes a man, not for what this man does, but for what He does Himself on this man?

The second reason is neither more solid, nor more plausible than the first. For finally to punish man because he has not resisted the Premotion of God, would be to punish him because he is not more powerful than Him.

Will one say finally that God punishes this man, not because this man hates Him, but because he hates Him criminally, and in a manner contrary to His Law? That would be tolerable if it were possible to hate God innocently. But this being impossible with all impossibility, and not being in the power of any of the creatures, nor perhaps even of the Creator, to make it so that it is, it is inconceivable that it is for that that God punishes him.

Here finally is a consideration to which I beg my Reader to pay a little attention, because in effect it appears to me decisive.

Let one suppose that God determines a man to hate Him, and this posed let one teach me what it is that one would want that this man did to prevent himself from sinning, and consequently from losing himself.

Does one want this man to prevent God from determining him to this detestable action? But is there any possibility of doing it? How could he prevent God from determining him to hate Him, except by acting, by making effort at it? And how could he act, how could he make effort, without the divine Premotion? Let us pose even that he had this Premotion. Let us pose that he wanted to put himself in a state to prevent God from doing what He has resolved to do. Would it be possible that he should succeed in it?

Would one want on the other hand that God pushing him actually to hate Him, he resist His impulse? Would one want him to prevent this impulse from having its effect? How can one claim it if one considers the immense disproportion that there is between the power of the Creator, and that of the Creature?

Would one want finally that abandoning himself to this impulse, and hating God with all his strength, he guard himself from hating Him criminally? That would be ridiculous. However, I see only these three responses that one could make to this question.

CHAPTER XII. Where one examines another response. If the formal of sin is nothing other than a privation.

I have supposed up until now that what one calls formal of sin, is nothing other than the opposition which is found between the criminal action, and the Law of God, or our duty. That is in effect what appears to me the most true, and the most conformable to what St. John has said of it.

But as most of the Defenders of physical Premotion do not agree with it, it will be good to make some reflections on what they say of it.

They maintain therefore that the formal of sin is nothing other than the absence, or the privation of the rectitude that this action should have. "Privatio rectitudinis debitæ in esse" [Privation of due rectitude in being]. And they conclude from it that this privation being a pure nothing, it is impossible that it be the term and the effect of an action of God.

But nothing is more vain, nothing more frivolous than this evasion.

First if it were good, it would not serve only to exculpate God, it would still do the same effect with regard to men, and Demons. Neither the ones, nor the others, would be blameworthy, either when they sin themselves, or when they induce others to sin.

Why would they be it in effect? Would it be because they are the causes of the material of the action? Not at all. This material, one tells us, is very innocent. Is it for being the causes of the formal? Just as little. This formal is only a pure privation, is only a pure nothing, which cannot be the term of a positive action, either of the creature, or of the Creator.

This is what Twisse recognizes formally in treating another question. He wants to prove that God has been able to pardon sin without satisfaction, and in this design he says that it appears well that God has been able to do it, since men do it each day, in fact, and in right. He objects to himself that if this reasoning were good, one would be able to use it to prove that God can sin. For who doubts that men can do it? He responds that this objection is a pure sophism founded on an equivocation. For, he says, one can understand two things by sin, the material, and the formal. God, and men can produce the material, but neither God, nor men can do the formal. Thus in this particular fact God can do all that men do.

Here are his words. "Est hic fallax arguendi modus, cum procul dubio verum sit quod à Deo fieri non potest, id a nemine fieri posse. Sed latet hic equivocatio in voce peccati. Nam si sumatur pro materiali, hoc est pro actu substrato, propósitio verissima est. Nam quicumque actus à Deo fieri non potest, idem actus à nullo fieri potest. Nam ad omnem actum creaturæ necessario requiritur coefficientia Dei. At hoc sensu falsa erit assumptio, hac enim significatione peccatum potest fieri à Deo, id est actus peccato substratus; imò necesse est ut fiat à Deo, alioquin enim, nempe nisi Deo ad ipsum efficiendum concurrente fieri non posset. Sin formaliter accipiatur, concedimus conclusionem, fatemurque peccatum impossibile esse ut fiat. A nullo enim fieri potest peccatum juxta formalem ejus denominationem. Peccatum enim formaliter non est res aliqua quæ fiat, aut fieri possit, sed est relatio, vel privatio consequens id quod fit committendo, vel id quod non fit omittendo, respectu agentis, quæ quidem relatio, vel privatio, dicitur inconformitas, quâ quis in agendo, vel omittendo dicitur inconformis legi alicui." [This is a fallacious way of arguing, since without doubt it is true that what cannot be done by God, cannot be done by anyone. But an equivocation lies hidden here in the word 'sin'. For if it is taken for the material, that is for the underlying act, the proposition is very true. For whatever act cannot be done by God, the same act cannot be done by anyone. For to every act of a creature, the co-efficiency of God is necessarily required. But in this sense the assumption will be false, for in this sense sin can be done by God, that is, the act underlying sin; indeed it is necessary that it be done by God, for otherwise, namely unless God concurs in doing it, it could not be done. But if it is taken formally, we concede the conclusion, and we confess that it is impossible for sin to happen. For by no one can sin be done according to its formal denomination. For sin formally is not some thing which is done, or can be done, but it is a relation, or privation consequent on what is done by committing, or what is not done by omitting, with respect to the agent, which relation, or privation, is called non-conformity, by which

someone in acting, or omitting is said to be non-conforming to some law.] Twiss. Vind. lib. I. part. II. Digress. 8. n. 1. pag. m. 254.

II. This response supposes the most false thing in the world. It is that the evil that there can be in a simple privation, cannot, nor should be imputed to those who have not produced this privation by a positive action, which ends in it directly, and immediately.

Nothing is further from the truth than this imagination. It suffices to render someone responsible for the evil that there can be in such a privation, that it be the necessary consequence of an action which has another term.

For example death and poverty are simple privations. But to whom does one impute them when they happen? Is it not to those who do the actions, of which these privations are the consequences? Does one not impute the death of a man to an assassin who has struck him? Does one not impute the poverty of another to a thief who has taken away his property? And is there anyone who excuses, neither one, nor the other, under this fine pretext that this thief, that this assassin, cannot be the causes properly said of an effect which is only a simple privation? Would one not whistle at an Advocate, who would have recourse to such nonsense to exempt these criminals from the punishment that they deserve?

Whether the malice of sin be therefore a positive being, a privation, or a negation, that is what matters very little. Everything reduces to knowing if this positive being, this privation, this negation, is separable, or inseparable from the action, to which God determines. If it can be separated from it, so that it depends on the creature to remove this malice, whatever it may be, positive, privative, or negative, to guarantee oneself from it, to prevent oneself from being soiled by it, I admit that one cannot impute it to God.

But if one poses that it is impossible that one be without the other, as it is certain that one should, it is clear that God being the author of the action, He will be it also of the malice, in whatever it may be that this malice consists.

And in effect is God not the author of death, of poverty, of the loss of hearing and of sight, of those whom He makes die, whom He impoverishes, and whom He deprives of the use of their eyes and of their ears, although these are only pure privations, and although He produces immediately only the actions of which these privations are the necessary, and inseparable consequences?

III. Here therefore come back most of the considerations that I have touched on in the preceding chapters. Let us suppose, for example, that what there is of criminal in the hatred of God is, not the act itself, but a privation attached to this act. That posed I ask what it is that God punishes in those whom He determines to hate Him. It is not the act itself. It is innocent from what one tells us, and besides the sinner could not prevent himself from doing it, not having been able to resist God who pushed him to it. It is just as little this privation, since it has not been in his power

to prevent it from being born from the position of the act in the circumstances where God has put it. What is it therefore that God can punish?

I ask again on this subject, as in one of the preceding chapters, what one would want that Beelzebub had done when God predetermined him to become proud, supposing that it is pride which has made his fall. Would one wish that he had resisted the Premotion of God which pushed him to the material of the action? But could he do it? Could he even want it? Would one want that allowing himself to do this act, he had prevented it from being deprived of the rectitude that it should have? What could be more absurd?

IV. It does not matter therefore in any way to know if what one tells us of the malice of the action is true, or false. Let it be as true, and as certain as one will want, our proofs will not be less solid.

But I add that what one says does not appear to me true. If the formal of sin were nothing other than a simple privation, all sins would be equal, since they are all equally deprived of this rectitude, which one claims that they should have. However one knows that there are some greater, and more atrocious than others.

Besides it is evident that in the sins of commission there is something more than a privation of rectitude. There is a positive obliquity, I mean to say a formal opposition to the Law of God, and to our duty. This is what cannot be contested. But if one admits it, how can one prevent oneself from recognizing that it is this opposition which makes the form, the essence, and the malice of sin?

Firstly that appears by the consideration of the contrary. What there is of good in our actions consists without doubt in their conformity with the Law. Why therefore would the opposition to this same Law not be what there is of criminal in the bad ones?

Besides this opposition to the Law is so essential to crime, that one could neither pose crime without this opposition, nor pose this opposition without there being crime.

Finally what one tells us appears to me incomprehensible. The formal of sin, one says, is the privation of the rectitude that the action should have. But what is the rectitude that should have, for example, the hatred of God? It seems to me that the rectitude of this action, and of all the others similar, would be to have never existed. The reason for it is that it is impossible that one do them rightly. Thus the only rectitude that one should seek with regard to such an action is to guard oneself from doing it.

So that if this rectitude consists in a negation, the obliquity, which is opposed to it, will consist in the negation of a negation. But besides that that itself appears rather ridiculous, the negation of non-existence can be nothing other than existence. And in the mind of whom can it fall that existence is the formal of sin? Is existence not

common to sins and to good actions? How therefore can it make the formal of the first?

Finally how will one be able to apply this to the sins of omission? Where will one find their formal and their material? In what will one make them consist?

I am therefore persuaded that the best is to say that as the formal of good works is nothing other than their conformity with the Law of God, and our duty; in the same way the formal of sins is the opposition that they have with this rule, and that thus nothing is less solid than this second response that one makes to us.

CHAPTER XIII: That nothing does less honor to God than the Dogma of Premotion.

The last of the proofs that we have produced has led us a bit far, because it has been necessary to refute the responses that are opposed to it. I will be briefer on the others, which demand fewer discussions. Such is in particular the one which will make the matter of this chapter.

As there is none of God's actions which does not bear the character of His perfections, and which cannot convince intelligent creatures that He possesses them to the highest degree, there is none which is not apt to attract to Him this external glory, which consists only in this conviction, and in the sentiments of admiration and respect, which are the most natural consequences of it.

The Supralapsarians even claim that this glory is the only end that God proposes in all that He does. But without engaging myself to examine if what they say of it is true, I content myself with concluding from the rest, which cannot be contested, that one can be assured that physical Premotion is not an action of God, since far from attracting to Him this glory of which we speak, it would be apt only to deprive Him of it, and to give to the impious the occasion and the means to contest the perfections, which are its principle and foundation.

The perfections, of which the Supralapsarians claim that God principally seeks the glory, are His Wisdom, His Justice, His Goodness, and His Holiness. And which is it of these high perfections, of which the dogma of Premotion does not rob Him of the glory?

If it is true, God is the first, and the principal author of all that has ever been committed, either in the world, or in hell, of the most enormous crimes, as one has seen above. And what can one imagine more contrary to His Holiness?

Holiness consists principally in the horror, and in the aversion that one has for crime. But is it to have horror and aversion for it to cause it, to push to it, to determine efficaciously such a prodigious number of intelligent creatures?

I know what one responds. One says that God makes sufficiently appear the horror that He has for crime in forbidding it by His laws, and in punishing it by all the punishments of eternity.

But I cannot satisfy myself with this response. To forbid crime, to punish it even, are very equivocal marks of Holiness. For how many has one seen, and does one see each day, of Princes, of Magistrates, of Fathers, of Masters, and of other Superiors, who forbid sin, and who punish it severely, and who practicing it themselves show only too well that instead of detesting it they love it with passion, and that thus far from being all Saints they are impious ones?

It is not the same with Premotion. It is a certain mark of the disposition most opposed to Holiness. To push positively and efficaciously to evil, and to do it because one needs this evil to arrive at one's ends, is not to hate it, it is on the contrary to love it and to seek it.

In effect one does not love only the end, one loves also the means. Sinners themselves do not always make an end of the crimes that they commit with the most determination. A highwayman does not rob and kill for the pleasure that he finds in it, but to enrich himself. I say the same thing of an assassin, of a false witness, of an unjust one, etc.

Thus to say that God pushes sinners to evil, and does it because He needs this evil to procure glory for Himself, is to outrage His Holiness, without this outrage being able to be covered, either by the severity of His laws, or by the rigor of the punishments, that He makes the impious suffer.

I say approximately the same thing of His Goodness. To determine an almost infinite number of intelligent creatures to commit all sorts of horrors, and of enormities, and to do it in the design of rendering them eternally unhappy, is something so opposed to all the ideas that one can make of Goodness, that I do not see how it is possible to violate more openly its maxims than in acting in this way.

The first of these two things above all appears frightful to me. Let us imagine in effect with several Theologians, that it is not impossible that a creature conserves its innocence while suffering all the torments of hell. I say two things in this supposition.

One is that if God leaving to the Angels and to the Blessed this Holiness that they possess in such an eminent degree, precipitated them into hell, there is no one who would not admit to me that He would treat them in a manner very opposed to the rules of Goodness. That in effect is what those themselves recognize who carry the furthest the rights of the absolute power of God. They say that He has the right to make suffer the most cruel punishments to the most innocent. But they add that His Goodness prevents Him from using this right. Thus according to them to precipitate innocents into hell is a procedure contrary to Goodness, although it is not at all so to Justice.

The other thing that I maintain is that to make an innocent commit a crime, is an action more opposed to Goodness, than to plunge him into hell while preserving his innocence. In effect all Theologians agree that sin is a greater evil than hell, and that moral evil is always greater than physical evil. If therefore Goodness cannot suffer, neither that one render the innocent criminal, nor that one throw them into misery without depriving them of their innocence, how would it suffer that one do the whole at once, as God will have done in determining to sin men and Demons, and in determining them to it in the design of rendering them eternally miserable?

I know what one responds. One says that in truth God does not exercise His Goodness on the reprobate, but that one cannot deny that He makes it appear in a manner which surpasses all admiration in what He does for His elect.

I am far from contesting this second proposition, but I do not agree with the first. I say only that to do immense goods to some, and terrible evils to others, above all to make incomparably fewer happy than unhappy, as the Supralapsarians claim that God does it, is not at all the character of a perfect and infinite Goodness, not even of a true Goodness.

If the contrary had place it would be necessary to put the Caligulas and the Neros in the rank of good Princes. If they made distinguished persons die, they made profusions in favor of the common people. That is why this common people adored them, and that appeared by the fury where it put itself when it came to learn the death of these monsters, and by the difficulty that one had to appease it.

A true Goodness always does one of two things. Either it does good indifferently to all, or if it does it only to some, it avoids at least doing evil to the others. But to do good to some, and evil to others, above all to do more evil than good, is, not the character of Goodness, but the sure mark of the contrary.

I come to vindicative Justice, and I say that the sentiment of the Supralapsarians robs God of the glory of this virtue. Two things make its perfection. One is that one punish crime with all the severity that it deserves. The other is that one punish only what deserves to be punished.

The Supralapsarians pay attention only to the first of these two things, and that is what makes them believe that their system leaves to God all the glory of this virtue. But they do not think enough about the second. Is there in effect justice in punishing rigorously crimes, to which one has pushed invincibly those who have committed them? But as I have touched on this in another place, I do not stop at it presently.

Passing therefore to another consideration I say that the sentiment of the Supralapsarians robs God as well of the glory of His Wisdom, as that of the three perfections, of which I have spoken until now.

Is it in effect a procedure worthy of supreme Wisdom, to choose means as little appropriate as those that God will have employed to arrive at His end?

His end, from what one tells us, has been to attract to Himself the glory of a perfect Holiness, of an inexhaustible Goodness, and of an inflexible Justice. And to succeed in this design He has done things which are apt only to make one doubt that He possesses these perfections.

As much therefore as we are obliged to advance the glory of God, as much are we to oppose the Dogma of Premotion, which is apt only to obscure it.

I cannot prevent myself from adding another consideration, which appears to me worthy of being well weighed. It is that one can reason about it in two manners, and with two intentions, on the conduct of God, and on the perfections that He possesses.

Firstly in supposing these perfections, as well proven, either by Scripture, or by Reason, and in trying next to reconcile them with His conduct.

Secondly in supposing the conduct of God as well known, and in remarking in it the vestiges of His perfections, to conclude from them that He possesses them.

I want one to be able to succeed in the first of these two designs. I want one to be able to respond to the objections of the impious, and to show that they have nothing demonstrative. Will one succeed with the same facility in the second? Will one find in the conduct of God, such as the Supralapsarians represent it, vestiges sensible enough, or to put it better solid enough proofs of the divine perfections, to assure oneself positively that this first Being possesses them?

Will one be able to say, for example, God after having forbidden crime, and having resolved to punish it, has determined a prodigious number of very innocent creatures, to commit all the horrors that it is possible to imagine. Therefore He has an infinite horror for sin.

God has thrown the majority of intelligent creatures, on one side into crime, and on the other into misery, without them having done anything to attract this misfortune. Therefore He is perfectly good.

God has punished these same intelligent creatures for sins that He had made them commit, and has condemned them for that alone to punishments which will never end. Therefore He is perfectly just.

Does one believe that this second manner of reasoning finds many persons whom it persuades, even if the first could be good? This second however is of the intention of God. He wants us to go back from effects to causes, and that in studying His works, we remark in them the vestiges of His perfections. He wants us to persuade ourselves that He is good, holy, and just, in seeing Him do acts which bear the character of His attributes. See Psalm XIX. 1. and following. Acts XVII. 26. 27. Romans I. 19. 20. Revelation XV. 3.4.

In a word according to Scripture, and according to all that one knows of Theologians, all that God does proves that He is wise, that He is good, that He is just

and holy. This would not be true if the Dogma of Premotion had place. One must therefore admit that it is false, and one is wrong to defend it.

CHAPTER XIV. That the sacred Authors saying that God abandons certain sinners, etc. have shown that they were ignorant of the dogma of Premotion.

One of the things which show most clearly the falsity of Premotion, is that it was unknown to the sacred Authors, as several things justify it.

This appears in particular from the fact that these holy men content themselves with saying that God abandons sinners, that He delivers them to their own sense, that He permits them to do evil, that He leaves them to wander in their ways, etc. This is what one finds in diverse places.

Would they have explained themselves in a manner so little exact, if they had believed in Premotion? To determine powerfully to evil, to push invincibly sinners to it, to put them outside the state of preventing themselves from doing it, is this simply to abandon them? Is it to deliver them to their lusts, to permit them to sin, and to let them do it?

One ordinarily says that a Doctor abandons a sick person whose cure he despairs of. What does one understand by that? Does one understand that this Doctor poisons this sick person, strangles him, or suffocates him? Not at all. One understands uniquely that he no longer gives him remedies, and that despairing of being able to overcome the illness he no longer does anything to combat it. That is without doubt the true sense of the expression. Why therefore will we not believe that it is thus that the sacred Authors have understood it when they have used it in their holy Writings?

I say the same thing of the term "to permit," which all Theologians use after St. Paul on the subject of sins, where God lets men fall. No one has ever employed this way of speaking to designate real and positive impulses, above all impulses so powerful, and so efficacious, that they infallibly have their effect.

Permission according to the idea that everyone makes of it, consists uniquely in not preventing from acting. To push efficaciously to do it is quite another thing, and no one, wanting to designate positive impulses, uses the term of permission.

Nothing is more absurd, said Twisse, than to say that God permits what He makes happen, and of which He is the principal cause. "Absurde dicitur Deum permittere id fieri, quod facit ut fiat, idque principaliter ipsum efficiendo." [It is absurd to say that God permits to be done, what He makes to be done, and that by principally Himself effecting it.]

There is a double permission, one of right, and the other of fact. The permission of right rightly holds the middle between the commandment and the prohibition. That of fact occupies the same place between impulse and prevention.

In the first of these senses a Legislator permits what he neither commands, nor forbids, and which he leaves to the choice of the subject to do or not to do, as it will please him. In the second one permits the things to which one neither pushes, nor opposes.

"Sanè," says Twisse, "videtur permittere medium quiddam esse, non per participationem utriusque extremi, sed per abnegationem, quorum alterum est efficere, alterum impedire." [Indeed, permission seems to be something in the middle, not by participation of either extreme, but by negation, of which one is to effect, the other to impede.]

In a word the permission of fact, which is the only one of which it is a question, is no less opposed to positive impulse than to prevention, and that is so true that if a Reformed Theologian took it upon himself to say that God permits us to do good, and leaves us to walk in His ways, there is no one who would not cry out at Pelagian and Socinian.

Why therefore will we believe that the sacred Authors, who have employed these same ways of speaking on what God does with regard to the sins that we commit, had the intention of making understood that He pushes us to them?

I know what one responds. One says that there are two things in each sin, the formal, and the material, that with regard to the material He does something more than permit it, that He pushes to it, and determines to it by a positive action; but that He pushes no one to the formal, and that all that one can say is that He permits it.

I do not want to repeat all that I have said in the preceding chapters against this distinction. I content myself with remarking that one never employs the terms "to permit" and "permission" on the subject of things which follow necessarily those that one does positively and directly.

For example when a man kills another he is not the immediate, and properly called, cause, of his death. He is it only of the blow, or at most of the wound, of which death has been the consequence. Sometimes even he is only a rather distant cause of this wound and of this death.

For example the one who kills a man with a pistol shot does nothing other than pull a small iron, which one calls a trigger, and which makes play a small spring. This one releases a second, and this second in unbending itself makes strike a flint against a piece of well-tempered steel. The shock of this stone and of this steel makes sparks fly, which set fire to the powder of the pan. The flame of this powder communicates itself to that with which the pistol is loaded. This one being inflamed dilates itself. In dilating itself it pushes the ball with impetuosity. The ball thus pushed enters with impetuosity, and by a very rapid movement, in the body of the one on whom one

fires it. It wounds him, and opens the vessels which contain the blood. This blood spreads itself, the spirits dissipate, and the man comes to die.

There is a long chain of causes of diverse orders, which all contribute, each one in its rank, and in its manner, to the production of this effect. Nevertheless because the last ones are consequences of the first, one never says that the one who has released the first spring of the pistol has let this man die, or that he has permitted his death. One says positively that he has killed him.

Why therefore would one employ the first of these expressions, and not the second, on the subject of physical Premotion, in relation even to what one calls formal of sin, which is a consequence so necessary, so near, so immediate, of what one wants that God does for the production of the material?

In how many ways can it not happen, and does it not happen each day, that the one who fires his pistol on his enemy does not kill him? On the contrary it is impossible that the material of sin being produced by physical Premotion the formal does not result from it at once.

Between the action of the one who releases the first spring of his pistol, and the death of the one whom he kills, several actions pass, and sometimes even whole days. On the contrary between the production of the material, and that of the formal, there is, neither any interval of time, nor any action. One is born promptly and immediately from the other. How therefore no one having ever said that the one who fires his pistol permits the death of the one whom he kills, can one say that God permits what one calls the formal of sin, if one poses that He has produced the material of it?

Moral causes are not in this different from physical causes. It happens however each day that the first cause the formal of a crime only in pushing to the material alone, sometimes even without knowing, nor wanting this formal, as when one counsels a bad action only because one believes it innocent. Then the counsel falls directly only on the material of the action. However the formal, which results from it despite the one who gives the counsel, and despite the one who follows it, is imputed to both because of the connection that it has with the material. Why therefore would this same connection not suffice to make impute the formal to the physical causes which know it, and which want it?

CHAPTER XV. Some other reflections that prove the same thing.

Several other considerations clearly show that Premotion was unknown to the sacred Authors. For firstly, they say on one hand that God tolerates the greatest sinners, that He awaits their conversion, that He even desires it; and on the other hand, what He does, He does from a principle of goodness, gentleness, and patience. St. Peter speaking of the inhabitants of the old world says (a) that God's patience awaited them in the time of Noah. Isaiah assures (b) that God had waited for His

vineyard to produce good grapes. Elsewhere (c) the same Prophet introduces God who says to His people, "Would that you had been attentive to my commandments": And David makes Him say in the same sense, (d) "Oh, if my people had listened to my voice! If Israel had walked in my ways!" Finally, St. Paul speaking to each of the unbelieving Jews tells them (e) "Do you despise the riches of His kindness, patience, and longsuffering, not considering that God's kindness invites you to repentance?" All this speaks quite clearly to us of a tolerance of the greatest sinners, of an expectation, even a desire for their conversion, of a patience, a gentleness, a kindness, even riches of this kindness, which are the principle, which I beg my Reader to note well.

I know that most of these expressions should not be taken literally. I know there is a figure called Anthropopathy. But I also know that this figure, like most others, assumes some resemblance between what is said and what one wants to make understood. But what resemblance can there be between waiting for and wishing for something on one hand, and on the other hindering it, preventing it, and effectively opposing it? Is not one of these things directly and formally opposed to the other? And if so, can the first be the image of the second? Can it bring the idea of it to mind?

Yet it is true that if Premotion is valid, God will prevent the sinner from converting, determining him invincibly to all that this miserable person can do to sink deeper and deeper into vice, to blind himself more, and to harden himself.

But what especially deserves to be well weighed is that St. Paul represents God's tolerance toward sinners as an effect of His gentleness and Goodness, a Goodness even extremely tender for these miserable ones, since he speaks of the riches of this Goodness.

Let us now imagine that God determines no one to evil. What St. Paul says will be undoubtable and will have no difficulty. But let us suppose Premotion as the Supralapsarians believe it. What sense can one give to what this Apostle tells us?

According to the Supralapsarians, God lets sinners live only because they do not yet deserve all the misery He reserves for them. Each of them is destined not only to damnation in general but to a precise and determined degree of damnation. And sinners only reach with time the degree of wickedness that deserves this punishment. There is, for example, such a reprobate whom God wants to make suffer a hundred degrees of misery, and all the sins he has committed deserve only sixty. God therefore cannot yet remove him from the world. He must leave him there until this unfortunate becomes wicked enough to be punished in this way. And since he can only become so by committing new sins, nor commit them without God pushing him to do so, it is necessary that He give him this impulse without which His Decree would not be executed.

It may be that the Supralapsarians do not say in so many words what I have just attributed to them. But besides the fact that they say things that approach it, it is

certain that their hypotheses put them in the necessity of saying it. I even have difficulty believing that they disavow it. However, if they recognize it, one sees what the Goodness and gentleness that God shows in supporting sinners is reduced to in their system.

II. There is a very remarkable passage in the Revelations of Jeremiah. God wants the heavens to be astonished at the blindness of His people. "Heavens," He says (f), "be astonished at this; be horrified and greatly dried up, says the Eternal. For my people have committed two evils. They have forsaken me, who am the fountain of living waters, to dig out cracked cisterns that hold no water."

If one supposes that men are the only causes of their sins, there will be nothing in these words but what is reasonable, nothing that causes the slightest difficulty. For is it not an incomprehensible thing that men, that is to say creatures endowed with reason and intelligence, voluntarily move away from the source of their happiness and attach themselves to what is only suited to make them eternally miserable? Taking it this way, it is with reason that God wants even the most insensible things to be astonished by it, and in this way all these figures so lively and brilliant will be perfectly well placed and will give a very accurate and very similar idea of their subject.

But it will not be the same if one assumes Premotion. Nothing will be colder than all this collection of Epiphonemes, Apostrophes, Prosopopoeias, and Metaphors. For after all, if God pushes creatures to abandon Him and attach themselves to other objects, is it very surprising that they do it? What is there in this that should seem strange? What more natural, what more ordinary, than to see the weaker yield to the stronger, and the Creator being obeyed by His creature? Is there in this the slightest subject for surprise and astonishment? Would it not even be a prodigy if the contrary happened? Thus what God says in this place could not be worthy of Him, not even of a moderately judicious man, if what we are told about Premotion were true, we must conclude from this very fact that it is not.

III. Is this hypothesis not also very opposed to what God Himself tells us through the mouth of the Prophet Hosea (g)? "Your destruction comes from you, O Israel, but in me is what can save you." In this supposition, will it not be true to say that our destruction comes from God? For how could it come from Him in a more sensible way than what this Dogma poses?

If we admit it, God does two different but very remarkable things. First, He pushes us, He determines us to do what destroys us in such a way that it is equally impossible for us both to do it without His impulse and to prevent ourselves from doing it when He pushes us to it. Secondly, He pushes us to it with the intention of destroying us and finding in our loss the glory of His Justice. Can one imagine a way in which God is more properly and more literally the author and cause of our loss than in this one?

IV. What will also become in this supposition of what the Apostle St. James says (h)? "When someone is tempted, let him not say that he is tempted by God. For as God cannot be tempted by evils, neither does He tempt anyone." In this hypothesis, it will be very true to say that God tempts us, that is to say that He pushes us and induces us to sin, for it is agreed that this is the meaning of this expression in this place and in some others. It will even be true to say that He pushes us to it much more strongly and more effectively than either men or Demons, or even our own concupiscence, to which St. James attributes this unfortunate effect in contrast to God, adding that each one is tempted when he is drawn and baited by his own covetousness.

Indeed, men and Demons tempt us only as moral causes, by councils and suggestions, in a word by presenting us with objects on which we make our reflections. But God does it on one hand by presenting us with these same objects, since their presentation itself is an effect of His Premotion, but also by a real and proper impulse. The action of concupiscence has something more effective than that of men and Demons, but it does not approach that of God. Indeed, we can repress all its movements, we can triumph not only over this passion but over all others; whereas it is not in our power to resist God's Premotion, to whatever it pushes.

He even determines those who tempt us to tempt us. He pushes them effectively. Thus He acts both on those who tempt and on those who are tempted, and acts on both in such a strong way that He triumphs over all kinds of oppositions. If this is so, it is He mainly who tempts us. And if this is still so, what was the Apostle St. James thinking when he so strongly assured that God never tempts anyone? What can one imagine more opposed to the truth than what he tells us?

CHAPTER XVI. Where the reasons of the opposite party are examined.

These reasons seem to me demonstrative. Above all, I find them strong when I come to compare them with those that are opposed to them. Nothing is weaker than the latter, as will be seen by going through the most specious ones.

I. The first thing valued is what St. Paul says that we have in God life, movement, and being. But who does not see that these words are verified enough by saying that our God is the author of our being, our life, our faculties, and consequently of our actions? And to justify this, is it necessary to recognize that it is God who created us, who gave us all that we have of strength, power, and activity, and who preserves it for us by His goodness? With this alone posed, is it not true to say that we have being, life, and movement in Him and through Him? To want to induce something more from the words of this Apostle, is it not making him say what he does not say?

I therefore do not believe that one can conclude from these words any kind of concurrence of God, neither predetermining nor simultaneous. But even if one

could, how could one prove that they precisely induce the first, which is the only one we dispute? Is there anything in the words themselves that makes it understood? Does it even appear that the Apostle had this distinction in view when he wrote what is objected to us?

II. It is said secondly that to deny predetermining concurrence is to render, at least to some extent, the creature independent of its Creator. But I do not see on what grounds this is said. Indeed, is it not to absolutely subject, and in every sense, the creature to the Creator, to say that this creature has nothing that its Creator has not given it, that He is the author of its being, that He is its preserver, that He has given it all its strengths and faculties, that He preserves them, that it always depends on Him to take them away, and that whenever it pleases Him, He will reduce it to its first nothingness, or that leaving it to subsist He will absolutely prevent it from acting, that He will even turn it, incline it, bend it, and determine it to whatever He finds most appropriate? To recognize all this, as indeed there is no one who does not admit it, is it to render the creature independent of the Creator? Is it not to leave to God all the empire that He has of Himself over all things?

It is indeed good to note that if we do not admit what is called physical Premotion, it is neither that we reject all Premotion, nor even that we believe the physical one in particular impossible. We are very far from these two errors.

We believe firstly that God moves us and determines us effectively, not to evil in truth, but to good, and sometimes even to indifferent things; which, as I prove elsewhere, does not wound our freedom.

We believe secondly that He determines us sometimes, both invisibly and physically, to certain actions, which by that very fact are not free. Such was the leap of joy of St. John the Baptist in his mother's womb. Such were the panic terrors, by which He has several times dispersed formidable armies.

We believe only that He does not always act in this way, and that in particular He does not do it, neither with regard to good nor with regard to evil. Not with regard to good, because He wants us to do it freely, which would not happen if He determined us to it by physical premissions. Not with regard to evil, because His own holiness, His own goodness, do not allow Him to do it.

To be in these sentiments is it to ruin the absolute dependence in which the creature finds itself in relation to its Creator? Is it necessary to establish this dependence, to accuse God of being the author of evil, or to say that He ruins our freedom?

III. It is also said that if we do not admit physical Premotion, it will have to be said that we ourselves are the immediate cause of our actions, which cannot be. For as these actions are beings that did not exist before their production, it will have to be said that this production is a true creation, and that thus man will be able to boast of being the Creator of something, which can only be very absurd.

All this is based on this principle of College philosophy, that our actions are accidents, and consequently beings. But this view is generally rejected since the establishment of the new Philosophy. No more Peripatetic accidents are admitted. Only spiritual and corporeal substances are recognized, which are beings properly said, and modes, or ways of being, but which are not beings. And these modes not being beings, they cannot be either created or annihilated, these two kinds of actions only being able to have true beings as their object.

If I am asked where these modes come from when they are produced, I will ask in turn what they become, and where they go, when they cease to exist, and I am sure that one cannot answer anything to this second question that does not apply very naturally to the first.

I will add that if the production of modes is a creation, it will be the work of God alone. For how could it be that simple creatures, such as are secondary causes, have any part in such a work? How could they act, either alone or with any other cause, on pure nothingness? Thus it will be necessary to reduce oneself to the opinion of Father Malebranche, who removes all activity from creatures and leaves it entirely to the Creator alone; after which there will no longer remain any concurrence, neither predetermining nor simultaneous.

I will finally say directly, and without detour, that the modes come from God, not immediately, like substances, but mediately, and through the intermediary of causes, to which God has given the power and strength to produce them. And in this I will only follow Mr. Regis, who said it long before me. "Reflecting that God produces Substances immediately by Himself, and that He produces modes only by substances, to mark this difference I will call Creation the action by which God produces substances immediately, and I will name Generation that by which He produces modes mediately." Reg. Metaph. Book I. Part I. chap. 12. n. 3.

IV. It is said that simultaneous concurrence is inexplicable, and that this is a truth that Louis de Dole has very well proved. It is concluded that since it is necessary to admit some concurrence, one cannot help but recognize the predetermining one, which is the only one that remains, the other being removed.

But besides the temerity in pronouncing on the way in which God acts, especially for us who know so little about how we ourselves act, besides that, I say, if one cannot accommodate the simultaneous concurrence, such as the Molinists pose it, which indeed is very difficult, can one not conceive it in another way, which will have nothing but what is very natural and very easy?

Can one not say in a word that as, according to the best Theologians, the power of God is not an attribute distinct from His will, and that indeed He produces, or does things only by effectively willing that they be, as He created the world only by willing that it exist as it is, He also concurs with secondary causes only by willing that they act each in its own way, and in accordance with the nature He has given them, some

freely, others necessarily? That is enough, and it is not necessary to add anything to it.

V. It is also said that if we reject Premotion, we will find nowhere a solid foundation for God's Prescience. But I answer amply to this objection in another work, where I show, on one hand that it is very bad reasoning to conclude that something is not from the fact that one has no knowledge of it, and on the other that it is not impossible to discover these foundations that one seeks.

In order for God to know the future with certainty, only two things are needed; one that this future is true, I mean that it must truly happen, or if one wants that it is true that it will happen; the other that God is in a position to perceive all truths whatever they may be. The second article causes no difficulty to anyone, and for the first I show in this other place that from the moment the creature acts in time, it has always been true that it would act.

I add that physical Premotion is not such a foundation as is needed for foreknowledge. If the latter had only this single support, God would see the effect in its cause, which can only make an abstractive knowledge, as they say in the Schools, that is to say an indirect knowledge, such as ours usually is; whereas all the earth agrees that that of God is a direct and intuitive knowledge, which sees things in themselves, and not effects in causes, or causes in effects.

Moreover, if this were the case, the certainty that God would have of events would only be a physical certainty, since God would only concur with them physically; whereas it is beyond doubt that the certainty of His foreknowledge is a metaphysical certainty. It therefore has other foundations.

CHAPTER XVII: Explanation of certain passages of Scripture which seem to say that God pushes us to sin.

The most considerable of the proofs that I have produced against the Dogma of physical Premotion is that which tends to show that if this Dogma were true, God would be the author of sin. One might imagine that this consequence is not nearly as absurd as I claim, since Scripture seems to support it. For example, David says to Abizai that if Shimei was railing against him, it was because the Lord had told him to do so. II Sam. XVI. 10. 11. The Apostles say to God, Acts IV. 27, "Against your holy Son Jesus, whom you have anointed, Herod and Pontius Pilate have gathered together with the nations and the peoples of Israel, to do all the things that your hand and your counsel had determined beforehand to be done." Elsewhere they say that this great Savior was delivered by the definite counsel of God, Acts II. 23. Finally, St. Peter assures that if there are those who are rebellious and who stumble against the word, it is because they were ordained to it. I Peter II. 8.

These passages, and some others similar to them, have given occasion to several Theologians of all sects to say very harsh things, which have had unfortunate effects.

But I am persuaded that they can be explained very naturally, and without doing them any violence, by making them simply say five things, which have nothing but what is very certain, and with which one should not be at all shocked.

The first is that God permits evil, which would be easy for Him to prevent, if He found it appropriate. He does not do it. He lets sinners do whatever they please. This is enough to give Scripture occasion to employ expressions that seem to insinuate that He leads these sinners to do what He is content to suffer. This is indeed the style of Scripture, which to designate a simple negation of action, often employs expressions that seem to signify real and positive actions. In this way it says that David vivified the Moabites, to simply say that he did not put them to death. See similar ways of speaking, Gen. VI. 19, 20. VII. 3. XII. 12. XIX. 19. XLVII. 25. L. 20. Exod. I. 17. Numb. XXII. 33. XXXI. 15. Deut. XX. 16.

The second thing that these passages entail is that this permission comes neither from ignorance, nor from inadvertence, nor from powerlessness to prevent it, but from a wise and positive will, which has for its object, not in truth the evil itself that men do—that seems harsh to me, although St. Augustine and several others have had no difficulty in saying it—but God's permission itself. I mean that God permits evil in such a way that He wants to permit it; so that He wants, not the evil itself that He permits, but the permission of this evil.

Thirdly, God does, for other purposes, certain external actions, from which men improperly take the occasion to carry themselves to the greatest excesses. This is how one must explain what David says that God had commanded Shimei to curse him. Indeed, the meaning of this Prophet is not that God had addressed to this wicked man some revelation, mediate or immediate, to command him to utter the horrors that the Holy History reports. His meaning is not even that God had pushed him to it by some positive action of His power, but only that He had given him the opportunity, putting David in a state where Shimei believed that he could outrage him with impunity, which he would never have had the audacity to do if David had remained in peaceful possession of his authority and his power.

Fourthly, although God does not inspire sinners with the wickedness that is the principle of their excesses, He nevertheless uses it to execute His designs. It was thus that He used the avarice of Judas, the hatred of the Jews, and the cowardice of Pilate to procure the death of His Son, and thereby to operate the salvation of the world.

Finally, it can happen that one or several men being determined, of themselves, to commit a crime, for example an unjust and violent action, God makes this violence and this injustice fall rather on one or several persons whom He wants to punish or chastise, than on some others. He will, for example, make it rather John than Peter who will fall into the hands of a band of thieves who are waiting for passersby on a highway to slaughter them. As the sin of these Thieves consists not in that it is rather John than Peter whom they slaughter, but in that they slaughter a man indefinitely,

it is clear that this determination of Providence, which makes the effect of this violence fall rather on one than on the other, has nothing that should trouble us.

Many even of our Theologians maintain that it can happen that God, seeing a man determined to sin, but undetermined on the choice of the particular sin he may commit, determines this general inclination to one of the sins included in this generality, because He will find it more appropriate than any of the others to make His designs succeed.

This thought is quite plausible, especially if two restrictions are added to it. The first is that this sin, to which one supposes that God determines the sinner, is less atrocious than the one he would commit if God abandoned him to himself. Indeed, I cannot persuade myself that God ever determines to a greater sin one who without His direction would be content to commit a smaller one. What the first has more than the second could in this way be imputed to God, which one must be careful not to admit.

On this foundation I cannot persuade myself that God determined in any way Judas to betray his master, this sin being the greatest of those to which this miserable person could carry himself. But it seems that there is something more specious to say that God determines to a lesser sin only by preventing the commission of another greater one: And this is what seems can be noticed in what Jacob's children did with regard to Joseph. They sought to get rid of him, and it was also with this design that they threw him into a pit, where they believed he would starve to death. But as God did not want him to die so soon, it is quite believable that He inspired Judah to propose to them to sell him to Arab Merchants who were passing by, and that He led the others to consent to it. This means that He prevented them from committing a frightful crime, by effectively leading them to commit a smaller one.

The other restriction that one could add to this thought to make it more reasonable would be to say that God determines no one to the lesser of these sins by pushing anyone by a positive action of His power, but only by preventing them from doing the other actions, which do not accord with the designs of Wisdom. One could say that He acts almost the same as a Gardener, who directs water to various places in his garden, not by pushing it towards the places where he wishes it to spread, but only by preventing it from flowing over those he does not want to water.

I am persuaded that many would have no difficulty in admitting this thought with these two restrictions. Nevertheless, to say what I think of it, I believe that the best is to reject it. First, it is certain that one can do without it. The simple permission of the sins to which God foresees that men will carry themselves of their own motion is more than sufficient to give Him the means to succeed infallibly in all His designs.

Moreover, it is certain that Providence presides over many actions to which it does not determine in any way. Such was, for example, the first sin of men and Demons, which one must be careful not to subtract from the direction of Providence, and to which nevertheless those who committed it determined themselves.

Finally, to say that God determines to a sin because He wants to use it to execute His decrees, in whatever way one poses that He determines to it, is to say that God wants this sin to be committed, and consequently that the sinner commits it. Now to say this is to say all that is harshest in the doctrine of physical Premotion, especially if one considers that, as I have already said, God does things only by absolutely wanting them to be. Consequently, if He wanted in this way for sin to be committed, He would visibly be its cause and author.

For all these reasons, therefore, I would like to guard against saying this, and leaving aside this sixth act, to content myself with the five others that I have indicated. These five indeed suffice to explain the passages of Scripture that are opposed to us. And as there is none of these acts that is not visibly innocent, and that does not accord very well with the aversion that God has for crime, one can see well that this matter explained in this way has no difficulty.

There are some other acts of which I have said nothing, because they were not my subject. There are certain sins into which God prevents from falling those who of themselves have too much inclination towards them. There are others that He permits only up to a certain point, and that He prevents from going further. He 444 Add. concerning the Dog. of phys. Prem. uses all usefully and advantageously, and directs them to good ends. But all this is not from this place and serves nothing to explain the passages that are objected to us. That is why I do not dwell on it.

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CLARIFICATIONS On some DIFFICULTIES That arise from the Consideration OF FREEDOM Necessary to act morally.

With an ADDITION, where it is proven against SPINOZA that we are Free.

To serve as a Sequel to the Response to the Objections of Mr. Bayle.

BY JEAN LA PLACETTE Pastor of the French Church of Copenhagen.

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FIRST DISSERTATION. Where it is shown that the inability in which we believe the sinner finds himself to do good is not contrary to this type of Liberty.

CHAPTER I. Occasion and general purpose of this Dissertation and the two Following ones.

Those who claim that Reason and Faith are not always in good agreement never fail to produce, as one of their most convincing proofs, the opposition they imagine they observe between what Reason teaches us about human Liberty, and what Faith teaches us on various subjects. Reason very distinctly teaches us these three truths.

The first is that there is a Liberty, which consists in being so much master of one's actions that one can do them or not do them as one wishes.

The second is that this is an advantage that we effectively possess in several respects and on a great number of occasions.

The third is that whenever one lacks this power, as happens quite often and in several ways, one is incapable of acting morally, that is to say, in a manner conforming to or contrary to our duty, and which might attract blame or praise, and make us worthy of being punished or rewarded.

On the other hand, Faith teaches us five principal truths. The first is that man is so depraved since sin that it is impossible for him to convert, and even to do anything good without Grace. The second is that this Grace, which assists us, is so effective that it never happens that it is frustrated, and that those whom God undertakes to convert persist in sin. The third, that even outside of Conversion, and in occasions that have no relation to salvation, God disposes of our hearts as He pleases and effectively leads us to certain actions that we would never do by ourselves. The fourth, that not only does He determine us in time to what He pleases, but also that He resolved it from eternity, and that moreover the Decrees He has formed thereupon cannot fail to be executed. The fifth, finally, that we never happen to do anything that God has not very certainly foreseen from all eternity.

It is claimed that these five Dogmas overthrow the three truths that Reason teaches us on the subject of Liberty. If these Dogmas stand, we are ordinarily told, God punishes us for not having done a very great number of actions that were impossible for us, and rewards us for having done some others, from which it was not in our power to abstain. And given this, what will become of what Reason teaches us on

the subject of Liberty? If one believes Reason, one can be neither punished nor rewarded except for what one has done or omitted freely; and one neither does nor omits freely except what one can do and not do. How then can God punish the sinner for not having done what was impossible for him, and for having done what he could not avoid? How will the righteous be rewarded for actions to which a superior force has determined him, which have been resolved by immutable Decrees, and foreseen with a certainty that nothing can shake?

It is true that there is not one of these Dogmas that is not contested for us. But it is also true that there is not one that is particular to us, and that many other Christian Societies do not admit as well as we do. All Christians, with the exception of Socinians alone, recognize the Foreknowledge of God. All Christians, with the exception of Socinians and Remonstrants, admit the powerlessness of the sinner to convert without Grace. The Thomists and Jansenists strongly maintain that Grace, which converts us, is efficacious in itself and always infallibly produces its effect. On the other hand, the Lutherans are not far from this thought, since they admit that one cannot resist that species of vocation, which they call extraordinary. And regarding the Decrees of God, I have shown elsewhere that there is much less diversity of opinions on this subject than one imagines.

One must therefore not imagine that this dispute concerns only the Reformed. One can, on the contrary, be certain that it interests all of Christianity. It is also much older than the Reformation. The same Objections that are presently made to us were made to St. Augustine and his Disciples: And even before Jesus Christ came into the world, most of these difficulties occupied the Philosophers of Paganism, as can be seen in Cicero's books *de Fato*, *de Divinatione*, and elsewhere.

It is agreed on the other hand that this matter is rather obscure, and that it is not easy to shed all the light on it that one would wish to find there. Some even claim that it is impossible to fully satisfy oneself on this subject. They persuade themselves that there is nothing on which it is more necessary to captivate our mind, and to submit it to the yoke of Faith, firmly believing what one cannot understand. Strangius in the Conclusion of his *Treatise de voluntate Dei* alleges Cajetan, Soto, and Alvarez on this, celebrated Thomists, and some of our Theologians, particularly Calvin, Bucer, Rivet, Cameron.

I am convinced that they say too much, and I hope to show this in the sequel. But be that as it may, it appears from this that the difficulties found therein well deserve that one apply oneself to clarifying them, since they have caused such trouble to such Minds. Moreover, one cannot neglect them without exposing those who regard them as insoluble to the danger of persuading themselves that they actually are, and then imagining from this persuasion either that what we believe on these five articles is not true, or that man has no Liberty, or that Reason and Faith contradict each other in such a way that it is impossible to reconcile them.

The first of these thoughts would cause a terrible fracas in Theology, and the two latter would overturn it completely and even annihilate Religion, as I hope to show in the sequel. Who can after that doubt that it is important to do what one can to extricate oneself from these embarrassments, and to try to shed some light among these shadows?

I had moreover committed myself in the Preface of my Response to the Objections of Mr. B. to work on it, and all these considerations together have determined me to undertake it. But as this Objection contains two, one of which is taken from the opposition that one believes to see between Liberty and powerlessness, and the other from the incompatibility that one imagines there is between Liberty and necessity, I propose to examine them separately, and one after the other, the first in this Dissertation, and the second, which has various branches, in the two following ones.

CHAPTER II. What is the Liberty presently in question. First character.

One sees well that the strength or weakness of the objection made to us, and which we undertake to resolve, depends on knowing if there is effectively incompatibility between Liberty on one side, and necessity and powerlessness on the other. For if it were quite sure that there is, the difficulty would be insoluble, whereas it would be quite contemptible if the contrary were proven. Thus everything reduces to making sure of what one should think on this preliminary question.

But before undertaking it, it must be noted that it is not a question here of all sorts of Liberty, nor of all sorts of necessity and powerlessness. There is such Liberty that we are not accused of ruining. There is also such necessity and such powerlessness which, by the consent of all the earth, have no opposition with this particular species of Liberty that we are accused of annihilating, and such another of which it is agreed on both sides that it has this unfortunate effect.

So as not to waste time arguing about things on which one agrees, as is ordinarily done, one must go through the principal species of Liberty, necessity, and powerlessness, and see which are those regarded as incompatible, to then investigate if they actually are.

I begin with Liberty. There are several species of it, or at least there are several things to which one gives this name.

There is first a Liberty, which is called of right, *Libertas juris*, because it consists in the right that one has to do and not to do certain things, such that whether one does them or omits them, one does not sin. This is what happens whenever there is no law that requires or forbids these sorts of things: And it is in this sense that St. Paul said 1 Cor. VII. 30. that the husband being dead his widow is at Liberty to marry whom she wishes. But there is nothing on which this Apostle uses this expression

more often in this sense than when it concerns the privilege of Christians discharged by Jesus Christ from the heavy yoke of the Mosaic Laws. This is what St. Paul very often calls a Liberty. See in particular Gal. II. 4. V. 1. 13.

There is secondly a Liberty, which is called civil, which is opposed to servitude properly so-called, and which consists in not having a master whom one is bound to obey. St. Paul speaks of this species of Liberty in various places in his writings, particularly 1 Cor. VII. 21. 22. 23. Eph. VI. 8.

There is thirdly a Liberty, which can be called spiritual and metaphorical, and which consists in being exempt from the tyranny of sin and the slavery of vice. In this sense the Son of God says to the Jews that all those who commit sin are slaves of sin, and that only those whom his Grace has freed are truly free. John VIII. 34. 36. See also Rom. VI. 16. 17. 18. and II. Pet. II. 19.

There is finally a Liberty, which can be called natural, because one has it from birth, and it flows in some manner from the principles of nature, which distinguishes it from the civil, which is a consequence of society, and from the spiritual, which is an effect of Grace. One can also call it Liberty of fact, as opposed to that of right. Be that as it may, it makes us masters of a great number of our actions, internal and external. I do not believe that there is a single place in the Holy Books where this term is employed in this latter sense. But it is ordinarily given to it in works of Philosophy, Jurisprudence, Theology, even in ordinary language.

Be that as it may, this latter species of Liberty is the only one that is necessary to be in a state to act morally. But what is it to act in this manner? This is what must be explained, and for this purpose it is important to note that we do two sorts of actions, natural and moral.

Natural actions are done in us and by us with a blind necessity, and without knowledge, from which it comes that one neither blames nor praises them; one neither rewards nor punishes them. It is in this rank that one can put the digestion of food, the beating of the heart, the circulation of blood, and some other functions of the sensitive and vegetative life.

Moral actions are those that one does only because one wants to do them, and which according to whether they are conforming or contrary to our duties, are reputed good or bad, and worthy of blame or praise, of punishment or reward. For example, lying or telling the truth, returning a deposit or keeping it.

One calls the first of these actions natural, because they are necessary consequences of those general and perpetual laws that the Creator established at the beginning, and whose observance makes what one calls nature and the order of nature. One calls the others moral, because they make what one calls morals, they have that species of goodness or malice which is called moral, and they are the principal subject of that Science which is called Morals and Science of morals.

There is a double goodness and a double malice, the physical and the moral. Physical goodness is that which makes us happy, and moral that which makes us praiseworthy. Health, life, pleasure are physical goods. Justice, temperance, piety are moral goods. By the same token one understands what the evils of these two orders are. Physical evils are those that make us suffer, like illness and pain. Moral ones are those that make us guilty, like sins.

Thus to act morally is to act in such a manner that what one does has, not some physical goodness or malice, but moral malice, and by the same token is conforming or contrary to our duty, and worthy of being blamed or approved, punished or rewarded, such also that after having done it one can say to oneself, I was right, or I was wrong to do it. That is what it is to act morally.

It is agreed that all sorts of causes are not in a state to act in this manner. Everyone admits that neither inanimate beings nor beasts are capable of it. There are only intelligent beings who are. These themselves are not always so, and in all sorts of states. There is such a state where one is incapable of doing either good or evil. Such is for example that of infancy, that of sleep, that of delirium. Persons who find themselves in any of these states can do various actions which would be good or bad in another state, and which are not so in that one.

One ordinarily gives the name of Liberty to the assemblage of what one regards as necessary to be able to do these sorts of actions, and that alone shows that this Liberty is very different from the three others of which I have spoken. Indeed not one of the three is necessary to act morally. One acts in this manner even when one is subject to laws, and consequently deprived of the Liberty of right.

It is even rather difficult to understand how it is possible to act in this way if one does not have some law that one is bound to observe. One acts morally even when one has lost that Liberty which is called civil. Slaves can do, and do each day, good and evil actions. One acts morally even when one does not have spiritual Liberty. Sinners, who are deprived of it, do not fail to do evil and to deserve to be punished for it.

That alone makes one feel sufficiently the equivocation of some Protestant Theologians, who when they have been accused of annihilating Liberty, which was understood only of the Liberty necessary to act morally, have admitted this consequence, and have maintained that it is very conforming to Scripture, which says so formally that all sinners are slaves, and that it is to Grace, not to nature, that the righteous are indebted for their Liberty. They have not noticed that the Liberty of which Scripture tells us sinners are deprived is not the Liberty necessary to act morally, since if they did not have it, it would be impossible for them to sin. For how could they sin if they lacked what is necessary to be able to do it? It is of spiritual Liberty that Scripture speaks in all these places, not of that which we are accused of annihilating. Consequently, to respond in this manner is to miss the point and to

show that one does not understand the sense of the objection that one proposes to remove.

CHAPTER III. Continuation of the same subject. Two other characteristics of the Liberty in question.

Here then is a sensible characteristic that distinguishes the Liberty which we are accused of annihilating from the rest of the things that bear the same name. But this characteristic is not the only one that makes this quality known. There are still two other similar ones, which it is good to indicate here, and which will be of very great use to us throughout this Treatise.

The first is that the actions in which this Liberty is found are the true matter of laws, and can be commanded or forbidden without absurdity and without injustice. I say disjunctively commanded or forbidden, and not conjunctively commanded and forbidden, because there are several free actions which cannot be commanded, such as those which are immutably evil, lying, hating God, disobeying Him, etc. There are others which cannot be forbidden, namely those which are immutably just and necessary, such as believing what God attests, loving Him, obeying Him, etc. But there is none of this order which cannot be the matter of either a command or a prohibition, both just and reasonable.

It is not the same with actions that are not free. One can neither forbid them nor command them. For example, one cannot forbid us to feel pain when we are burned or broken on a wheel, and there is no one who would not regard this prohibition as tyrannical.

Here then is a second characteristic of very great use. There is still a third which is no less so. It is that free actions depend so much on the Will that one does them every time one wants to strongly and sincerely, and one abstains from them every time one has a similar will not to do them. I say, when one wants it strongly and sincerely, because indeed I speak neither of ineffective wills, which are otherwise called velleities, nor of languishing wills. The first are not followed by any effort, and the second make only ones that are too weak to succeed. I speak of firm and determined wills, which act with all their strength whenever necessary.

This characteristic is a necessary consequence of the two preceding ones. For by the first, an action must be in our power to be free, if it must be free to be able to be good or bad. How indeed could it be either good or bad if it did not depend on us? If that were so, it could happen that we would be criminal at the time when our will would be upright and would have nothing to reproach itself for.

Let us imagine indeed that God commanded us something that was not in our power. In this supposition we would sin by not doing what He would command us. However, our will could be upright, since it could want with all its strength to

execute what would be ordered. Can one however understand that the will is upright at the time when one does not do one's duty?

And for the second, if it were not necessary that an action depend on us to be able to be either prescribed or forbidden to us, God could order us the most impossible things, such as stopping the course of the Sun and moving mountains. He could forbid us the most inevitable, for example being sick and dying. As all this would be absurd and unbearable, it must be recognized that free acts depend on us in this sense, that we will do them or omit them infallibly whenever we want to in the right way, following the ordinary maxim, *In moralibus tantum possumus, quantum volumus*. In terms of Morality, power extends as far as the Will.

This is also what all our Authors recognize. See Rivet *Cathol. Orthod. Tract. IV. quæst. 3. n. 2.* Chamier *Panst. Tom. III. Lib. XI. cap. 9. n. 16-24.* Cameron *Defens. pag. 243.* Amyraut *de lib. arb. pag. 111.* La Place *opusc. posth. pag. 198.* Morus *de grat. & lib. arb. disp. 1. n. 39.* Heidanus *Locc. comm. Part. I. pag. 472.* Strangius *de volunt. Dei pag. 711.* Beaulieu *Thes. Theol. pag. 475.* Burman *Synops. lib. II. cap. 11. n. 25.* Vittichius *Antispin. pag. 33. 35.* Heidegger *locc. comm. Tom. I. pag. 484.* M. Pictet *Theol. Lat. lib. V. cap. 10. n. 12. & Theol. Franç. liv. V. chap. 12. pag. 311.*

I am not at all surprised to see that our Theologians agree so well on this matter. Everyone knows that they have made it a point of honor to follow in the footsteps of St. Augustine, and it is certain that St. Augustine consistently maintained this truth, and that, as Jansenius has shown very distinctly, he taught it uniformly and without variation from his promotion to the Episcopate until the end of his life.

I will not report the places where this great man explained himself on this. They can all be found together in Jansenius *de Grat. Christi lib. VI. cap. 3. 4. 5.* There will also be found those of several other Fathers who have said the same thing.

Here then are three sensible characteristics of the Liberty that we are accused of ruining. This alone is enough to make us understand the true meaning of the objection, and to give us the means of showing its weakness, without it being necessary to enter into all the disputes there are on this subject, and which make so much noise in the Schools. Perhaps I will say something about it elsewhere.

CHAPTER IV. First part of the Objection made to us. Various Responses opposed to it. Three Meanings of the first Response.

I have said that we are accused of ruining in two ways the Liberty necessary to act morally, on one hand by the powerlessness in which we maintain that all sinners naturally find themselves with regard to the good that God prescribes for them, and on the other by the necessity of several species, where some other dogmas that we teach put all that there are of intelligent creatures, to do what they do.

I will repel this double accusation, beginning with the one that emphasizes the opposition that is believed to exist between Liberty and powerlessness, which we

put together in each sinner. Here is the form that can be given to it, and which makes it appear in all its strength.

We believe that the sinner deprived of grace is reduced to an absolute powerlessness to convert, and generally to do good actions. We receive with respect this great number of clear and precise decisions of the sacred Authors, who say it in so many words, and who explain themselves on this with a force that is not common. They say that of ourselves, as of ourselves, we are incapable of having even a good thought, far from being able to do good actions. They say that the flesh does not subject itself to the Law of God, and that indeed it cannot. They say that it is as impossible for the sinner to convert as for a Moor to change his skin, and for a Leopard to erase his spots. They say that this bad tree cannot bear good fruits. They say that as a branch does not bear fruit if it does not remain on the vine, we can just as little do it if we do not remain in Jesus Christ. Without me, says finally this great Redeemer, without me you can do nothing.

But this being the case, how can it be that God commands the sinner to do this good which is impossible for him? If He can command us this, He can command us to fly, to stop the course of the Sun, and to move mountains. He could order a blind man to see, a deaf man to hear, a paralytic to walk.

How, secondly, is it possible that man sins by not doing this good, which he is so little able to do? Who does not know that powerlessness, when it is total and absolute, dispenses with the obligation to observe the most just laws? Is it found bad that a prisoner confined in a dungeon does not go to the Temple to attend the exercises of Religion, that a blind man does not read Scripture, that a man reduced to the last indigence gives nothing to those who find themselves in the same state?

How, thirdly, can he deserve to be blamed for it, to be punished for it, either in time or especially in eternity? What idea, it is said, is this to have, not only of the Goodness of God, but also of His Justice, to believe that He will punish for all eternity by the most rigorous of all torments, the unbelief, for example, and the impenitence of so many unfortunates, who perish principally by that, and to whom it was no more possible to believe and to repent, than for a blind man to see, or for a dead man to resurrect?

Fourthly, what reproaches do the greatest sinners have reason to make themselves for not having done what was commanded to them, if what was commanded to them was impossible? What grief can they reasonably have about it? With what ardor finally can they excite themselves to do what is ordered to them, if they remember that whatever efforts they make, it is impossible for them to succeed? Is it not the hope of success that sustains us in work, and which makes one stiffen against difficulties to overcome them? This hope taken away, courage fails, resolution vanishes, and one loses the desire to make the least effort.

All these considerations, it is said, show clearly that it is impossible to reconcile Liberty with powerlessness, and that it is necessary to recognize one of two things,

either that we can do what God commands, and thus Faith deceives us by assuring us that this is not in our power, or that we have no Liberty in this regard, and thus Reason deceives itself by imagining to see distinctly the contrary.

There is no other response to make to this objection than to maintain two things. One is that not all powerlessness is opposed to the Liberty necessary to act morally. The other is that the powerlessness that we attribute to the sinner with respect to good is of the order of those which do not prevent those who are engaged in it from still being free enough to be able to sin.

This is also the only response made. The first of these two propositions has no difficulty. The whole earth agrees on it. It is admitted on both sides that as there is such powerlessness which ruins Liberty, there is such other which does not prevent one from being very free.

All the difficulty reduces to the second proposition. It is to show that this particular species of powerlessness, in which the sinner finds himself engaged with respect to good, has nothing contrary to Liberty.

This is also what all our Theologians, and many others, have tried to do, but they have not all gone about it in the same way. Three different routes have been followed for this, the difference of which consists in that they diversely assign the particular order of powerlessness which ruins Liberty, and that which lets it subsist.

Some have said that in truth involuntary powerlessness produces the first of these two effects, but that one cannot say the same thing of the voluntary, such as, as they claim, is that of sinners.

Others have said that powerlessness, which is a consequence of the state in which the Creator put nature in producing it, is contrary to Liberty, but that it is not the same with that which comes from sin, such as that which is in question.

The latter finally have maintained that in truth physical powerlessness annihilates Liberty, but that moral powerlessness, such as that of the sinner, does not wound it at all.

I propose to examine these three responses, and to begin with the first, after having noted that it would be desirable that it had been proposed a little more distinctly than it has been. It can receive three meanings.

One can understand first that the powerlessness of the sinner is voluntary in its origin, insofar as it is by a free act of the Will that he has fallen into it.

One can understand secondly that it is voluntary because of its subject, Subjective, because it resides in the Will, it affects this faculty, it binds it, and prevents it from acting.

Finally, one can understand that this powerlessness, being voluntary neither in one nor in the other of these two senses, becomes so afterwards, by a posterior consent,

because one loves it, one takes pleasure in it, and one does not want to come back from it.

It must now be seen which of these meanings is the one in which it is claimed that it is sufficient that powerlessness be voluntary in order not to destroy Liberty, and especially if it is with reason that it is claimed. For this purpose, all three must be examined. This is what we are going to begin to do in the following chapter.

CHAPTER V. Reflections on the first meaning of the Response indicated in the preceding Chapter. First reflection.

The first of these three meanings is the one that is principally in view when making this response to the Objection. It means that the powerlessness in which the sinner finds himself with respect to good is voluntary because he has thrown himself into it voluntarily. It is claimed that this is sufficient to make criminal the omission of everything that he would be bound to do if he found himself in another state, and two examples are always produced to prove it.

One is that of a Debtor, who, dissipating his property by all the excesses of luxury, intemperance, and debauchery, and putting himself out of a state to satisfy his Creditors, nevertheless does not take away from them the right to be paid what is due to them, and to use against him the most rigorous constraints, without excepting prison.

The other is that of a drunkard, who, having drowned his reason in the excess of wine, comes in this state to kill someone with whom he has quarreled, and is punished the same as if he had been in his right mind when he did this action.

Much is made of this Response and these examples, which is why they are found everywhere, and there are few Authors who do not use them. However, nothing seems to me either weaker or more poorly conceived.

Indeed, it is necessary that those who allege this to us have one or the other of these two thoughts, either that all powerlessness contracted by a voluntary action is compatible with the Liberty necessary to act morally, or that this is true only of some particular species of powerlessness of the order of that which appears in these two examples, which will serve no purpose if that of the sinner is not of this same order.

It is not possible to have the first of these two thoughts. Nothing would be easier than to show its falsity and absurdity, and it will be clearly seen in this very chapter, and in the following. Let us therefore stop at the second thought, which is without difficulty that of the Authors of this Response.

This one contains three things. The first that there is such particular species of powerlessness, into which one has fallen voluntarily, which can subsist with Liberty. The second that this appears by the two examples that are produced to us. The third

that the powerlessness of the sinner is precisely of this order. Let us see if all that is true.....

I first note that there are three sorts of voluntary acts which can put us in the powerlessness to do certain things. Sometimes this happens by our own action, as when Oedipus tearing out his eyes put himself out of a state to see. Other times this happens by the action of those who brought us into the world, as when certain fathers mutilate and cripple their children to put them in a state to beg successfully, and to excite the compassion of charitable persons. Sometimes finally this happens by the action of a third party, with whom we have no connection, as when that young fool of Lacedaemon put out one of Lycurgus's eyes.

One would have to carry extravagance to its peak to imagine that a powerlessness, into which one has fallen by a voluntary action in this latter sense, can subsist with Liberty. Moreover, that of this order has nothing in common, either with that of the sinner to do good, or with that of the prodigal and the drunkard that is opposed to us. Thus it would be useless to stop at it.

The first is of the same species as that of this prodigal and this drunkard. Both put themselves into it voluntarily, one by his debaucheries and his profusions, the other by the excess with which he drank. But also it has nothing in common with the powerlessness of the sinner. For finally it is so untrue to say that this sinner has put himself by his own action in the powerlessness to do good, that he was engaged in it even before he was in a state to act freely, and that moreover the first criminal omission into which he fell was an effect of this powerlessness.

He could only act morally when he began to have the use of his Reason, and consequently some years after his birth: And the depravation of his nature, which makes him incapable of doing good, preceded his birth itself, for he was conceived in sin, and warmed in iniquity.

Nothing therefore is more false, nor even more confused than this response understood in this sense.

But there still remains another, which is apparently the one that one has in mind. It means that a powerlessness, into which one has fallen by the free and voluntary action of the first man, is compatible with the Liberty necessary to act morally. This is, if I am not mistaken, the true thought of the Authors of this Response.

But if that is so, what are they thinking of to produce for us the example of the prodigal, and of the drunkard, whose powerlessness is of a completely different order? For as has just been noted, this prodigal and this drunkard have equally put themselves in the powerlessness, one to pay his debts, and the other to conduct himself well, they have put themselves in it, I say, by their own action. Does it follow from this that one should make the same judgment of sinners, to whom nothing similar has happened, and whom the imprudence of the first man, and not their own, has put out of a state to do good?

Moreover, since what is done in the world is opposed to us, one subjects oneself to being judged by this same law that is produced to us. Let us see then if in the world children are held responsible for the consequences of a powerlessness, into which the voluntary actions of their Fathers have thrown them.

Let us recall first the example of these children, of whom I have spoken incidentally, and to whom unnatural fathers twist the arms and legs, mutilate and cripple them, some even take away their sight, so that they have something to excite the compassion of charitable persons, and that they can profit themselves from the alms that will be given to them.

The powerlessness to act, in which this barbarity of fathers puts these children, is a voluntary powerlessness in the sense in which it is claimed that that of the sinner is. These Fathers subject their children to it freely and voluntarily. If that of this order has nothing opposed to Liberty, these children are free for all the functions that it does not allow them to exercise. Any legitimate Superior can prescribe them to them. They will be wrong if after they have been prescribed to them they do not do them. They should reproach themselves for it. One will be founded to blame them for it, and even to punish them for it.

Let us see however if this case has ever happened. Let us see if these Emperors, who carried cruelty and extravagance so far, the Caligulas, the Neros, the Heliogabaluses, ever made this sort of commandment, and if having made some of this order they punished those who did not execute them.

Let one consult oneself to know if one would want to do it, and to see even what one would think of others, if there were someone who did it.

Let us judge finally if it is doing much honor to the perfect Being to attribute to Him such a strange conduct, and so opposed to the most common notions, and the most universally received.

Indeed it is beyond doubt that this is what God would do if the response that I examine took place. He would punish sinners because they would not do what the first of their ancestors has made impossible for them. That is to say that He would do what the most unjust and the most barbarous of all men have never done.

Be that as it may, does He do it? and does one believe even that He can? Most of those who make this Response to us admit that God cannot command a blind man to see, a deaf man to hear, a paralytic to walk, a crippled or one-armed man to work with his hands, a frantic person to reason correctly, a lethargic person, or an apoplectic person to work to cure himself. It is agreed that He cannot forbid us to be sick and to die. It is agreed that if He did, and that afterwards He punished us for not having executed such orders, we would have no answer to make to the enemies of Religion, who would treat all that as absurd, incredible, and ridiculous.

It is however true that all these things are impossible in the same way in which it is wanted that it is to the sinner to do good. The powerlessness which prevents from

doing these things has the same source, and is equally voluntary. The free action of the first of men has thrown his descendants into it in the same way. Without this action there would be as few blind, deaf, paralytic, apoplectic, lethargic, crippled, one-armed, etc. as sinners.

Consequently if this is sufficient to make free and criminal the omission of what one of these species of powerlessness prevents from doing, it will have the same effect with regard to the others. Thus one must say one of two things, either that sinners are not responsible for the consequences of their powerlessness to do good, or that the blind, the deaf, etc. are for the omission of everything that their blindness, their deafness, etc. prevent them from doing. One will not say the second. One must therefore absolutely renounce the first.

CHAPTER VI. Second Reflection on the first meaning of the first Response.

What I have just said seems to me so strong and so convincing that I do not see what one could answer to it. However, I consent to depart from it. I consent that one makes the same judgment of the powerlessness into which one has fallen through the fault of one of one's ancestors, and of that into which one has fallen through one's own fault. Even in this supposition, one will see that the Response that is made cannot stand.

The powerlessness into which we fall by our own failing can be combined in two ways with the Law which orders us to do what we omit. Sometimes it precedes it, sometimes it follows it. It follows it in the two examples that are opposed to us, and in a hundred others that could be added to them.

Indeed, the prodigal was bound to pay his debts as soon as he had contracted them, and before his profusions had put him out of a state to be able to do it. The drunkard was bound not to take the life of his neighbor even before he got drunk. Thus in these two examples, the Law is older than the powerlessness.

But if a Prince commanded a man who had cut off his hands in punishment for his crimes, or otherwise, to write and to play the lute, the Law would be posterior to the powerlessness.

That being supposed, I say that whatever the case may be with the powerlessness that follows the Law, which I do not yet discuss, reserving to speak of it in the following chapter, that which precedes the Law, however voluntary it may be in its origin, not only dispenses with the necessity of observing this Law, but also prevents making it justly, and makes it so that if it were imposed, it would be null and without any force.

It is on this that I consent that the whole earth pronounces.

Let us imagine two men who live in countries where one cuts off the hand of forgers and the tongue of blasphemers. Let us imagine that one of these two men commits the first of these crimes, the other the second. Let us imagine that this Law is executed on them, and that one actually cuts out the tongue of one and the hand of the other. Here they both are out of a state, one to speak, and the other to write, to paint, to play the lute, etc. Here they both are reduced to an absolute but voluntary powerlessness in its origin, to do all these actions, which without that would be easy for them.

Would one approve however that a Prince should command them on pain of death to do them, and that they not doing them, he should have them put to death? I have difficulty believing it. Is there not something so contrary to all the ideas that we naturally have of justice and equity, that it is impossible to like it!

Let us imagine a villain who is tied to a wheel, and whose arms and legs are broken. Let us imagine that after that the Judge who condemned him orders him to get up, to walk, to run, to work with his hands. Let us imagine that this miserable person answering that he could not, the Judge to punish him for his disobedience has a hot iron applied to the most sensitive parts of his body. What will one think of this Judge, and what idea will one have of his equity?

To say something a little stronger, let us imagine a man who voluntarily tears out his eyes, like Oedipus, or who without tearing them out takes away their use, by looking fixedly at a basin of copper reddened in the fire, like Democritus. Here is a powerlessness to see, even more voluntary in its origin than either that of the blasphemer, the forger, and the villain, of whom I have spoken, or that of the sinner to do good. Would one approve however that a Prince should command this voluntary blind man to read a paper that he would put in his hands, and that the blind man not being able to, he should have him put to death?

One could imagine a hundred other similar examples. But as these three are sufficient, I hope that one will permit me to conclude from them that even if the powerlessness into which one has thrown oneself posterior to the Law would not excuse, that which has preceded the Law would not fail to do so.

It is however easy to show in several ways that we are in this latter case.

It is commonly held among us that a moment after the first man and the first woman had eaten the forbidden fruit, they found themselves reduced to an absolute powerlessness to rise from their fall by faith and by repentance, and that if they fulfilled these duties, it was the effect of a grace quite similar to that which presently converts sinners. However, the powerlessness in which these two guilty ones found themselves to believe and to repent was anterior to the Law which required these two duties in the sequel, and which was imposed on them only when God taught them that the seed of the woman would one day break the serpent's head.

Consequently, if the powerlessness which precedes the Law renders unjust the Law which commands what this powerlessness prevents from doing, God could not order these two sinners to repent and to believe in his Son, especially to order them to do so on pain of death and damnation, even though they had voluntarily thrown themselves into this powerlessness. Is this not enough to prove that this response does not satisfy the objection, and that it is necessary to look for some other?

Here is a second example which proves the same thing. It is that of the Jews who heard the first preachings of Jesus Christ and of his Apostles, and who saw the miracles that were done to confirm what they announced. These preachings and these miracles were the publication of the Law which obliged these Jews to believe with divine faith that this Jesus Son of Mary, whom they saw, and who conversed among them, was the Messiah, and they could not do it without the supernatural help of Grace. Here then is again a powerlessness anterior to the Law, and which nevertheless does not excuse those who do not do what this Law orders them.

I say the same thing of this act of divine faith, which had for its object the resurrection of Jesus Christ as actually having occurred. One was obliged to make this act only when this great event was sufficiently attested. However, the powerlessness to do it without the help of Grace was as old as those who found themselves engaged in it.

But here is something more general. There is no sinner in whom the powerlessness to do good does not precede the notification of the Law which orders it to him. Indeed, it matters little whether a Law is old or new, if it is unknown. Laws begin to oblige only when they are notified. Now there are men to whom the positive Laws of God are notified only at the end of their life; and as for the natural ones, they are notified to anyone only when one begins to have some use of Reason. Until then one ignores them innocently, and what one does against their prohibitions is not imputed. These are only simple material sins, as they are called in the Schools.

It is not the same with the powerlessness in which we find ourselves to do good. It is as old as ourselves, and consequently it precedes by some years the notification which is made to us of this Law. So that if the powerlessness which precedes the Law excuses the omission of which it is the cause, it will excuse the omissions of all sinners without exception.

CHAPTER VII. Third Reflection on the first meaning of the first Response.

In the preceding Chapter I did not want to examine whether the powerlessness which is posterior to the Law ruins Liberty, or if it lets it subsist, because I could do without entering into this discussion. But as, although this discussion is not absolutely necessary, it can be very useful to us, and help us to put the truth in its light, there will be no harm in stopping at it a little.

I say then that provided that it is a physical powerlessness, which is supposed on both sides, since one opposes to us that of the indebted prodigal, and of the homicidal drunkard, which is visibly of this order, one sins in truth by throwing oneself into it without necessity, but one does not commit a new sin by not actually doing what it prevents from doing.

This appears by the very example of the prodigal that is opposed to us. He sins without doubt when he dissipates his property. He even sins in several ways. He violates the rules of frugality, of prudence, of charity, of the natural affection that he owes to his children, etc. Above all, he sins against justice by taking away from his Creditors the use and disposal of what he owes them. But I do not believe that he commits a new sin of this latter order when he does not actually pay what he owes.

If he sinned in that he does not pay, it could happen that a good man, a child of God, would commit very great sins, that he would persist in them throughout the course of his life, and what is stranger, that he would commit them, and persist in them, despite himself. Nothing is more absurd than these consequences, nothing at the same time more closely linked to what we are told.

Let us imagine a man of the world who, after having made various loans, dissipates his property and that of others. Here he is absolutely out of a state to pay his debts, to repair his injustices by good restitutions, to maintain his family, to assist the poor, etc. Let us imagine that after all that God touches his heart, and that feeling keenly all the irregularity of his past conduct, he groans over it, he deploras it, and obtains pardon for it from God. This pardon will not prevent the past from being past, and thus his powerlessness having come to him through his fault, it is not voluntary. Being such, and everything that follows that of this order being criminal, will he not sin every time he finds the occasion to discharge the duties which have become impossible for him in this way? Will he not commit in each of these occasions new injustices, new excesses? These excesses even returning so often, and some of them always subsisting, will they not be real permanent sins, real habitual sins, incompatible with regeneration and the state of grace!

What will become of him after his death? Will he be saved, or will he perish? If he perishes, what good are his faith, his repentance, and his piety to him? And what will become of the promises that God makes in his word to those who will discharge all these duties? And if he is saved, what will become of what one believes, and what one has such good reasons to believe, that there is no salvation without amendment, and that a single known sin, in which one persists until the end of life, is enough to close the door of heaven?

It will perhaps be said that in truth all these omissions are real sins, but that God bears them in his dear children. But if that were so, nothing would be better founded than the atrocious accusation that Mr. Arnaud has brought against us, and that Mr. Jurieu has repelled with so much force, namely that according to us the most

righteous will have this in common with the most lost and the most impious, that both commit the same sins, and that all the difference there is, is that God pardons and bears those of the first, and punishes and detests those of the second. It will be necessary to pass condemnation on this, if this response is solid..

Moreover, if these are real sins, they are sins of a very particular order, and very different from the others that one knows. These are sins into which one falls at the very time when one most strongly wishes not to fall into them. For who can doubt that a good man reduced to the last indigence would wish with passion to have the means to pay his debts, to restore what he has badly taken, to maintain his family, to assist the poor, etc.

I have shown in Chapter III that to be free is to be master of one's actions, and to be able to do everything that one wants strongly and sincerely. But is this what one can say of those of whom I speak? They want to pay, they want to restore, and they cannot. A physical and insurmountable impossibility prevents them. Are they then free in this regard?

Who does not see that it is impossible to get out of these embarrassments, unless one says that those of whom I speak no longer commit these sins, because in the state where they are, they are not bound to do what they do not do, and which is physically impossible for them, although the powerlessness which prevents them from it is their own work, and even it is posterior to the Law which obliged them to it?

CHAPTER VIII. Fourth Reflection on the first Meaning of the first Response.

The Response that I examine has yet another defect, and there will be no harm in discovering it, since this will be the true means of making one no longer dwell on it. It is that the examples on which one relies prove nothing except by making I don't know how many false suppositions.

That of the prodigal, who is imprisoned, proves nothing if one does not suppose that one imprisons him only to punish him for not paying. One wants to prove that voluntary powerlessness subsists with Liberty. With this design, one tells us that one must indeed suppose that it is freely that this prodigal abstains from satisfying his Creditors, since one punishes him for it, there being no justice in punishing what is not free.

But nothing is more false than this first supposition, namely that one imprisons this prodigal to punish him. Two things show manifestly the contrary. One is that one exercises the same rigors against those who have never had property, or who having had it have lost it by pure misfortune, and without it being their fault, as can so easily happen. The other is that as soon as a third party pays, or promises to pay, for the

most prodigal Debtor, one opens the doors of the prison to the latter, which one would not do if this prison were a punishment for his bad conduct.

The Laws which authorize all these rigors have other views and other designs. They presume that the Debtor is not as poor as he appears, that he may have diverted a considerable part of his effects, and one hopes to force him to reveal them by the treatment one gives him. This is why one admits prodigals, as well as other ruined persons, to do what is called Assignment of goods.

In the production of the other example, one supposes that the powerlessness of the drunkard to prevent himself from shedding innocent blood is total and absolute: And I say that it is very rare that it is so. It is rare that a man who abandons himself to this vice loses the use of Reason so absolutely that one can say that he entirely ignores what he does. There ordinarily remains to him, and almost always, some weak glimmer, some spark of knowledge, which makes his action not entirely mechanical, that it has some small remnant of Liberty and consequently deserves to be punished. And as Laws regulate themselves only by what happens most often, it is not surprising that they punish indifferently all drunkards who commit homicides, since it is to be presumed that they commit them criminally.

One supposes in the third place that what one punishes in putting this drunkard to death is what he does in killing the innocent. However, it is very possible that what one punishes is the fault that he committed in exposing himself to the danger of doing what he did.

I suppose indeed that not all drunkards run the danger of committing homicides. There are some in whom the excess of wine has no other effect than to inspire gaiety in them, rather than throwing them into stupidity and inaction, very few whom it renders furious, and whom it puts in a state to commit violence. Those in whom it produces this latter effect should know themselves, and consequently take precautions against the danger to which their temperament exposes them. If they do not, this negligence makes the misfortune into which they fall much more voluntary than it would have been without that. Consequently, it is not strange that the Laws, to oblige them to take more precautions, make them responsible for everything that they might do in this state.

It is even very possible that the Law which subjects drunkards to punishment has less in view the exact observance of the rules of justice than the public good. It is very possible that as homicide is one of the excesses most opposed to the end and to the preservation of Society, the Laws have neglected nothing to prevent it, and with this design have carried their precautions beyond what the exact rules of justice could prescribe. This appears from the fact that involuntary homicides, which following the maxims of Morality are so innocent, nevertheless need the grace of the Prince to avoid punishment.

When one says that something similar has happened on this occasion, one will say nothing that can be convicted of falsehood, nothing that deserves to be rejected, or

treated as absurd. It is indeed certain that when Legislators attach punishments to certain excesses, they look much more to the interest of the public than to the rules of Morality. There are very great sins that they do not punish at all, because they do not interest Society, such as Pride and Ingratitude. There are others much less atrocious, which one punishes very severely, because it is important to the public that one does not fall into them, for example the negligence of a soldier who, being put on sentry duty, falls asleep.

Nothing is more natural, nothing more pardonable in itself, than to fall asleep when one is alone, and during the night. One punishes it however with the utmost rigor in the case that I have indicated; because one does not look so much at the action in itself, as at the consequences it can have, the negligence of a sentinel who lets the enemy enter being able very easily to cause the loss of a city, the pillage of houses, the massacre of inhabitants, etc. Who will assure me that one does not have similar views when one puts to death drunkards who shed innocent blood.

That was at least the thought of a very able man, I speak of Mr. Puffendorf. "In general," he says, "crimes committed in cold blood pass for more enormous than those to which one is pushed by some passion, or by an effect of some unforeseen accident, which troubles the mind. An ancient Legislator nevertheless established a double penalty for those who had beaten someone, or committed some other crime, in wine: but this is because there being more people who insult others in the heat of debauchery, than there are who do it without having drunk, he had regard to public utility, and not to the action in itself, which detached from this view is more pardonable in a drunk man than in another, who commits it in cold blood." Puff. on the Law of nat. and of peoples, Book VIII. Chap. 3. n. 21.

It is also remarkable that the wisest Jurists approve of relaxing somewhat the rigor of the Law in favor of the drunkards of whom we speak. See Wesembet ad Legem Cornel, de Sicariis, n. 24.

As none of the causes to which I have just shown that one can attribute the rigor which is used in the earthly Tribunals, with regard to this sort of guilty ones, has place in the Tribunal of heaven, it appears that these examples which are opposed to us have little relation to our subject, and be that as it may, that from the fact that one imprisons an insolvent Debtor, and that one punishes a drunkard who has committed a murder, it does not follow at all that of whatever order the powerlessness to do what one should be, it does not prevent the omission of it from being free, and consequently criminal. The contrary can be true without there being any injustice in the rigors that one exercises against these two orders of persons. Thus it is without any foundation that one promises to embarrass us by that.

CHAPTER IX. Where one examines the second meaning of the first Response.

I will not dwell longer on the first meaning, in which one claims that the powerlessness of the sinner to do good can be called voluntary. I pass to the second, which consists in saying that it is voluntary with regard to its subject, I mean that it resides in the will, that it affects it, that it binds it, and prevents it from doing and from willing what would be just, and conforming to the Law of God.

This meaning does not seem to me more reasonable than the preceding. First, it supposes the truth of a sentiment, which I believe very false, and the falsity of which I hope to show in the sequel. It is that it is sufficient that an action be voluntary to be free. For if the contrary is true, as it is easy to prove, it does not follow at all that an omission is free because the powerlessness in which one finds oneself to do what one omits is voluntary. Let it be so as much as one wants, what does it matter, if all voluntary that it is, it ruins Liberty?

But indeed it is beyond doubt that there is such powerlessness, which although it affects the will, does not prevent the omission of what it does not allow to be done, from lacking the Liberty necessary to act morally.

I suppose in the first place with the new Philosophers, that it is the will which judges, that is to say which affirms, and which denies, which pronounces that such a thing is true, and such another false: And I say on this foundation that if all powerlessness which affects this faculty were a voluntary powerlessness, and by that very fact compatible with the Liberty in question, it would be necessary to regard as free the powerlessness in which we find ourselves to strongly persuade ourselves of propositions which appear to us quite obscure, and non-evident, that is to say which appear to have no mark of truth, such as these two; The number of Angels is even, The number of Angels is odd.

I say the same thing of the impossibility in which we find ourselves to admit as certain and indubitable propositions evidently false, such as these two; One and one make five, the whole is always less than the least of its parts.

I say it finally of the impossibility there is in positively rejecting as false propositions which appear evidently true, these two for example, one and one make two. The whole is greater than each of its parts.

As this triple powerlessness affects the will, it will be voluntary if to be free it is sufficient that this faculty be the subject of it; and it will be freely that we will abstain from doing all these things, which can only be very absurd.

This proof is no less strong in common hypotheses. The College Philosophers, who hold that it is the understanding which judges, nevertheless believe that it does so freely, because they believe that this understanding is subject to the will, and that thus its acts are free, because the will commands them, though it does not produce

them immediately. These therefore will be voluntary in this hypothesis, and with that will not be free, so true is it that the voluntary has more extent than the free. The voluntary is the genus, and the free is one of the species, which are contained in this genus.

Here is another example which supposes only what all ancient and modern Philosophers unanimously admit, I mean that it is the will which loves and which hates. It is agreed that this faculty is incapable of various things. It is agreed that it is impossible for it to love an object entirely unknown. It is agreed that it cannot either love evil known as evil, or hate good known as good. We cannot either have aversion for happiness, or consent to be eternally miserable. The will finds itself in a complete powerlessness to do any of these acts. Thus this powerlessness binds and affects this faculty. Consequently if that alone were needed to make a powerlessness voluntary, this one without difficulty would be, and the omission of these acts could be free.

It is nevertheless true that this is not the case. The omission of these acts is not at all free. No one either praises or blames it. God neither rewards nor punishes it. It is even impossible that he command what it prevents from doing, and there is no one who does not feel internally, and in a very lively manner, to what point it would be unworthy of him to do so.

Is it not therefore a certain truth that a powerlessness can affect the Will itself, without the omission of what it prevents from doing being able to be blamed, and should be regarded as criminal.

Thirdly, the Blessed love God with all their strength, but they fall far short of loving him as much as he would deserve to be loved. This is what the quality of necessarily limited creatures does not allow them. Here then is a new powerlessness which has its seat in the Will, and which prevents it from acting. Thus it is voluntary in the second sense. However, it does not fail to excuse, and to render absolutely involuntary, and very innocent, the omission of what it does not allow one to do.

Finally, it seems to me that what one cannot will is much more involuntary than what one could will, and does not will. The first shows a greater opposition to the will, and a stronger repugnance for the thing itself, than the second. There are however a hundred actions which pass for involuntary, and consequently for innocent, for this sole reason, that one does not will them, although one can will them. Witness actions done through invincible ignorance. Witness again those which are done naturally, and independently of the will, such as the circulation of blood, and the beating of arteries. Can one not conclude from this that with greater reason what not only one does not will, but which it is impossible that one wills, is never free.

CHAPTER X. Reflections on the third meaning of the first response.

The second meaning of the first response does not therefore remove the difficulty. I say the same thing of the third. It is said that the powerlessness of the sinner to do good becomes voluntary because he voluntarily loves it, he takes pleasure in it, and he is quite content to be engaged in it. In order for this response to be good, it would be necessary that among all that there will be until the consummation of the world, there would not be found a single one who would not be content with his powerlessness. But that is not all. It would be necessary that there would be none who had fallen into a single sin of omission, without immediately making this reflection, and without it giving him this criminal joy.

Let us imagine indeed that there has been a single one of these sinners who, after having neglected some necessary duty, has come to die without having thought either of this duty, or of the fault into which he has fallen by neglecting it, or of the powerlessness in which he found himself to discharge it, and all the more reason without having joy in it. This man will have sinned, and his powerlessness to do what he has omitted will not have been voluntary in the sense in question. Thus the difficulty subsists with regard to this sin alone, and consequently the response that one opposes to it is not solid.

Let us see then if one can say that there is no sinner who is not quite content with the powerlessness in which he finds himself to do what God orders him. For this purpose, let us note that one can imagine three different situations in which the sinner finds himself with respect to this powerlessness; the first is to ignore it, not to feel it, not to think about it, and consequently to be neither content nor afflicted by it, as one is not by what is presently happening in the Planet of Jupiter, supposing that there are intelligent Beings who inhabit it. The second is to feel this powerlessness, to detest it, to groan over it, and to have a very keen sorrow for it. The third is to feel it, to think about it, and to have joy in it.

I admit that if the third of these situations were general and perpetual, the response would not lack color, although even in this case it would not be without difficulty, as will be seen in the sequel. But does one have any certainty that this is so? Is there even any plausibility?

Will one believe it first of all of the Pelagians, who far from feeling this powerlessness mock it, and treat it as a vain and foolish imagination? Will one believe it of the Pagans, who are in this more than Pelagians? Will one believe it of the Savages, the Kaffirs, and the Hottentots, to whom one has such difficulty making understand the truths of salvation, and even more in persuading them of them?

Let us imagine for example a young Savage. It is commonly believed that the first sin of omission into which those of this order fall as soon as they begin to make some use of their reason, is not to turn towards God to recognize him, and to adore him. Must one believe that this omission is not imputed to the one of whom I speak,

unless he actually feels the powerlessness in which he finds himself to discharge this great duty, and that feeling it he does not take pleasure in it? How many innocent Atheists there would be, if that were so, both among the Barbarians and elsewhere.

But as this imagination would differ in no way from Philosophism, I mean from the opinion of Philosophical sin, of which one has had such horror as soon as it appeared, and which one has so unanimously condemned and abandoned, I will not insist any more on this first member of my division.

I pass to the second, which includes the situation of those who knowing this powerlessness, feeling it, and actually thinking about it, groan over it, and would with pleasure give everything they hold most dear to free themselves from it. I say that there is something absurd in thinking that this powerlessness should in their regard pass for voluntary in this sense. On the contrary, it is just to regard it as involuntary.

This is nevertheless the situation in which first of all the true children of God find themselves. They all feel this powerlessness, and groan over it sincerely. One can even say that this is the most ordinary cause of their sorrow, and the most prolific source of their tears.

I believe even that there can be sinners who enter somewhat into this sentiment. Witness those whom the Apostle St. Paul introduces in Rom. VII, and to one of whom he has say: "I do not approve what I do, since I do not do what I want, but I do what I hate. I do not do the good that I want, but I do the evil that I do not want. Oh miserable that I am! Who will deliver me from the body of this death."

I come to the third situation, which is the one that the response supposes. I am not at all inclined to treat it as impossible, and to maintain that it is absolutely without example. I believe only that it is rather rare, because on one hand there are very few sinners who make these reflections, and because on the other among those who do, there are few who carry their impiety and their brutality to the point of rejoicing in what should very sensibly afflict all those who have not entirely stripped away nature.

I want however there to be those who go that far. I ask if they have the power not to do it. If they have it, who will assure me that they do not use it, and that thus they do not carry themselves to such excesses? These then at least will sin by neglecting the duty that they do not fulfill, without the powerlessness in which they find themselves to discharge it being voluntary in the sense of the response that I examine.

If they lack this power, the difficulty returns, and it appears that the response has not removed it. They sin, it is said, by loving their powerlessness. But, I will say, how can this love of their powerlessness be criminal, if it is inevitable? Will one say that they still love this inevitability, and the inevitability of the love that they have for the first, for the second, for the hundredth, for the thousandth, and so on to infinity?

This will be attributing to them many reflections, and at the same time showing that one is very attached to one's fancies, since in order not to abandon them, one carries oneself to retail such visions.

Finally, I understand very well that a man can sin by voluntarily loving an involuntary powerlessness, but I do not understand how an involuntary powerlessness in itself can become thereby voluntary, and be so to this point, that the omission of what it does not allow one to do, is free enough to be able to be forbidden, and even less punished.

Let us imagine a man who has lost his eyes, and who is quite content with this loss, which is not impossible, witness the Book of the learned Gutherius de bono caritatis, and witness again the response of Maris Bishop of Chalcedon to the Emperor Julian the Apostate. This impious Prince reproached him for his blindness, and said to him, "Go, miserable, weep for the loss of your eyes, which your Galilean will not restore to you." "I have no inclination to ask him for it," replied Maris. "I thank him on the contrary for having taken them away from me, since he spares me by that the pain that I would have to see an Apostate like you." Will one believe on this foundation that one would be right to command this blind man to read, to paint, or to do some other similar thing?

A lazy person loses the use of his hands by a contraction of nerves, or by some other similar accident. He is quite content with it, because this loss dispenses him from the necessity of working, which his laziness makes him find unbearable. Would one approve that under this pretext one should order him to do what he cannot, and that one should punish him because he would not do it.

Powerlessness of this nature is always involuntary, always innocent, although it can easily become the object and the occasion of a sin. Thus this response would not prove at all that the powerlessness of the sinner was criminal, even if the fact that it posits were true.

CHAPTER XI. Examination of the second Response. Whether Liberty can subsist with powerlessness which comes from sin.

There is a second response much more plausible than the preceding, and which approaches much more to the truth, but which with all that cannot subsist. It is that of Ursinus, of Chamier, of Maresius, of Heidanus, of Forbesius, of Turretin, of Heidegger, and of several others.

They say that there is a double powerlessness. One is a necessary and inevitable consequence of the constitution of our nature, such as it was when it came from the hands of its Creator. The other is an effect of sin, and consequently our own work. They admit that the first destroys Liberty, but they deny that the second has this effect.

This response has two parts. It admits one thing and denies another. It admits that the powerlessness which has its source in nature, such as it was when it came from the hands of its Creator, is contrary to Liberty. It denies that it is the same with the powerlessness which comes from the depravation of this same nature by sin.

What it admits is very true. How could it be that God would command the sinner things that he could not have required of innocent man? And how could he have required of innocent man what was impossible for him by the laws of his natural constitution? Could he have ordered him to fly in the air, to stop the course of the Sun, and to move mountains? And after having given him such orders could he have punished him because he would not have executed them? If Scripture attributed such a procedure to him, what could one answer to the impious, who would treat it as unjust, and unworthy of the perfect Being?

Nothing therefore is more true than this admission that one makes to us. Nothing however is more proper to make us know the nature of Liberty, and to smooth out the difficulties that one finds in this matter. But it is not yet time to show it, and it is more appropriate to examine what this response contests, and to see if it is with reason that one refuses to agree with it.

It says that the powerlessness which has its source in sin has nothing contrary to Liberty. But this is a thing that I cannot let it pass. There are a hundred things which have their source in sin, and for which we have no Liberty, for this reason that they are not in our power, and that it does not depend on us to avoid them. Such are illnesses, death, the pains of childbirth for women, the sterility of the earth, and the obligation in which we are to cultivate it to force it to share its fruits with us, the rebellion of animals, the disorders of seasons, floods, pestilences, etc. These are all so many consequences of sin, but necessary and inevitable consequences, which do not depend at all on us. Whether we want it or not, we will be sick, we will die, etc. All this comes therefore from sin, but because it comes from it necessarily, and independently of our wills, there would be injustice in forbidding it to us, and in saying to us, Take care not to be sick, do not let yourself die, etc. If anything whatsoever of all this happens to you, I will punish you eternally in hell. Who does not see that such a prohibition, and such a threat, would be very unjust, and that it would be impossible to reconcile them with the Wisdom, with the Goodness, and with the Equity of the perfect Being?

But here are other examples much more striking, and which I have indeed produced in another place, and on another response, but which can also well have their use on this one.

It is beyond doubt that blindness, deafness, so many illnesses which prevent acting and working, all species of madness, vexations of the Demon, etc. are consequences and effects of sin. None of all this took place during innocence, and would not have taken place if this state had lasted. Will one conclude from this that the powerlessness which comes from all these sources, and which prevents from doing

a hundred things, which would otherwise be necessary, does not excuse those who omit them?

Will one say that it is freely that they do not do them? Will one believe that they deserve to be punished for it? Who would dare to retail such Paradoxes? And to whom would it be possible to persuade them?

CHAPTER XII. Whether the powerlessness which can subsist with Liberty, is that which is called moral. Various ideas that one forms of this species of powerlessness. First idea.

All these reasons make it that I cannot content myself with any of these responses. There is another which I believe better, provided that it is well conceived and well explained. Most of the modern Scholastics, especially the Jesuits, and among our Theologians the disciples of Cameron, even some of those who are the furthest from these latter, such as Twisse and Des Marets, distinguish a double powerlessness, the physical and the moral, and say that the first is contrary to liberty, but that the second is not.

These Theologians agree well for the terms, but they are rather distant for the meaning. It is good to try to penetrate their thought. Otherwise it would not be possible to judge it well. I will begin with that of the Disciples of Cameron.

These have explained themselves on this rather amply, but they have not done it with all the clarity, and all the precision necessary on a subject as obscure and as confused as this one is; this is why also they have not been understood, and various sentiments have been attributed to them from which they were rather distant, which would perhaps not have happened if they had taken a little more care to make themselves understood. Here is what I have gathered from the confrontation of some places in their writings, and in particular from the Apology of Mr. Daillé for the two Synods page 492, and following, from the Specimen Animadversionum of Mr. Amyraut in the 1st part of his particular Remarks, and above all from his Dissertation on original sin against Courcelles, n. 49.

They hold I. that there is a double powerlessness, one which comes from the fact that one lacks the faculties necessary for certain actions; the other which comes from the fact that the faculties that one has are badly disposed. II. These dispositions, which prevent the natural faculties from doing the acts, which do not otherwise exceed their power, are the habits, either acquired or natural. III. Both have two effects. They incline to certain actions, and they prevent from doing the contrary actions. IV. When they are strong, and rooted, they necessarily and invincibly have these effects. V. If the acts to which they push are morally good, they are themselves good. If they are criminal, they are so too. VI. The stronger and more invincible they are, the better or worse they are, the more worthy they are of being either esteemed or detested. VII. The powerlessness which is born of the privation

of faculties, being a physical evil, not a moral evil, should be called a physical powerlessness. The second on the contrary being criminal, should be called a moral powerlessness. VIII. The first ruins liberty, but the second lets it subsist, and has nothing which is contrary to it.

But there are in all this various things which shock me. I. Physical powerlessness does not always come from the privation, or from the absence of what are called faculties. It very often comes from the bad disposition of the organs, sometimes even from the fact that one lacks means, which these faculties can put to work.

II. The bad disposition of the faculties themselves sometimes makes a physical powerlessness, as appears by the example of the infidelity of memory, by that of the grossness of the mind, and of the weakness of judgment, especially by that of invincible ignorance, which is so contrary to liberty.

III. Philosophy does not recognize any natural habits. Those of which it speaks are formed by reiterated acts, but it admits none which is born with us. It is true that there are natural inclinations, but these inclinations are quite another thing than habits.

IV. What mainly shocks me in this is that one says that habits, at least those which are rooted, necessarily and invincibly have their effect. Nothing seems to me more false, nothing more often contradicted by experience.

There are three principal sorts of habits, those of the body, those of the mind, and those of the heart. The first depend, at least in part, on a certain disposition, which reiterated acts put in some parts of our bodies. Such is the skill of a Musician to sing, that of a player of instruments to touch them, etc. One puts in the second rank the persuasion, true or false, of certain propositions, which one has become accustomed to regard as indubitable, from which it comes that every time one thinks of them, one makes the same judgment of them.

The habits of the heart are certain attachments, and certain aversions, which one has become accustomed to having for some objects, for example the love of gaming, that of hunting, that of Comedy.

Bodily habits determine so little to act in a manner which is conformable to them, that they often permit, and with the utmost facility, to do the contrary. For example an excellent Musician will abstain from singing, and even will sing very badly, when it pleases him. I say the same thing of a Painter, of a Sculptor, etc. It is principally in this that the vulgar maxim which states that the use of habits depends on the will is verified. *Habitibus utimur cum volumus*. V. Thom. 1. 2. quæst. 78. art. 2.

I admit that it is not quite the same with intellectual habits. They rather carry us to always make the same judgment of the same things, from which comes the power of what are called Prejudices. But is it without example that one sees the contrary? What is more ordinary than to see that a demonstration, a sophism, even a caprice, makes one change opinion, and that one abandons opinions, of which one had been

prejudiced, and even obsessed, for some time? Is this not seen every day with regard to sciences, with regard to Religion, with regard to the judgment that one makes of persons, and in a hundred other occasions?

If therefore the powerlessness to believe savingly, in which sinners are naturally engaged, consisted only in a habit of unbelief, or in a simple prevention against the Gospel, it would not be more difficult to receive it, than it is for a man persuaded of the immobility of the earth, to become a good Copernican, or after having believed that it is in the liver that the blood is formed, to persuade himself that it is in the heart that it is made.

I say more or less the same thing of the habits of the will. One sees people who carry the love of gaming, that of hunting, or of Comedy, to the point of fury. However, those very ones who are most strongly possessed by them can cure themselves of them, and even cure themselves of them every day. One sees rather often misers, who become prodigals, and prodigals who become misers. One sees people who pass from superstition to libertinism, and from libertinism to superstition. This is something of which one has every day examples before one's eyes. What is even more ordinary than indifference, than hatred, succeeds, either to the most violent love, or to the most tender friendship? What is still more ordinary than to see on the contrary that one sincerely loves those whom one has hated?

But I want it to be impossible to get rid of a habit, and all the more reason to pass to the contrary habit. Does it not happen every day that those very ones who always remain engaged in their old habits nevertheless do not fail to do acts contrary to these habits? Does one not see misers, who without renouncing their avarice display liberality and magnificence on certain occasions? Has one not seen a thousand times the most timid carry themselves to actions of temerity? Do not even the most virtuous people sometimes fall into great sins?

It is therefore not true that habits determine in such a way to a certain genre of acts, that they invincibly prevent from doing quite opposite ones. Consequently if the powerlessness of the sinner to do good came uniquely from there, nothing would prevent him from doing from time to time some good action, which the Disciples of Cameron will never admit.

It is not that I claim to deny that the habits of vice are a great obstacle to conversion. What I maintain is first that these habits are neither the only, nor even the principal sources of the powerlessness of which we speak, since we are engaged in it from our birth, and before we have been in a state to act.

Secondly, there is quite a difference between saying that habits increase this powerlessness, and make it more absolute, and more incurable, than it was, and saying that they are the unique source of it. The first can be true, and is indeed, but the second is very false.

Finally, it is necessary to distinguish a double depravation of our faculties, one natural, and common to all, the other acquired, added, and particular to some. The habits that we contract are the acquired, added, and particular corruption. But they are not the natural, which comes from elsewhere, and which not only precedes this other, but also produces it. However, it is of the natural alone that it is a question here.

V. One could still add that even if it were certain that habits make our powerlessness, the difficulty would not be fully removed. It would still remain to know why it is that a powerlessness which comes from such a source, wounds our liberty less than if it had another origin. I well know that Mr. Amyraut makes this come from the fact that the powerlessness which comes from habits, is voluntary, that it is even doubly so, on one hand because it affects the will, and on the other because it has been contracted voluntarily. But as I have refuted this amply in some of the preceding chapters, it is not necessary that I dwell on it presently.

VI. One will even see in the sequel that if it were true that there were habits which invincibly determined our will to certain actions, and prevented it from doing quite opposite ones, this necessity and this powerlessness should rather pass for physical than for moral, and consequently would be absolutely incompatible with Liberty. The reason is that they would be born from the very nature of the soul, and from that of these habits. These would be the natural consequences of the general laws to which God would have subjected spirits at the beginning, willing that they be invincibly determined by their habits.

CHAPTER XIII. True idea of moral powerlessness.

All these considerations prevent me from admitting this explanation of the Disciples of Cameron. But there is another one, which seems to me much more natural, and at the same time more likely to remove the difficulty: here it is.

I am persuaded first of all that moral powerlessness does not at all exclude physical power. If it excluded it, everything that is morally impossible would also be so physically, and in this way there would remain no difference between the two members of distinction, which would make it vain and illusory. In order for it to retain some truth and some reality, it is necessary that physical power and moral powerlessness have nothing opposed, and that thus the very one who cannot do something morally can do it physically.

What then makes this powerlessness, which is called moral? It is without doubt that the things that one cannot do in this manner, not exceeding physical power, nevertheless remain difficult. This is what an infinity of Philosophers and Theologians reduce themselves to, and I do not see what other thing one can indicate.

But does all difficulty, whatever it may be, make a moral powerlessness? This is what some Remonstrants think, and some Scholastics, such as L. de Cassel, and G. de Rhodes: And indeed one says rather often in this sense that one cannot do certain things, to say simply that one has repugnance for them, and that it would be necessary to do violence to oneself to resolve to do them.

Scripture itself sometimes uses this way of speaking in this same sense. Witness this place in the holy History, where it is said that the children of Jacob could not speak peacefully to Joseph. Indeed it is not a question there of the interior sentiments of these Patriarchs, but only of their external discourses. The sacred Author does not say that Joseph's brothers could not either love him, or even prevent themselves from hating him. He says that they could not speak to him without anger. And who doubts that if they were not masters of their hearts, they were at least of their tongues, and that even without making great efforts they could have hidden their animosity, and disguised it by deceptive caresses? This was therefore only a simple difficulty. Thus nothing prevents, according to these Authors, one from understanding a simple difficulty by this powerlessness, which is called moral.

I do not want to waste time examining if it is permitted to use this expression in this sense. This would be only a petty dispute of words. I content myself with noting that in explaining this distinction in this manner, one makes it useless for the clarification of the difficulty which occupies us. Let it be indeed as certain as one will that one does not cease to be free for the things that one does only with much pain, and in overcoming great difficulties, of what use will all that be to us to prove that our doctrine has nothing contrary to Liberty, since we believe that it is not simply difficult, but impossible in a certain sense, for the sinner to convert, and to do good without Grace.

Something more than a simple difficulty is therefore needed to make a powerlessness such as we posit in all sinners with respect to good. It is necessary to say with most of the Scholastics that there are two sorts of difficulties, some that one overcomes, at least sometimes; others that one never overcomes, and to add on one hand that it is uniquely the second which make this powerlessness, which is called moral, and on the other that such a powerlessness has nothing contrary to Liberty.

I am even quite mistaken if this is sufficient to give us a just idea of this powerlessness, the nature of which we are researching. Indeed there is a certain species of difficulty, which supposes physical power, which otherwise is such that one never overcomes it, and which nevertheless on one hand is opposed to Liberty, and on the other is very different from that of the sinner to do good. Suarez gives these two examples of it. One is that of the difficulty there is in drawing with a single stroke of the pen, and without a compass, a perfect circle: the other is that of the difficulty there would be in making a hundred times in a row while playing dice, what is called a six Raffle, and what was called in Latin, *factus Cous*, or *factus Venereus*.

I do not want to stop to examine whether this impossibility should not be called physical rather than moral, because I would need time for this examination, and besides this question seems to me of little importance. I content myself with saying that whatever name one gives it, it is beyond doubt that it ruins Liberty. The reason is that it is not at all subject to the will. Whether a man wants to succeed in either of these two designs, or whether he does not want to, he will be neither more nor less. One does not therefore have Liberty in this regard. For as has been seen, one of the characteristics of Liberty is that one does with certainty the act where this quality is found, provided that one wants it strongly and seriously.

One has seen in this same place that every free act can be commanded by a legitimate Superior, if it is not essentially criminal; and forbidden, if it is not essentially just. As therefore these two acts are very indifferent in themselves, if they were free, one could command them, and punish those who would not do them. Let one see however if there would be any justice in acting thus. Let one see if one would approve that a Prince should order one of his subjects to do, either one or the other of these two things, and have him put to death after this one would have uselessly exerted himself to obey him.

There is therefore some restriction to make to what I have said, and it is necessary to recognize that there must be some particular species of this order of difficulties that one never overcomes, which can subsist with the Liberty necessary to act morally, as there is another which is opposed to it. This seems certain to me, and I do not even believe that it is difficult to indicate, either these two species of impossible actions, or what distinguishes one from the other.

There are things that it is easy to want, even strongly, and difficult to execute; others on the contrary that one would execute without difficulty if one wanted them strongly, but that it is very difficult to want in this manner.

Nothing is easier than to want to draw without a compass a perfect circle, and to want to make a raffle a hundred times in a row, but nothing is more difficult than to succeed in it however strongly one wants it. On the contrary it would be easy for a miser to give all his property to the first poor person he will meet, and for a wise and judicious man, to throw himself without any necessity into a precipice, provided that they sincerely wanted it, but it would be very difficult for them to resolve to do it, and so difficult, that one can be assured that they would never resolve to do it.

That being supposed, I say that whatever name one gives to the powerlessness of the first order, in which I take very little interest, it is only the second that I call here a moral powerlessness, and that this is the only sense, in which I ask my Readers to take this expression.

It seems to me that this use that I make of this way of speaking is rather natural. Since as has been seen, Scripture gives the name of powerlessness to a simple difficulty, I hope that one will not find it wrong that I give it to a difficulty that one never overcomes. I hope besides that one will not contest with us that I cannot give

to such a powerlessness the name of moral. It even seems to me that there is no epithet, which suits it better than this one.

First it has its source in the inclinations of the Will, which, as everyone knows, is a moral faculty, and whose acts are the great field of this science, which treats of morals.

Besides it has much relation with this impossibility, which serves as foundation for the certainty which bears this same name. One ordinarily says that it is morally certain that there is in Thrace a city which is called Constantinople, that Alexander and Julius Caesar, won great victories in their time, etc. One says that it is morally impossible that this is not so. But why is it? It is because in order for this to be false it would be necessary that a prodigious number of persons should have conspired to deceive us about these facts, and about several others, which seems incredible, and seems so with reason. If this is sufficient to make it so that one can give to this impossibility the name of moral, why would it not be sufficient to be able to give it to the powerlessness of which we speak?

Finally, I am not the first, who has made this use of this way of speaking. Several others have done it before me. First a great number of Scholastics, whom I will cite in the sequel. Secondly some Remonstrants, whose words I will report; even some of our Theologians, and particularly Mr. Daillé, who wanting to define the powerlessness, which he calls moral, does not always say that it comes from habits, but sometimes stops at repugnances in general. Witness this place in his Apology for the two Synods, where he maintains that one can say that we cannot do something, when having all the faculties necessary for this effect, our will has so much repugnance for it that we cannot obtain from our mind that it judge that we should do it. Apol. page. 474.

Let one permit me therefore to use this expression in this sense. This is all that I ask presently: one will see in the sequel on one hand if the powerlessness of the sinner to do good is of the order that this expression designates, and on the other if that which this expression designates, can, or cannot, subsist with the Liberty necessary to act morally.

CHAPTER XIV. What physical powerlessness is.

I come now to the other branch of the distinction, I mean to physical powerlessness. One asks what it consists in? To respond clearly to this question it is necessary to look for an idea, which on one hand includes all powerlessness contrary to Liberty, and on the other includes none which can subsist with this quality. Whichever of these two defects one can notice in this idea, it will appear clearly that it is not just.

By that very fact it appears that one should reject the thought of those who want the powerlessness which ruins Liberty, to be that which comes from birth. That cannot be, since on one hand there is such powerlessness which does not wound

Liberty at all, although one was engaged in it at birth, such as that which comes from temperament; that besides there is such other which ruins Liberty, although it came, long after birth, for example that of a man who has become blind, deaf, or mute, by some accident.

For this reason again it is necessary to reject the thought of those who say that the powerlessness which ruins Liberty is that which has its source and its seat in matter. This thought has the same defects as the preceding. It excludes various sorts of powerlessness, in which spirits themselves are engaged. For example an Angel, either good or bad, cannot resurrect a dead person. A soul which has just separated itself from its body, cannot reunite itself to it. The Demons cannot put themselves in cover from the torments that divine justice makes them suffer. This powerlessness has nothing in common with matter. However it excludes Liberty. I say the same thing of the powerlessness in which the soul finds itself to reject as false what appears evidently true to it, to love what it does not know at all, or which appears sovereignly bad to it, etc.

There is besides such powerlessness, which has its source in matter, and which nevertheless does not fail to subsist with Liberty. Such is that which comes from temperament, and from passion. A bilious man who is outraged, cannot prevent himself from having resentment about it. This comes from the constitution of the machine, and does not fail to be criminal, which is sufficient to show that it is free.

I admit as little the thought of the Disciples of Cameron, who say that physical powerlessness is that which comes from the privation of the faculties, which it would be necessary to have to act. What do they understand by these faculties of which they speak? Are they these spiritual qualities of which the School speaks, and which it regards as attached to the very substance of the soul, supposing that they are distinct from it, which many deny? Or is it the good disposition of the organs, without which the action is never done? If it is the first, they are mistaken. One often lacks Liberty without lacking these faculties. A sleeping man, a man who is awake, but in darkness, do not have the Liberty to see, although they have the faculty to do it. One can even say that a blind man has this faculty in this sense.

If it is the second, the absence of this sort of faculties will not be necessary to make one lose Liberty. If there were only the bad disposition of the organs which took it away, spirits would be free in all respects, since they have no need of organs to do what depends on them. Thus this idea that one forms of the powerlessness which ruins Liberty is no more exact than the two others.

There is a fourth, which I truly find nowhere, but which seems to me so just and so natural, that I am surprised not to find it everywhere. Before indicating it I note that as there are a great number of events which never happen, and others on the contrary which always happen uniformly on certain occasions, it is rather natural, and very ordinary, to conceive what makes this double regularity as an assemblage

of laws which are observed, and the observance of which makes what is called the order of nature.

One conceives these laws very differently. Some believe that they consist only in the particular nature of each thing, which determines it to act always in the same way. Others want it to be an impression that God gave to his work when he drew it from nothingness, and the effect of which will last as long as the world. Others finally want them to be laws that God has imposed on Himself, and that He takes care to observe Himself on occasions.

It does not belong to me to decide which of these sentiments is the true one. It is not besides necessary on this occasion to know it. I content myself with saying that there are four different orders of these laws. There are some which regard all substances, both spiritual and bodily; this one, for example, that everything which exists must continue to exist until it pleases God to annihilate it. There are some which regard only bodies alone, such as those of the communication of movements. Others on the contrary concern only spirits alone, such as these, One will never reject as certainly false what will appear evidently true. One will love nothing which does not appear good. One will hate nothing which does not appear bad. Finally there are others which are particular to Beings composed of a spirit and a body, I mean to men. Such are those of the reciprocal succession of certain thoughts of the spirit, and of certain movements of the body.

The necessity that there is that all these laws be executed, makes the powerlessness which is called physical. It is thus that I cannot, either annihilate the least of Beings, or move mountains, or persuade myself of what appears evidently false to me, or prevent myself from feeling pain when I approach a little too close to fire.

As there is no one who does not give the name of physical to the powerlessness, in which we find ourselves to prevent the execution of most of these laws, especially those of the second and the last order, it seems to me that one should not find it wrong that I give it to that which prevents us from violating and overturning the others, since they are all of the same order, and have the same principle.

Be that as it may, I declare that I will use everywhere this expression in this sense, and that when I speak in the sequel of a physical powerlessness, I will always understand the powerlessness to prevent the observance of some one of the general laws. In taking it in this way nothing will be easier than to distinguish moral powerlessness from physical. One could without miracle overcome the first, although that never happens. But there are only miracles which triumph over the second.

CHAPTER XV. That physical powerlessness ruins the Liberty necessary to act morally.

One sees presently the meaning of the third response, which admits that physical powerlessness annihilates Liberty, and denies that moral powerlessness has this effect. But one does not yet see if this response is solid. One sees neither if what it posits is true, nor if it destroys the objection. It is therefore important to research this, and this is what one cannot do except by treating exactly these four questions. The first is to know if one is right to admit that physical powerlessness annihilates Liberty. The second if moral powerlessness lets it subsist. The third if one can say in our principles that the powerlessness of the sinner to do good is not a physical powerlessness. The fourth finally if one can maintain that this powerlessness is only moral.

It seems in truth that one could say nothing of the first, which has for its subject, not a principle that one opposes to our Adversaries, but a simple admission that one makes to them. They claim that all powerlessness annihilates Liberty, and one admits to them that what they say is true provided that one understands it of all physical powerlessness. Thus this truth being recognized on both sides, it appears rather useless to prove it. But as others could think that in granting this I relax too much, and do not manage enough the interests of the truth, it will be good to stop a moment to show the contrary.

I. First I note that if there is anyone who does not approve this admission, it will at least not be those of whom I spoke in Chapter XI, and who say that in truth the powerlessness which comes from the order that God established in the world when He created it, destroys without reservation Liberty, but that it is not the same with that which comes from sin. I leave what they say of this second powerlessness. It is sufficient for me that they recognize that the first is contrary to Liberty. By that very fact they agree with what I say. For who does not know that the general laws which are the true causes of this powerlessness, come from creation, and not from sin?

II. It will be just as little those who recognize that nothing is less free than what is determined to one species of action. *Quod est determinatum ad unum.* "To this Liberty," says Mr. Pictet, "is opposed a double necessity. 1. a necessity, which is called physical, or natural, which one sees in these natural agents, which are determined by their nature to a single thing. It is thus that one says that fire burns necessarily; that the Sun illuminates necessarily." *Theol. Chrét. Book V. Chap. 8.* See also Amesius *Bell. enerv. Tom. IV. lib. 4. cap. 1. La Place opusc. posth. pag. 145.* Mr. de Beaulieu *Thes. Theol. pag. 403. n. 10.*

I say that these Theologians will not disagree that physical powerlessness, such as I conceive it, does not ruin Liberty, since these general laws which make it be born determine the causes which are subject to it to a single manner of acting on each of their objects. Thus the Will is determined to a single action with regard to good, it

is to love it, to a single one with regard to evil, it is to hate it. Consequently in this no Liberty.

III. I say the same thing of those of whom I spoke in chapter III, and who recognize that one has no Liberty for an action that one cannot do, whatever effort one makes, and however strongly and sincerely one wants it. If that is so one is not at all free for things physically impossible. Let one try indeed as much as one can to do them. Let one exert oneself to regard as certainly false what appears evidently true, to love evil because it is evil, to hate good because it is good. It is sure that one cannot succeed in doing so.

IV. I have shown in the same place that there is no free action which cannot be commanded, unless it is essentially criminal; after which we will be bound to do it, and not doing it we will sin, one will have reason to blame us for it, and God will be able to punish us for it by all the torments of eternity. Let one see however if it is possible to conceive that God, who is so just, should order us under such penalties to do any of the things which are physically impossible for us. Let one see if supposing that He did it, one would have reason to blame us for not doing them. Let one see above all if one can understand that not having done them, He would punish us for it by all the fires of hell.

V. Whatever idea one forms of these laws it will always be found that both their establishment, and their observance, are necessary and inevitable effects of infinite power. If they are consequences of the particular nature of each thing, they have the same source as this nature, which is the principle of them, that is to say the Will and the power of God, who made it such as it pleased Him. If they are nothing else than the impression that God gave to the universe, and to each of its parts in producing them, it is visible that it is God Himself who does everything that this impression operates. And if God after having imposed these laws on Himself executes them Himself, what I say appears still more clearly. Thus it is beyond doubt that it is God Himself who does everything that is done in consequence, and by the efficacy of the general laws. So that if these laws push us to certain actions, or prevent us from doing others, it is to God Himself that it is necessary to attribute this prevention and this impulse.

This consequence is necessary, and cannot be contested. Let one see now if it is conceivable, either that God commands us what He prevents us from doing, or that He forbids us what He pushes us to do. Let one see above all if it is conceivable that He punishes us, either for having yielded to His impulse, or for not having overcome this prevention. To do the one, and to abstain from the other, it would be necessary that we be more powerful than He. It would be necessary at least that we have more strength and more power than He deploys when He makes observe the general laws of which we speak. Let one judge however if this lack of power deserves in good justice to be punished.

VI. Finally if someone maintained the contrary to me, I would ask him what his thought is. Does he claim that there is no physical powerlessness which cannot subsist with Liberty? Or does he only believe that this is true only of some? There will assuredly be found no one who takes the first side. And for the second, besides that one could not indicate any particular species of this powerlessness, of which I have not proved that it ruins Liberty, besides that, I say, it is inconceivable that all the species of physical powerlessness being equally invincible, there are some of those which ruin Liberty, and others which let it subsist. For finally if there is something in powerlessness which wounds Liberty, it is that it prevents acting. Thus all those of this order preventing equally, they are all contrary to Liberty.

CHAPTER XVI. That moral powerlessness does not ruin Liberty.

Here is a truth which suffers even less difficulty than the preceding one. Indeed I know no one who contests it. The most zealous partisans of indifference admit it, and use it on occasions as a means proper to extricate themselves from the difficulties made for them.

Episcopus speaking of this accomplished perfection, which excludes the slightest defects, says that it is morally impossible. "De legali (perfectione) qua omnem & omnimodam in supremo gradu ἀναμαρτήσιαν, complectitur, etiam eam quæ perpetua est, & omnem imperfectionem, infirmitatem, inadvertentiam excludit per omnem vitam, non agimus, hanc enim moraliter impossibilem credimus." Episc. Resp. ad quæst. 19.

Elsewhere this same Author explaining what St. John says that he who is born of God cannot sin, says that this way of speaking does not imply an absolute impossibility, but only a moral impossibility, which comes from the opposition which is found between certain actions, and the disposition of the one who should do them. "Quibus phrasibus non absoluta, aut omnimoda impossibilitas ejus rei, de qua agitur, significari solet, uti per singula discurrenti manifestum est, sed tantummodo moralis, sive ethica, secundum quam impossibile id dicitur, quod ingenio, moribus, studiis, & animo alicujus, atque affectui repugnat & adversatur." Episc. in I. Joan. III. 9. pag. m. 300.

Above all the Jesuits have recourse to this response to extricate themselves from an objection which returns often, and which one applies to various subjects. They recognize that the Demons and the Damned cannot either love God, or prevent themselves from offending him in several ways. They admit that sinners cannot without the help of grace resist violent temptations. They admit that the Just with the ordinary helps of grace cannot absolutely avoid the sins, which they call venial. They hold on the other hand that the Saints confirmed in grace cannot commit mortal sins. They even believe that the Holy Virgin could not commit either mortal or venial ones.

One opposes to all this that this powerlessness is contrary to Liberty, and the response that they make to this objection is that this pretension would be legitimate if the powerlessness, in which these various orders of persons find themselves, or have found themselves, were a physical powerlessness, but that being only moral, it has nothing contrary to Liberty.

This is the response of Bellarmin de grat. & lib. arb. lib. V. cap. 7. ad 3. of Molina Concord. disp. 20. ad quæst. 14. art. 13. pag. m. 127. & seqq. of Suarez de grat. lib. 1. cap. 24. n. 28. of Vasquez 1.2. disp. 212. n. 16. where he says that this is the common sentiment of Gregory of Valencia tom. II. disp. 8. quest. 3. punct. 3. § 1. of Tanner tom. 1. disp. 5. quæst. 6. n. 23. & 24. & Tom. II. disp. 6. quæst. 3. n. 184. 185. of Arriaga tom. II. disp. 25. sect. 6. n. 56. & Tom. IV. disp. 40. n. 3. & 15. of l'Ami Tom. II. disp. 22. sect. 1. n. 13. 14. of Compton tom. I. disp. 80. sect. 3. n. 2. & 4. of George of Rhodes Tom. I. tract. V. disp. 2. quæst. 1. Sect. 6. § 1. of Louis de Caspe tom. I. tract. de grat. sect. 7. n. 88.--91. of Platelius part. I. cap. 6. § 3. n. 401. & 402.

I do not report the words of these Authors, still less those of the others that one could add to them, because all that does not seem necessary to me. It even seems to me that what they say about it is incontestable. For first what this powerlessness prevents from doing is possible in itself. Let us stop at the first example that I have given of it, and which is taken from what can be most difficult, without being impossible. It is to let oneself be grilled, alive, to gain a very small sum. This is not physically impossible, since the Martyrs have done it for other motives. Indeed this diversity of motives can well increase and diminish the difficulty of the action, but not change the nature of the necessity which is attached to it.

And if the thing is not impossible, who can doubt that God, who has a supreme authority over us, and without bounds, cannot require it of us? And if He can, it is necessary that not doing it we omit it freely. For, as has been seen, it is impossible that He command us what is not in our power and which by the same is not included in the sphere of Liberty.

Besides one agrees that the Will is not physically determined, either by finite goods or evils, or by mixed evils. Indeed a finite good, precisely because it is finite, does not include all possible good, and consequently does not entirely take away the hope of finding elsewhere the means to compensate for its loss, which is sufficient to make it not impossible to renounce it. And as for objects mixed with good and evil, it is clear that they have disgusts as well as attractions. Consequently as the attractions can carry one to seek them, the disgusts can make one renounce them.

As therefore it is beyond doubt that the goods and evils, which are the object of moral powerlessness, are goods and evils, on one hand finite and bounded, and on the other goods and evils mixed together, although with much disproportion, it is clear that they do not invincibly determine our Will, and that thus they let subsist the Liberty necessary to act morally. They do not destroy what is called the

indifference of judgment, which by the admission of the Jesuits themselves is the root, the foundation, and the strength of the indifference of the Will.

CHAPTER XVII. That the powerlessness of the sinner to do good is not a physical powerlessness.

This third truth does not seem to me less certain than the two others. However I do not doubt that it will find oppositions. But also I do not doubt that this will come from the fact that one will obstinately give to the terms which I use to express it a meaning quite different from that in which I take them, which seems to me a crying injustice. For finally in using thus, what one will reject, and what one will treat as false, and perhaps even as heretical, will not be what I say, or what I think, but what it will please these people to attribute to me, and which apparently is very far from my thought?

Let those therefore who pride themselves on some equity remember what I have said that I understood by a physical powerlessness. Let them remember that I designate by this expression a powerlessness which consists in not being able, either to change, or to overthrow the general laws, which God established in creating the world, nor to resist the power which He deploys, either in making observe these laws, or in observing them Himself, or in suspending their observance, or in some other similar manner. Let one remember that it is in this sense alone, and not in any other that one could substitute for it, that I say that the powerlessness of the sinner to do good is not a physical powerlessness.

If one takes this proposition in this sense as one cannot dispense with without a manifest injustice, it seems to me that not only does it have nothing shocking, but that it is of an incontestable truth. In order for it to be false it would be necessary that it be God Himself who prevents the sinner from doing good, and that He does it either by some general law, which would make this good impossible for him, or by some miracle that He would operate in him, or by some other action, which would demand the same degree of power which makes observe the general laws, or which suspends their observance. Now who is it who would want to advance such paradoxes? Is it God who prevents the sinner from doing good either by some law, or otherwise? If He did it, would it be worthy of Him either to command him this good which He would invincibly prevent him from doing, or to punish him because he would not do it?

Be that as it may this is not our thought. And consequently we are very far from believing that the powerlessness of the sinner to do good, is a physical powerlessness in the sense that I give to this expression.

I have besides shown in one of the preceding chapters that physical powerlessness absolutely ruins the Liberty necessary to act morally. Consequently if the powerlessness of the sinner were of this order, this sinner would innocently abstain

from doing this good, which is a manifest contradiction. How indeed could he sin by not having the Liberty necessary to be able to do it?

But this seems so clear to me, that I would fear to abuse the patience of my Readers, if I amused myself by trying to clarify it further. I leave it therefore, and I pass to the fourth proposition.

CHAPTER XVIII. That the powerlessness of the sinner with respect to good is a moral powerlessness.

This fourth truth is a necessary consequence of the third. For if the powerlessness of the sinner to do good is not a physical powerlessness, it is of all necessity that it is a moral powerlessness. The reason is that these two species of powerlessness are the only ones that one knows. I know that besides physical impossibility, and moral impossibility, there is a third, which is called metaphysical. And I know also that impossibility and powerlessness are two things linked very closely together, the impossibility of the effect responding to the powerlessness of the cause. But I know also that although there is a metaphysical impossibility, which is found in all that implies contradiction, one does not speak of a powerlessness of this same order, which I attribute to the fact that powerlessness, which is a privative term, supposes a power that one should have, and that there is nowhere, not even in God a power which extends over the impossible.

When all that would not be, and there would be a metaphysical powerlessness, that would not cause us any pain, since it is beyond doubt that that of the sinner is not of this order. Thus this one being neither physical, as has been seen in the preceding chapter, nor metaphysical, as has just been noted, it must of necessity be a moral powerlessness.

But the thing appears enough of itself.

I have said that moral powerlessness supposes a physical power. And can one doubt that sinners themselves have such a power with regard to good! They have the faculties necessary for this effect. They have an understanding, a will, and a memory. These faculties are sheltered from constraint properly so-called. They can exercise them freely. Their organs are well disposed. They are of an age of maturity, for it is not a question here of children. They are neither imbeciles, nor frenzied. In a word they have on the side of nature all that is necessary to do good, all that those have on this side to whom grace gives the strength. Thus physical power does not lack them.

But with this power they have an extremely strong inclination to do quite the contrary: And this is the second characteristic of moral powerlessness. For as I have shown in another place, nothing is more essential to it than to have its source in the repugnances, and in the inclinations of our hearts. And who is it who does not notice it in the powerlessness of the sinner to do good? Is this not what St. Paul gives us to

understand when he assures that the flesh does not subject itself to the law of God, that it even cannot? When again he teaches us that the prudence of the flesh is a true enmity against God? Is saying this not making understand quite clearly that there is in the foundation of nature a strong inclination for evil, and a frightful repugnance for holiness?

When this same Apostle said to the Hebrews that sin envelops us easily, and when St. James assured that each one of us is tempted, when he is attracted and baited by his own lust, were they not putting before our eyes by these expressions the fatal inclination that we have naturally for crime?

But is it necessary to have recourse to revelation to learn a truth as evident, and as incontestable as this one? Who is it who does not feel in himself this repugnance for good, and this inclination for evil, of which I speak? Who is it who does not have reason to say each day with St. Paul, I feel a law in my members, which fights against the law of my understanding, and which makes me prisoner of the law of sin?

The love of life, which is so natural to us, and which is such an immediate consequence of self-love, the aversion for pain, which has the same source, and comes from the same principle, these two sentiments, I say, do they not naturally produce a very strong repugnance for martyrdom, one of the most holy, and most indispensable of our duties.

This same self-love which dominates us, and which is the most general principle of our actions, does it not give us an extremely strong inclination for pleasure, which appears to us the most excellent of goods, and the most efficacious means to make us happy? And how many sins are there not, to which this love of pleasure carries us?

Pride is a natural consequence of this same self-love which possesses us. It is by that that humility, this virtue so excellent, and so necessary, is so difficult. It is from there that comes ambition, and all that one does to satisfy it. It is from there that come quarrels, animosities, hatreds, and consequently an infinity of sins.

And what shall I say of vengeance? What shall I say of the repugnance that we have, either to forgive our enemies, or above all to love positively and sincerely those very ones who outrage us, at the very time when they do it?

Does not all this strongly prove that we all have much inclination for evil, much repugnance and aversion for good, and that consequently the powerlessness in which we find ourselves to practice the one, and to abstain from the other, is a moral powerlessness?

This is also what I have difficulty believing that one will contest with me. One will admit to me without doubt that there is something moral in our powerlessness, but one will perhaps claim that there is something more. This is what it would be necessary to examine, if I had not already done it, and if I had not strongly proved

that one cannot say that this powerlessness is a physical powerlessness, as it would be without difficulty, if it were more than moral. Thus all that should not stop us:

I will add only that I am not the first to say that the powerlessness in which the sinner finds himself with respect to good is only a moral powerlessness. Several others have said it before me. Witness the Disciples of Cameron. Witness even Doctor Twisse, who was so rigid on these matters. "Impotence," he says, "arising from the amputation of the hands is a natural impotence. But impotence with regard to doing good is merely a moral impotence, by which, nothing hindering, a man could fulfill some moral duty, if he willed it." Twiss. Vind. grat. lib. 3. Errat. 9. sect. 6. pag. m. 769.

CHAPTER XIX. Where one responds to an objection.

Someone will perhaps say that in truth the powerlessness of the sinner is at most only moral, but that there is much appearance that this expression, far from being too weak, is even too strong at least in some respects. That one suffers it, one will say to us, on the subject of the conversion of the sinner, which is a work so great, and so admirable. But can one use it on the subject of each good work that we do? Among these good works, are there not a great number, which are so easy, that one does them, not only without the help of grace, but even without any effort? For example to tell the truth to a man who asks what time it is, to show the way to a traveler who strays, to give him a glass of water, which he needs in order to quench his thirst, to return a pin to someone who lent it.

One will ask me in an insulting manner if I believe all that as difficult, and as opposed to the inclination of nature, as to consent to be pinched with red-hot pincers, drawn by four horses, broken on a wheel, burned on a slow fire, etc. One will ask me finally if Pagans, if even Atheists, do not do each day things much more difficult.

This is, if I am not mistaken, the greatest difficulty that there is in this matter. But this difficulty reduces to nothing if one pays attention to the principles that I have posited in my treatise on good works in general, chap. XI.

I have shown in that place that in order for a work to be truly good, it is not sufficient that it be so in itself, as it is provided that it has been commanded by God, but that it is necessary that it be so also in its circumstances, above all that it be done by good principles, of which the most essential are the love of God, and the submission to His wills.

I have shown in this same place that this love must be a dominant love, which triumphs over all other love, and which is ready to sacrifice to its great object our dearest and most precious interests, with the reservation of salvation alone.

I have shown that this submission must be proof against, both the strongest repugnances, and the most terrible difficulties, without which our good works

however good they may be in themselves, will never be so absolutely, as it is certain that they must be to please God.

Finally I have shown that all this is necessary, not to make our actions perfectly good, something much stronger is needed for this, but to make them such truly, and to give them this degree of goodness which is absolutely necessary for them to have some advantage over those of sinners, whom grace has not yet regenerated.

That being posited when one will ask me if it is as difficult to tell the truth when one asks us what time it is, as to consent to be pinched with red-hot pincers, etc. I will respond that this question is equivocal, and that before deciding it is necessary to explain it.

Does one ask if it is as difficult to tell the truth, in whatever way one tells it, as to consent to suffer the most cruel pains? If one understands it in this way, I will respond that it would be necessary to have lost one's senses to find some equality between two things so prodigiously disproportionate. I will add that it is not doing a good work to say simply the truth, if one does not say it for the motives that I have indicated. This is only the shadow, and the appearance of a good work. Consequently this example produced in this sense, proves nothing against me, and is not even in any way relevant.

But if by telling the truth one understands telling it in a holy way, and in the manner in which it is necessary to tell it to do a work which is truly good, I will respond without hesitating that the one is as difficult as the other. The reason is that to tell in a holy way the least important truth, it is necessary to tell it with all the dispositions which are necessary to suffer the most frightful torments.

Indeed to tell it in a holy way it is necessary to tell it by a movement of love for the God of truth: But what love? Of a love which surpasses all other love, and which is ready to lose all that one holds most dear, and to suffer all that one can imagine as most harsh, when it will be necessary to please the beloved object. Consequently that very thing which one finds so difficult, and which effectively is, is included in what appears so easy. Consequently again there is more equality than one imagines between two things that one compares, and where one believed to see so much inequality and disproportion.

I say the same thing of the other actions that I have indicated. I maintain that however easy they appear in themselves, nothing is more difficult than to do them for the most necessary motives to make them good, since it is necessary for the ones and for the others the same love for God, and the same submission for His wills.

It is by that that I have responded in my Treatise on divine faith to those who asked me if a supernatural help is needed to persuade oneself among the revealed truths those which appear the least opposed to our reason, for example that St. John the Baptist wore a leather belt on his loins, and if to persuade oneself of this, which is so believable, the same help is needed as to believe the mystery of the Trinity. I have

responded that I doubted neither the one, nor the other, because to believe with divine faith the least paradoxical truths, it is necessary to believe them with a submission of mind which suffices to make us receive the most difficult.

CHAPTER XX. Where one responds to two other Objections.

Perhaps one will say that in truth what I have just said completely removes the proposed difficulty, but that from that very thing is born another which is no less. One will say that if it is so difficult to do good, whatever it may be, sinners who do not do it, appear more worthy of pity than of blame, or of punishment. For is it just to expect from them that they make such great efforts, especially that they make them with a perseverance which never relaxes, and which lasts from the moment that they begin to have the free use of their reason until the end of their life? Was it of the goodness of God to impose on them such a harsh law? And does it not seem that it was more worthy of Him to be content with less?

I respond first that if this objection has some force, it has it above all against those who hold that the powerlessness of the sinner to do good is a physical powerlessness, such as are those who are called Predeterminans. I admit that I do not see what these can say to themselves to satisfy themselves on this subject, nor what is the idea that they can form of the goodness and the equity of God, in maintaining, as they do that He punishes by all the torments of eternity those who have not done what it was so impossible for them to do.

I respond secondly that this objection would not lack color if one supposed that sinners having done all that was morally possible for them, God punished them for this sole reason that they would not have done what was impossible for them. But is there a single one of these sinners that one can think that God treats in this way? Is there a single one who has not omitted an infinity of times things that he could do with the utmost facility? Is there even a single just person who should not make himself this same reproach? No one therefore has the right to complain of the severity of God since among all those who perish there is not one who could not very easily avoid the most considerable part of what has brought about his loss.

I respond thirdly that even if there were sinners who had done all that was morally possible for them, and had omitted only what was morally impossible for them, they would not fail to deserve to perish, because in effect they should have done this very impossible that they have omitted. It is sufficient that this moral impossible was physically possible, as it was without difficulty. Being such it was necessary to do it, since there were three motives of an infinite force which demanded it, the supreme authority of God, the hope of an inestimable reward, and the just fear of the misfortunes of eternity.

I respond finally that that very thing which is morally impossible for us is so necessary, that it was not possible that God could dispense us from it. For finally if there is something morally impossible for the sinner, it is without difficulty to love

God sovereignly, and above all. One can even say in a certain sense that there is only this alone which is so. It was however impossible that God should dispense us from this great duty, as I have justified in the second volume of my Essays on Morality, disc. 5. pag. 173. and following.

All these considerations joined together show that this objection is not nearly as pressing as it appeared.

Others will perhaps say that the powerlessness of the sinner to do good must be a physical powerlessness, since Scripture represents it under images taken from a hundred things which are impossible in this sense. Is it not indeed in this way that a Moor whitens his skin, that a Leopard erases his spots, that a thorn bears grapes, and a thistle figs, that a blind man sees, that a dead man resurrects, etc. And how many times are not all these images employed in the holy Books to represent the depravation of the sinner.

I agree, but at the same time I maintain that it would be a gross error to imagine that one should find all the properties of the image in what it represents. Who does not know that there is no comparison which does not limp, nor anything so similar, which does not differ in some way? What would happen, if it were permitted to press all the comparisons that one finds in Scripture? for example that of God with a man who having drunk too much, and who having fallen asleep to sleep off his wine, comes to wake up with a start, that of this same God with the unjust Judge, who finally did justice to the Widow, etc.

It is necessary that what I say has place on our subject, since first the powerlessness that one notices in the subjects, from which one takes these images, is not of the same order. Other is that of a thistle and a thorn to bear figs and grapes, other that of a Leopard to get rid of his spots, other that of a blind man to see, and of a dead man to resurrect. Besides they all have this in common, that they are all involuntary, although with some diversity; this again, that they all exclude the Liberty necessary to act morally. Let one judge after that if there is safety in pressing these images much, and in concluding from the fact that one notices certain properties in the subjects from which they are taken, that these same properties must be found in the original.

CHAPTER XXI. Conclusion of this first Dissertation.

I am much mistaken if what I have just said does not entirely destroy the objection that I had undertaken to examine. One tells us that if the sinner is in the powerlessness to do good, he does not have the Liberty necessary to omit it criminally, and that thus the sins into which he falls by not doing what is commanded to him, cannot be imputed to him. But I have clearly shown two things. One is that whatever the case may be with physical powerlessness, moral has nothing contrary to Liberty. The other is that the powerlessness of the sinner to do good is of the

second order, in a word that it is only a moral powerlessness. What more can one wish for to absolutely ruin this objection?

With all that I do not doubt that among my Readers there will be found several who will not be satisfied with this response. They will find that I extenuate too much the powerlessness of the sinner to do good by giving it only the name, and the quality of moral. They will say that it is quite differently strong than this term makes one understand, since it is invincible to any other than the Repairer of our ills.

I would first like to ask them to consider that as there is danger in not forming a great enough idea of our natural incapacity with respect to good, there is no less in exaggerating it to excess, and in carrying it too far. I ask them to take good notice that one can say such strong things about it, that finally the sinner will be more worthy of pity than of blame and punishment, if he does not do things which exceed his power so immoderately. The more one imagines raising the glory and the necessity of grace, the more one obscures the brilliance of the justice and the equity of God, by accusing Him of punishing with the utmost severity, what one has so much trouble finding even slightly criminal, and worthy of blame.

I would secondly like to ask them to have some regard for the weakness of those whom these exaggerations carry to doubt the truth of the Religion which is accused of approving them. The more one exaggerates this powerlessness of the sinner to do good, the more one gives force to the objections of the impious, and the more one increases, and makes difficult, the task of those who undertake to repel them.

I ask them thirdly to consider that if the powerlessness of the sinner is more than moral, it is necessary to say one of two things, either that it is physical, taking this term in the sense that I have given it, or that it is of another order, which holds the middle between the physical thus explained, and the moral, and which being weaker than the first, is stronger than the second.

I do not fear that any reasonable mind takes the first of these two sides. One would thereby throw oneself into frightful extremities, and into a great number of absurdities, of which I have indicated a part, and the rest presents itself enough by itself, without it being necessary to stop at it.

As for the other side, I have difficulty believing that it is possible to find this third order of powerlessness, which holds the middle between the physical and the moral. But as whatever inclination I have to believe the thing impossible, I am not entirely convinced that it is, I would not want to deny that more able people than I may discover this middle which is unknown to me. Still less will I hazard to reject it, and to treat it, either as false, or as useless, without knowing it. I will content myself with waiting for someone to indicate it to me, reserving for myself to examine it then with all the application, and all the good faith, that this sort of subjects demands.

I have only one request to make to those who will believe they have found it. It is to express it as clearly as possible, and for this purpose as simply as they can. I beseech

them to avoid as two reefs two sorts of expressions, which have been the cause until now that one has made much less progress in Theology than in other sciences. Some are vague, confused, and general expressions, which designate things only by attributes common to what one undertakes to make known, and to several others, which are very different from it in the rest. The others are metaphorical expressions, which present to us only very imperfect images of a very small part of the qualities of the subject, and which, even if they represented more of them, would always give to the mind the trouble of reducing them to the property of the literal sense, without which it is impossible to judge of them with even a little solidity and exactitude.

I beseech them therefore to explain themselves clearly and precisely, so that everyone can judge more soundly of what it is, and that one does not see in this dispute what is only too ordinary in others. It is that one contests much without understanding each other, and that each one following his own ideas, one gets heated against each other at the time when one is in agreement on the substance.

If one grants me these two requests, which seem reasonable to me, I oblige myself on my side not to stiffen myself against the evidence of the truth, and if one indicates to me what it is necessary to add to what I have said of the powerlessness of the sinner, I promise in good faith to admit it, and to avow that I have known my subject only imperfectly.

II. DISSERTATION. Where one tries to reconcile the insurmountable efficacy of the Grace of God with the Liberty of man.

CHAPTER I. Where the difficulty which must be the subject of this Dissertation is proposed.

The difficulty that I am going to try to clarify in this Dissertation has much conformity with the one that was the subject of the preceding Dissertation. It is true that one is taken from powerlessness, and the other from necessity, which are two directly opposed things. But it is also true that the most opposed things give each other light and clarity. Thus what we have said on the first of these difficulties will considerably shorten what we have to say on the second.

Here is what this second consists in. We believe that the Grace which converts us infallibly produces its effect. We well believe that there are internal and supernatural Graces, which do not convert sinners. Nothing is more certain than this. For finally St. Paul speaking of those who sin against the Holy Spirit, and who, according to us, have never been regenerated, says that they have been enlightened, that they have tasted the heavenly gift, and have been made participants of the Holy Spirit. Heb. VI. 4. St. Stephen likewise reproaches the rebellious and unbelieving Jews that they always resist the Holy Spirit. Act. VII. 51. Thus here are interior and supernatural operations of the Holy Spirit, Graces consequently, which do not convert sinners.

But these Graces are very different from that which regenerates us, and this difference consists not only in the success of these two sorts of Graces, but also in their nature, and in the intention of the one who grants them.

We do not believe that God granting these Graces to the reprobates, does it with the design of converting them. That seems impossible and contradictory to us. If He had the design of converting these sinners He would succeed in it infallibly. For who can resist His will? He is All-powerful, and that is enough. For to elude the effects of such a power it would be necessary to have another greater one. And besides if there were some which was in a state to face Him, which is impossible, God would know it, and knowing it He would not undertake to overcome it, wisdom not permitting to undertake seriously what one regards as impossible.

If therefore God gives to some sinners of this sort of Graces which do not operate their conversion, He does it with other designs, which it is not permitted to us to fathom. For who has known the intention of the Lord, or who has been His Counselor?

Also we hold for certain that these Graces are in themselves, and in their own nature, very different from the one which operates the conversion of the sinner, as I hope to show in the sequel.

It is this latter alone that we regard, not only as efficacious but also as efficacious by itself. Indeed the Molinists well recognize a Grace always efficacious. It is the one they name Congruent. But they do not want it to be efficacious by itself. It is so according to them only because God foresees that those who will receive it will cooperate freely with it. To the point that they believe that there is such inefficacious Grace, which is stronger in itself, and has more intrinsic activity, than this efficacious Grace.

We are very far from this thought. We believe the same as the Jansenists that efficacious Grace is such by its nature, and independently of the consent of man. We regard this consent, not as the cause of this efficacy, but as an effect which it produces. Thus we believe that not only is this Grace never frustrated, but also that it is impossible that it be so.

I will not undertake here to prove this truth, and to produce all the places of Scripture which confirm it, still less to refute the responses that one makes to them to elude them. On one hand that would lead me extremely far, and on the other several of our Theologians have already done it, without it being necessary to return to it. I will content myself with defending this truth, not against all the objections that one opposes to it, but only against the one which claims that what we believe on this ruins the Liberty necessary to act morally.

One proposes it in several ways, but which all come down to the same thing. Sometimes one says that if Grace converts us infallibly, its effect will be necessary and inevitable, and consequently will not be free. Sometimes one says that Liberty carries as well the power not to do what one does, as that of doing what one does not do. And from there one concludes that if man converts freely, it is necessary that he have the power not to do it, and that thus his Grace can remain without effect.

Here is the difficulty. It now remains only to see how one will be able to resolve it. This is what one is going to work on.

CHAPTER II. Various species of necessity. Which are those that ruin Liberty, and which let it subsist.

As it is beyond doubt that there are various species of necessity, and that among these species there are those which annihilate Liberty, others which do not have this effect, the whole question reduces to two things. One is to know in general what is the necessity which can subsist with Liberty, and what is the one which cannot. The other is to know if the necessity which according to us accompanies the operations of Grace is of the first of these orders, or of the second. Here are two questions that it is necessary to try to clarify.

It is first beyond doubt that there are several species of necessity. There are those which have no relation to our subject. Such are for example these two, of which one

calls the one necessity of precept, and the other necessity of means. The first is found in the things that God has commanded, and the second in those which one cannot do without. Everyone sees enough by oneself that these two senses are very far from our question.

In our subject the necessary is that which cannot be otherwise. There is first an absolute necessity, and another which is called hypothetical in the Schools, and which one could call more intelligibly a necessity of supposition.

Absolute necessity is that which nothing has preceded, and which nothing can change. Such is that of the existence of God. The necessity of supposition has place when two facts, either necessary or contingent, are linked so closely one to the other, that it is impossible that the first exist without the second, or the second without the first, although absolutely speaking the two have been able not to exist.

There are several orders of this second species of necessity, because there are several sorts of suppositions that one can make, or if one wants because the things that one supposes can have various links with those that one infers from them.

Sometimes one supposes the thing itself, as when Aristotle, and a thousand Authors after him, have said that everything which exists, supposing that it exists, exists necessarily. *Quicquid est, dum est, necessariò est* (Whatever is, while it is, necessarily is), which in the foundation comes back to the vulgar maxim, which states that it is impossible that a thing be and not be at the same time. One can call this supposition an identical supposition.

Sometimes one supposes a thing which necessarily accompanies another, like heat and light in the Sun, respiration and life in animals, the remission of sins and regeneration in Grace. One reasons from one to the other, and one says equally, If the Sun illuminates, it warms, and If it warms, it illuminates. One can call this supposition a supposition of concomitance.

Sometimes one supposes what follows to infer from it what precedes, as when from the fact that a man is old one concludes from it that he has been young, and from the fact that he dies one concludes from it that he has lived. One calls this supposition a subsequent supposition.

Sometimes finally one supposes what precedes, to conclude from it what must follow, as when one says, If I throw this blade of straw into a great fire, it will be consumed there. One calls this supposition an antecedent supposition.

All that being posited I say first that it is beyond doubt that absolute necessity is incompatible with Liberty. This is what the whole earth agrees on. Thus it is not necessary to stop to justify it. Besides no one accuses us of introducing such a necessity into the operations of Grace.

It is no less indubitable that neither the necessity which is born from an identical supposition, nor the one which comes from a subsequent supposition, or concomitant, has anything which wounds in the least the world of Liberty. If that

were not so there would not be any Liberty in the world, there being nothing, however free, and however contingent it may be, which is not necessary, I will not say in some one of these three senses, but in all three together, because in effect there is nothing which does not have these three links with something.

For example it presently depends on me to walk, and if I do it, I will do it with a full and entire Liberty. However this action will have the three necessities that I have indicated. It will have the necessity which is born from an identical supposition. For if I walk it is not possible that that not be. It will have the necessity which comes from a concomitant supposition. For if I walk towards the East, it is certain that I move away from the West. It will have finally the necessity which comes from a subsequent supposition. For if I find myself in a place where I was not, it is a sign that I have come there, and that to come there I have walked.

This will be of very great use to us in the sequel, but here it is rather useless to us, because it is none of these three species of necessity that one accuses us of attributing to the productions of Grace, there being no one who does not attribute all three to them as well as we.

Everything therefore reduces to the necessity which is born from an antecedent supposition. It is this one alone which makes the difficulty, and this difficulty is all the greater because we do not deny that according to us the effects of Grace are necessary in this last sense. It is therefore necessary to stop at this alone, and to see first if there is not still some other restriction to make before deciding if this species of necessity is compatible, or incompatible with the Liberty in question. This is what one is going to research in the following chapter.

CHAPTER III. Whether antecedent necessity can subsist with Liberty. Two sorts of this necessity. On physical necessity.

I am persuaded of two things. One is that there is such antecedent necessity which ruins Liberty, the other that there is such other necessity, also antecedent, which does not have this effect. For example the necessity of constraint, which is without difficulty an antecedent necessity, is directly opposed to Liberty. But also on the other hand the necessity with which one wishes to avoid an evil which appears extreme, does not prevent one from wishing it very freely.

It is therefore necessary that there be two different orders of this species of necessity, and that one can subsist with Liberty, and the other cannot. It is not even very difficult to indicate one and the other. One can do it in a word by distinguishing physical necessity from moral, of which the first is very certainly contrary to Liberty, the other is not.

Everything consists in forming clear and precise ideas of these two species of necessity. As most of those who treat this matter do not do it, that makes the most

considerable part of the difficulty that one finds there. It is therefore necessary to try to repair this defect.

Many people recognize no other physical necessity than that which comes from matter, and I am not inclined to deny that necessity, which has its source in matter, is almost always a physical necessity. I say only that there are various species of physical necessity, which come from elsewhere.

Such is that in which the Demons find themselves to put themselves under cover from the torments that divine Justice makes them suffer. Such is that in which our soul finds itself to prevent itself from feeling pain, when our body approaches too near to fire. Such is that, in which not only men, but Angels themselves find themselves to restore life to the dead, etc.

All that is physically impossible, for it is so neither metaphysically, nor morally, and is such besides that it is without any Liberty that one abstains from doing it. However this impossibility being found in pure Spirits, it is clear that it comes from elsewhere than from matter. Thus it is not essential to physical necessity, and incompatible with Liberty, to come from there.

Besides I would really like to know why it is that necessity, which has its source in matter is opposed to Liberty, why for example, a vessel, on which I navigate, drags me along necessarily, without my being able to prevent it. I do not believe that one can give other reasons for it than to say that necessity which comes from matter is not subject to the will. But if that is so, all necessity which is not subject to the will, will have the same effect, even if it does not come from matter. Consequently coming from matter is not the essential characteristic of necessity contrary to Liberty.

In essence one cannot prevent oneself from recognizing one or the other of these two things, either that there are species of antecedent necessity, distinct from the physical, which ruin Liberty, or that physical necessity can come from elsewhere than from matter. Let one take whichever of these two sides one wants. One will see that neither one, nor the other decides the question, and that they both leave our mind in the embarrassment from which one claims to draw it. Neither one, nor the other teaches us with precision what is the antecedent necessity which ruins Liberty, and what is the one which lets it subsist.

I believe therefore that physical necessity is that which comes from the impossibility there is that simple creatures resist efficaciously and with success, to this degree of power that God deploys, either in making observe the general laws, which He established at the beginning, or in suspending their execution, as He does by miracles properly so-called, or in doing some other action, which is neither conforming, nor contrary to these laws.

Three things seem certain to me on this subject. The first is that this necessity thus conceived can with reason be called physical, since it has its source in the nature of

things, and that it is a consequence of this order that God established at the beginning in His works, and which is commonly called the order of nature.

The second is that one could not indicate to me any necessary action, and destitute of Liberty, of which I do not explain the necessity by what I have just said. Let one ask me indeed why it is that one cannot prevent oneself, either from falling, when a plank, on which one walks, comes to break, or from being shipwrecked against a rock, when the tempest throws the vessel impetuously there, on which one has embarked, or from dying when a cannon ball carries away the head, or from feeling pain when one is too near a great fire, or from doing, or suffering a hundred similar things, I will respond without hesitating that it is because the general laws demand that that be done, and that one is not powerful enough to prevent the effect.

The last thing which seems certain to me on this subject is that nothing of what is necessary in this sense is ever free. As this is very important, and as one could even take it badly, it is necessary first to explain it, and then to prove it. This is what one is going to apply oneself to.

CHAPTER IV. Whether physical necessity is contrary to Liberty.

When one asks if physical necessity, such as I have described it, and Liberty, can subsist together, one does not ask if every time that a man is reduced to such a necessity to do an action, he loses his Liberty forever, and in all respects. This question understood in this sense would be ridiculous. What is there, for example more opposed to Liberty than the necessity of constraint? This constraint however only deprives of his Liberty the one who suffers it in certain respects, and during a certain space of time. Thus a prisoner is deprived only of the Liberty to go where he would want. He always has that of thinking of what he will want, of saying what he will want, of reading, of eating, etc. and as soon as one opens the doors of his prison he recovers his Liberty in all respects.

The meaning therefore of the question is uniquely this. One asks if it is possible that one, or several actions, be free actions, when those who do them cannot prevent themselves from doing them, and are engaged in them by a physical necessity, and such as one has described it in the preceding chapter. It is only in this sense that one accuses us of ruining Liberty by the dogma of Grace efficacious by itself.

One does not claim that a man whom God would convert in this manner would lose his Liberty forever, and in all respects, but only that he would lose it in this regard, and for this moment. This is therefore the true meaning of this question.

To respond to it I say without detour that as far as I can judge this necessity and Liberty are two opposed qualities, and which cannot subsist together. Here are my reasons.

I. There is no doubt that it is necessary to make the same judgment of necessity as of powerlessness. As therefore I have shown in the 1st Dissertation that physical

powerlessness ruins the Liberty necessary to act morally, it is clear that it is necessary to say the same thing of physical necessity, and to recognize that it annihilates this Liberty.

II. Besides one has seen from the entry of this Treatise that in order for an action to be free it is necessary that it be so in our power, that we do it every time that we will want it strongly and seriously. I say the same thing of an omission. To be free it is necessary that it depends so on us, that we can dispense with acting provided only that we want it.

But do we have such a power over things physically necessary? Can we prevent ourselves from doing them, however strongly we want to abstain from them? Can we, for example, prevent ourselves from feeling pain, when we burn ourselves, or when we are tormented by gout, or by gravel?

III. One has seen in this same place that in order for an action to be free it is necessary that it can be commanded by a legitimate Superior, unless it is bad by its nature, in which case it can be forbidden. But if it is indifferent in its genre, it can equally be commanded and forbidden, as it will please the Superior. But does one conceive that God can forbid things physically necessary, however indifferent they may be otherwise? Does one conceive that He could forbid a man who would be burned alive, or who would be broken on a wheel, to feel the least pain? Does one conceive that this man not being able to obey such a Law, God could for that alone precipitate him into hell, and punish him eternally there? Does one conceive that He could forbid us to receive as true what would be, and what would appear evidently false, and to reject as false what would appear such, and would appear such with the utmost evidence? Does one conceive finally that He could forbid us to be sick and to die?

IV. I have said that physical necessity has its source in the general laws that God established at the beginning, and which He will make observe until the consummation of the ages. That alone discovers two absurdities in the sentiment that I refute.

The first is that if God forbade us some physically necessary action, it would happen that He would push us towards it, and would move us away from it at the same time. He would push us towards it by the general Laws that He has established, and which He takes care to make observe on occasions: And He would move us away from it by the prohibition that He would make us of it. And would this procedure be worthy of Him? Would it respond to the idea that we all have of His simplicity and of the uniformity of His ways?

The second absurdity which would appear in this, is that the observance of the general Laws being an effect of His infinite power, in forbidding us the action to which these general laws would carry us, He would oblige us to resist this power, and consequently to have more than He. For how could we, either prevent ourselves

from doing what He would forbid, without resisting His power which pushes us towards it, or resist His power without having more than He?

What would one say of a robust man, who pushing a child with all his strength, would forbid him at the same time to fall, and would chastise him rudely because he would not have held himself firm? It is however what God would do if He forbade us physically necessary actions.

All that proves strongly, if I am not mistaken, that physical necessity is incompatible with the Liberty of which we speak. This is also what the most celebrated of our Theologians recognize, of whom here are the very words.

Du Moulin, *Anat. Arm.*, ch. 31, no. 1: "Liberty from coercion and physical necessity is essential to the will, inseparable from it."

Valæus, *Defens. Molin. contra Corvin.*, p. m. 108: "We grant that purely natural necessity is incompatible with liberty."

Rivet, *Cathol. Orth.*, tract. 4, question 3: "We acknowledge that the nature of liberty cannot consist not only with coercion properly so-called, but also with natural necessity."

Amesius, *Bell. enerv.*, vol. 4, book 4, ch. 1: "We concede that free will, in what it does, is free from all necessity, so that it cannot properly act necessarily, with respect to the exercise of its acts."

Strangius, *De Voluntate Dei*, p. 214: "Whoever hears this cannot help but be troubled by this scruple—how this deed should be imputed to Adam and his posterity, when a harsh necessity compelled him to it, and it could in no way be avoided. And since this threefold necessity arose from God, how can the justice of God be maintained, that from this deed so many and such great evils and punishments invaded the human race, and the greater part of it is afflicted with immense and eternal torments?"

Maresius, *Hyd. Socin.*, vol. I, p. 206: "Where there is physical necessity, there is neither proairesis [deliberate choice] nor free will."

M. de Beaulieu, *Thes. de Lib. arb. in gen.*, part 1, no. 27: "Therefore, with Amesius and Robert Baron, we do not hesitate to say that the liberty of the human will is opposed to any properly called necessity."

Vittichius, *Antispin.*, p. 28: "That necessity, however, is opposed to liberty, which is usually called natural necessity, by which a thing is inwardly and by its own nature determined to one course of action, so that it cannot do otherwise."

Hottinger, *Cursus Theologiae*, locus VIII, p. 318: "Man is free from coercion, from physical necessity, from brute determination. All these things still belong to man even after the fall."

M. Turretin, Locus IV, question 4, no. 6: "He who posits determination to one thing by physical necessity or coercion, removes liberty and contingency."

M. Heidegger, Locus VII, no. 48: "Necessity—whether physical or natural, or that of coercion—is entirely incompatible with free and voluntary causes."

M. Pictet Theol. Franç. liv. V. chap. 8. "To this Liberty is opposed a double necessity. 1. A necessity that is called physical, or natural, which one sees in natural agents, which are determined by their nature to a single thing, etc."

One can add that several of our Theologians, particularly Rivet, Amesius, Baronius, Strangius and Amyraut, reported by M. de Beaulieu Thes. Theol. pag. 404. & 405. and besides these Martyr Loc. Com. pag. 971. and Aretius Problem. pag. 87. maintain that Free will has place only with regard to means alone, and that as for what regards the last end it is not freely, but necessarily that we want it.

CHAPTER V. Of moral necessity. That it is not contrary to Liberty.

I will not dwell longer on physical necessity. I come to moral necessity, and I say that it supposes a physical and absolute power not to do what is necessary in this sense; but it demands that this power be so constrained by opposed inclinations, and crossed by such a concurrence of difficulties, that there is some certainty that one will never make all the efforts necessary to overcome them, and that in effect one has no example which justifies that anyone has succeeded in it.

This necessity has three principal sources. The first is the strength of the inclination, which carries one to do certain things. The second is partly the greatness, and partly the multitude of efforts that it would be necessary to make to resist this inclination, and to prevent oneself from doing what it carries us to do. The third, which has place only on certain occasions, is the difficulty there would be in making enter into certain thoughts those who should concur in some very bizarre designs.

The inclinations which make the first of these three sources are of three orders. Indeed I put in this rank first the inclinations and the repugnances that nature gives us. For example we naturally love life and pleasure, and we have aversion for death and for pain. This love and this aversion will make it so that any man to whom one will propose to let himself be impaled, roasted, and flamed, to gain an écu, will reject this proposition as extravagant.

I put in it secondly the extraordinarily violent passions. Such is principally anger in certain men naturally quick-tempered, and who have never made an effort to moderate themselves. Let one make a bloody outrage to such a man. It is beyond doubt that he will have resentment about it.

I put in it finally inveterate habits, especially when they are strengthened by temperament, these two in particular, the fury of gaming, and crapulence.

The second source is sometimes the greatness, sometimes the multitude and the continuation of the efforts that it would be necessary to make to abstain from certain things to which one is carried naturally. Sometimes these efforts must be great, and so great, that there is no reason to presume that one will make them. This is what appears by the example of this man to whom one would propose to let himself be impaled. What violence would it not be necessary that he do to himself to admit such a proposition?

Other times these efforts should not be so great that it would be incredible that one would make them, but it would be necessary to make such a great number of them, and to renew them so often, and during such a long time, and with so much perseverance, that one does not see any resolution capable of succeeding in it. It is thus that although one can make a short prayer without distraction, it is morally impossible to make extremely long ones without falling into this failing.

Finally the last source of moral necessity is the great number of persons who would have had to concur in an extraordinarily bizarre design to make it so that certain things would not happen. It is for example, certain that there is in Italy a city which is called Rome. But why is it certain? Is it physically impossible that all those who have assured me of it, and on the word of whom I believe it, have conspired to deceive me about this? Not at all. But if that is not physically impossible, it is morally impossible, given the number of those whom it would have been necessary to make enter into this bizarre plot, in which it is certain that one would never have succeeded with whatever eagerness one would have worked on it.

These are the principal sources of this necessity which is called moral, there being none which cannot give birth to such a necessity, at least in certain circumstances, the concurrence of which is not impossible.

One can notice in it without difficulty the characteristics that I have given in the preceding Dissertation to powerlessness of this order. I. The contrary is impossible, neither metaphysically, nor physically. II. Notwithstanding that this contrary is such, that one never sees it happen. III. This necessity has its source in the ordinary constitution of our mind and of our heart.

Being such I do not see any name which suits it better than that of moral necessity, which is the one that one ordinarily gives it.

Thus it remains only to see if this species of necessity can, or cannot subsist with Liberty. But this is a question quite easy to decide, or to better say it is a question decided by the consent of Philosophers and Theologians, which is so unanimous that there is on this no dispute. I can say at least that I know no one who denies expressly and formally that this necessity can subsist with Liberty. Even those who appear the most jealous of the rights and of the extent of this perfection recognize it formally, witness Suarez, Gregory of Valencia, Ruys, L'Ami, Caramuel, Fr. Malebranche, and Mr. Limborch, of whom one will find the very words immediately after this chapter.

II. Besides it is certain that it is necessary to make the same judgment of necessity and of powerlessness. However opposed these two things may be, they do not fail to be inseparable. There is never, either powerlessness without necessity, or necessity without powerlessness. If it is necessary that a thing happen, no one can prevent it. As therefore I have shown in the preceding Dissertation that moral powerlessness has nothing contrary to Liberty, one should make the same judgment of moral necessity, and admit that an action necessary in this sense, can be free, if something else does not prevent it.

III. On the other hand it is certain that a man who does an action, which he cannot morally prevent himself from doing, does it because he wants to. It is certain that he wants it, because he has reasons which appear solid to him, to want it. It is certain finally that these reasons are taken from the consideration of a good or of an evil, which appear to him in truth very great, but finite, such consequently that the acts which suppose the love of the one and the repugnance for the other, are free acts, for this is what is most essential to Liberty, as I hope to show in its place.

IV. I have said that it is morally certain that in making long prayers, especially if one makes many of this order, one will fall into some distraction. I am even persuaded that the ordinary helps of Grace, which weaken this troublesome necessity, do not take it away completely. Who would dare however to deny that these distractions are sins?

It is morally certain that no one will ever do all that he has the physical power to do to serve God, and to save himself. But does one not sin in lacking in it?

I have said that it is morally certain that a hot-tempered man, and bloodily outraged, will have resentment about it. But can one doubt that this resentment is criminal?

There is such a sinner for whom it would be morally impossible to suffer for the defense of truth what several Martyrs have suffered. They would certainly succumb if they undertook it, and they would not fail to sin in succumbing.

Finally, one cannot deny that the Damned find themselves engaged in a moral necessity to hate God, who overwhelms them with His vengeance, and who gives them no hope of ending their ills. They sin however in hating Him. Who can doubt it?

Here then are up to five different orders of sins, in which an infinity of persons fall each day, and fall into them necessarily of this species of necessity, which is called moral. This necessity therefore has nothing opposed to Liberty, for if there were opposition one would not sin at all in doing all these actions, it not being possible to sin in doing what one does not do freely.

Extract of some places where various Theologians maintain that moral necessity has nothing opposed to liberty.

Suarez de auxiliis Lib. III. cap. 10.1. 7. After having proved that there is nothing absurd in saying that exciting grace can be so efficacious, that it will morally determine our will, he asks if this determination can be carried to such a high point of activity and efficacy that there would be a true certainty, and an indissoluble connection between this effect and this cause, and he responds without hesitating that that is possible, and that in particular liberty does not prevent it at all. "The difficulty remains whether this determination can arrive at a certain highest degree, in which there is exact certainty, and infallible connection of such effect with such cause, namely of the free consent of the will with divine excitation from solely the moral efficacy of such excitation... I judge that it should be said that in this determination one can arrive at moral infallibility, which can be said simply never to fail, not however at metaphysical (so to speak) infallibility, that is so exact, that it is repugnant for it to fail. The reason for the first part is, because God comprehends the capacity and inclination of the human will, and all the ways, and modes, by which it can be inclined to consent, or be impeded. Therefore He can so circumvent. Or prepare the will, that He infallibly makes it consent with moral infallibility. For it is moral that the will allows itself to be carried by a vehement propensity, especially if on the part of the intellect the object is aptly proposed, and those things which can impede are turned away, which can easily be done by divine grace. Finally in this way we freely do many things, or omit, which we do with a certain moral infallibility, etc."

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fullness of the gentiles entered into the Church, and afterwards with a fuller and more efficacious operation of grace, such as He has not used until now, He will look upon the remnants of the Jews, so that a huge door for them to recognize their Messiah will be opened. What however, and what sort that operation of grace will be in the future, and by what acts to be absolved, pertains to the arcane treasures of divine Providence, which it is not right for us to scrutinize." And in page 246. speaking of the Apostles. "Certainly if they had wanted to be bad, they could have (speaking absolutely) deceived men through malice. But so great, and so copious are the gifts of divine grace given to them, that although their liberty is not destroyed, nevertheless that is by no means to be feared, indeed it would have to be regarded as a miracle that such excellent gifts of grace would be insolently despised by these good men themselves, and worshipping God with a sincere mind."

CHAPTER V. Of moral necessity. That it is not contrary to Liberty.

I will not dwell longer on physical necessity. I come to moral necessity, and I say that it supposes a physical and absolute power not to do what is necessary in this sense; but it demands that this power be so constrained by opposed inclinations, and crossed by such a concurrence of difficulties, that there is some certainty that one will never make all the efforts necessary to overcome them, and that in effect one has no example which justifies that anyone has succeeded in it.

This necessity has three principal sources. The first is the strength of the inclination, which carries one to do certain things. The second is partly the greatness, and partly the multitude of efforts that it would be necessary to make to resist this inclination, and to prevent oneself from doing what it carries us to do. The third, which has place only on certain occasions, is the difficulty there would be in making enter into certain thoughts those who should concur in some very bizarre designs.

The inclinations which make the first of these three sources are of three orders. Indeed I put in this rank first the inclinations and the repugnances that nature gives us. For example we naturally love life and pleasure, and we have aversion for death and for pain. This love and this aversion will make it so that any man to whom one will propose to let himself be impaled, roasted, and flamed, to gain an écu, will reject this proposition as extravagant.

I put in it secondly the extraordinarily violent passions. Such is principally anger in certain men naturally quick-tempered, and who have never made an effort to moderate themselves. Let one make a bloody outrage to such a man. It is beyond doubt that he will have resentment about it.

I put in it finally inveterate habits, especially when they are strengthened by temperament, these two in particular, the fury of gaming, and crapulence.

The second source is sometimes the greatness, sometimes the multitude and the continuation of the efforts that it would be necessary to make to abstain from

certain things to which one is carried naturally. Sometimes these efforts must be great, and so great, that there is no reason to presume that one will make them. This is what appears by the example of this man to whom one would propose to let himself be impaled. What violence would it not be necessary that he do to himself to admit such a proposition?

Other times these efforts should not be so great that it would be incredible that one would make them, but it would be necessary to make such a great number of them, and to renew them so often, and during such a long time, and with so much perseverance, that one does not see any resolution capable of succeeding in it. It is thus that although one can make a short prayer without distraction, it is morally impossible to make extremely long ones without falling into this failing.

Finally the last source of moral necessity is the great number of persons who would have had to concur in an extraordinarily bizarre design to make it so that certain things would not happen. It is for example, certain that there is in Italy a city which is called Rome. But why is it certain? Is it physically impossible that all those who have assured me of it, and on the word of whom I believe it, have conspired to deceive me about this? Not at all. But if that is not physically impossible, it is morally impossible, given the number of those whom it would have been necessary to make enter into this bizarre plot, in which it is certain that one would never have succeeded with whatever eagerness one would have worked on it.

These are the principal sources of this necessity which is called moral, there being none which cannot give birth to such a necessity, at least in certain circumstances, the concurrence of which is not impossible.

One can notice in it without difficulty the characteristics that I have given in the preceding Dissertation to powerlessness of this order. I. The contrary is impossible, neither metaphysically, nor physically. II. Notwithstanding that this contrary is such, that one never sees it happen. III. This necessity has its source in the ordinary constitution of our mind and of our heart.

Being such I do not see any name which suits it better than that of moral necessity, which is the one that one ordinarily gives it.

Thus it remains only to see if this species of necessity can, or cannot subsist with Liberty. But this is a question quite easy to decide, or to better say it is a question decided by the consent of Philosophers and Theologians, which is so unanimous that there is on this no dispute. I can say at least that I know no one who denies expressly and formally that this necessity can subsist with Liberty. Even those who appear the most jealous of the rights and of the extent of this perfection recognize it formally, witness Suarez, Gregory of Valencia, Ruys, L'Ami, Caramuel, Fr. Malebranche, and Mr. Limborch, of whom one will find the very words immediately after this chapter.

II. Besides it is certain that it is necessary to make the same judgment of necessity and of powerlessness. However opposed these two things may be, they do not fail

to be inseparable. There is never, either powerlessness without necessity, or necessity without powerlessness. If it is necessary that a thing happen, no one can prevent it. As therefore I have shown in the preceding Dissertation that moral powerlessness has nothing contrary to Liberty, one should make the same judgment of moral necessity, and admit that an action necessary in this sense, can be free, if something else does not prevent it.

III. On the other hand it is certain that a man who does an action, which he cannot morally prevent himself from doing, does it because he wants to. It is certain that he wants it, because he has reasons which appear solid to him, to want it. It is certain finally that these reasons are taken from the consideration of a good or of an evil, which appear to him in truth very great, but finite, such consequently that the acts which suppose the love of the one and the repugnance for the other, are free acts, for this is what is most essential to Liberty, as I hope to show in its place.

IV. I have said that it is morally certain that in making long prayers, especially if one makes many of this order, one will fall into some distraction. I am even persuaded that the ordinary helps of Grace, which weaken this troublesome necessity, do not take it away completely. Who would dare however to deny that these distractions are sins?

It is morally certain that no one will ever do all that he has the physical power to do to serve God, and to save himself. But does one not sin in lacking in it?

I have said that it is morally certain that a hot-tempered man, and bloodily outraged, will have resentment about it. But can one doubt that this resentment is criminal?

There is such a sinner for whom it would be morally impossible to suffer for the defense of truth what several Martyrs have suffered. They would certainly succumb if they undertook it, and they would not fail to sin in succumbing.

Finally, one cannot deny that the Damned find themselves engaged in a moral necessity to hate God, who overwhelms them with His vengeance, and who gives them no hope of ending their ills. They sin however in hating Him. Who can doubt it?

Here then are up to five different orders of sins, in which an infinity of persons fall each day, and fall into them necessarily of this species of necessity, which is called moral. This necessity therefore has nothing opposed to Liberty, for if there were opposition one would not sin at all in doing all these actions, it not being possible to sin in doing what one does not do freely.

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CHAPTER VI. Whether what we believe concerning the power of Grace which converts us affects our Liberty.

All that I have said until now reduces to these two propositions. One that physical necessity is contrary to the Liberty necessary to act morally; the other that moral necessity does not have the same opposition to this privilege, and that such a necessity, and such a Liberty, can subsist together.

That being so it seems that the whole question reduces to knowing if the necessity which accompanies the operations of Grace is a physical necessity, or a moral necessity. For if it is of the first order we cannot deny that it ruins Liberty, whereas if it is of the second the whole earth will admit to us that there is nothing in what we maintain on this subject which affects in the least the world of Liberty.

But also that being posited it seems that we should pass condemnation, and admit that what we believe concerning the insurmountable efficacy of Grace destroys without reservation Liberty. For finally according to most of our Theologians this necessity is a physical necessity. Several things indeed are incontestable on this subject.

The first is that according to us God acts physically on our soul when His Grace converts us. All our Theologians have unanimously rejected the moral Suasion of the Remonstrants: And when Mr. Pajon wanted to maintain that God employs to convert us only the preaching of His word, and the management of circumstances, which can make it efficacious, all our Theologians rose up against him, and regarded this new sentiment as a species of extreme Pelagianism, and which went further than that of Pelagius himself. We all recognize an immediate operation of God on our soul, distinct from that of the word, and without which the word, whatever may be the circumstances in which it is announced, does nothing else than strike the ear, without penetrating into the heart.

For my part I cannot accommodate myself to the thought of some of our Theologians, who imagine to say something very subtle in maintaining that the action of God, which converts us, is neither a moral action, nor a physical action, but a hyperphysical action. All that is founded only on what it pleases these Authors to give to the terms which they use a meaning quite different from that which has been given to them until now.

Some imagine that there is only matter which is the principle, the subject, and the term of a physical action, and on this foundation they find that there is something unbearable in saying that God, who is a pure Spirit, acts physically to produce a spiritual quality in a substance, which has nothing material, or corporeal.

Others take for the same thing, to act physically, and to act naturally. Thus the conversion of the sinner being without difficulty a supernatural action, and very elevated above the common train, and ordinary of things, they say that it is necessary to call it, not a physical action, but a hyperphysical action.

But besides that this is only a miserable dispute of words, it comes only from the fact that one departs without any necessity from the sense that the School has always given to these expressions. Here is what it says on this.

It distinguishes first two sorts of causes, the physical, and the moral. Physical causes are those which act by a positive and true influence on their subject. It is thus that one claims that fire burns, and that a body moves another, when it collides with it. Moral causes are those which act only in proposing to intelligent causes, either objects, or motives, which being perceived by these knowing beings, determine them objectively, as one speaks, to certain actions, or better to say give them reason to determine themselves.

It is thus that he who counsels a crime is reputed the cause of it, and has his part in the blame, and in the punishment which it deserves.

Physical causes are of two orders. There are natural and supernatural, or hyperphysical ones. Natural ones are those which make their effect by virtue of the general Laws which God established at the beginning. Supernatural causes are those which act independently of these Laws, which even change them, and stop their execution, as we see that God does in miracles, and even without miracle, every time that His wisdom finds it appropriate.

In conserving this sense to these expressions it is true to say first that God acts physically and naturally on souls, as for example when He produces sensations in them, for then He acts naturally, because He acts conformably to the general Laws. Secondly it is true to say that He is a physical, but supernatural cause of physical Grace, because He operates it by a true influence; and supernatural, because He follows in this other laws than those of nature.

Thus the whole mystery of this little gibberish consists first in preferring to give to the action of God a Greek name, which almost no one understands, than a Latin name, which is within the reach of everyone. Everyone knows what a supernatural action is, but few people know what a hyperphysical action is, which in the foundation is the same thing. Thus one retails to us as a great mystery a thing that children know, and besides one inappropriately opposes a hyperphysical, or supernatural action, to a physical action, as if every supernatural action were not a physical action.

I believe therefore that the action of God which converts us is truly a physical action. But that is not all. There are physical causes, whose action, although physical on its side, gives to its effect only a simply moral necessity. For example the movement of blood and spirits in the passions, is a physical cause, of which however the effect, supposing that it has some necessity, has only a simply moral one. When Jesus Christ restored sight to the blind, movement to paralytics, etc. He did it by a physical operation. However He imposed on them no necessity, neither physical, nor even moral, to make such, or such use of the power which He restored to them.

I say therefore that not only God acts physically on our soul when His grace converts us, but again that the necessity with which the immediate effect of this grace is produced in us, is a physical necessity, and is in nothing less than that of natural, or supernatural effects, which the divine power produces on other occasions, as indeed St. Paul assures the Ephesians that God deploys in our conversion the same power which resurrected His holy Son. Ephes. I. 19. 20.

If that is so, one will doubtless say, it is not possible to save the Liberty of man in maintaining the all-powerfulness of Grace, and it is necessary to renounce the one to defend the other. For has one not seen in what precedes that physical necessity destroys Liberty? How therefore could this Liberty subsist with an operation which gives birth to a necessity of this order.

That appears rather specious, but I do not believe it solid. I am persuaded that these two things agree very well together. But to prove it it is necessary to explain a little more distinctly our belief on this subject.

CHAPTER VII. Where one exposes what is believed most commonly among us concerning the manner in which our conversion happens

I admit that there are some Theologians among us, who regard the work of conversion only as an operation of the power of God which pushes, which inclines, and which invincibly determines, either our mind, or our heart, or the two together, to the acts by which we convert ourselves towards Him, to faith, to repentance, to love, etc. They believe that it is absolutely impossible to resist this impulse, and I admit that I have never been able to find a means to reconcile the insurmountable efficacy of this operation with the liberty necessary to act morally. It is for those who are prejudiced with this thought to see how it is that they will be able to remove this troublesome difficulty. For as for all that has been said until now with this design, it would be easy to show its uselessness, if the thing were necessary.

It is good for us that this sentiment is not the most commonly received among us. There is another which is incomparably more followed, and which is not exposed to the same difficulties. It consists in attributing two different effects to regenerating grace, one proximate, and immediate, the other mediate and more distant.

Before explaining all these terms it is important to note that our conversion, considering it in its entirety, is a composite of two sorts of acts, some of God, others of man. That appears enough from the fact that Scripture represents this conversion to us, sometimes as a work of God, sometimes as a work of man. Sometimes men say there to God, "Convert us, and we will be converted." Sometimes God says there to men. "Convert yourselves towards me, and I will convert myself towards you."

The acts of God are of two sorts. Some are external, namely the vocation by the word, and the management of circumstances in which this vocation is addressed to us. The internal ones end up producing in us all that can contribute to making this word efficacious.

The acts of man are faith, either divine, or justifying, repentance, that is to say the sorrow of the past, and the resolution to better regulate the future, the love of God, etc.

No one has better disentangled this than the Theologians of England deputed to the Synod of Dort. They arrange the whole under two titles. The first is this; "Of conversion, insofar as it is an immediate work of God, who regenerates man." The second is this; "Of conversion insofar as this word designates an action of man, who converts himself towards God by faith and repentance." Under each of these titles they put approximately the acts that I have indicated.

There are not great difficulties, either on the action of God, who makes His word preached, or on the acts of man who converts himself to God, or if there is some they are not of our subject. But it is not easy to make known, either the immediate effect that His Grace produces in us, before we actually convert ourselves towards Him, or the manner in which He produces this effect there, to carry us to convert ourselves.

To begin with the first, it passes among us for rather constant that God produces in us something fixed, lasting, and permanent, which remains there during the whole course of life, even during sleep, and which on occasions pushes us, and inclines us in its manner to all sorts of good works, and makes us regard with horror the sins which are contrary to them.

To be assured that this is the most common sentiment among us, one has only to read the judgment of the Synod of Dort on Art. III. & IV. and the votes of each of the Members of this Assembly. One will find it expressed there clearly and formally.

One has only to pay attention to a dispute which made much noise in France, and elsewhere, a short time before our dispersion. We were accused of establishing a monstrous alliance of holiness, and of the most enormous crimes, and this accusation was founded on what we believe concerning the perseverance of the Saints, and on what happens when one of these Saints falls into faults similar to those of David and of St. Peter. We believe that in these sad occasions the germ, the principle of holiness, which regenerating Grace produces in us, although weakened,

although reduced to very little, is not entirely destroyed and annihilated, but that it always remains in the depth of the heart, like a little fire hidden under the ashes, and like a weak remainder of life in the heart of a man fallen in weakness. One has only to see the excellent books that our Writers published on this subject, to be assured of the truth of this fact, I mean that this is our sentiment.

One can still see the judgment of the Synod of Dort on Article V, with the votes of the Members of the Assembly.

But what is this germ, this principle of holiness? Various expressions are employed to designate it. Scripture calls it rather often the Spirit dwelling in us, the Spirit which desires against the flesh, the new man, the inner man, the Seed of God, which remains in us, The anointing from the Holy One, etc.

Our Theologians give it three different names, some more general, others more particular. The Synod of Dort says in a very vague manner that these are new qualities poured into the will. "Voluntati novas infundit qualitates." [To the will He infuses new qualities]

Most of our Theologians, to say something more precise, say that these are infused habits. And others to determine the thing a little more, maintain with St. Augustine that it is a victorious pleasure, which makes it so that truth and justice, please us more than falsehood and sin, that we love them more, and that we make them the rules of our conduct.

If it is permitted to me to say what I think of it, I believe first that in this occasion, as in many others, the most general expressions are the best. I believe that there is some species of temerity in determining the nature of this effect of Grace, Scripture not having explained itself formally enough on this to give us reason to go further.

I believe secondly that none of the natural things that we know has more relation with the nature of this new being than these two, natural inclinations, and acquired habits. Everyone knows the strength that these two species of qualities have to carry us to certain actions, and what violence it is necessary to do to oneself to resist them, especially when the inclinations are strong, and the habits inveterate. Nothing therefore resembles better what grace produces in us; and if I dare not say that it is precisely the same thing, I say at least that it is something very close, at least in efficacy, for as for origin I admit that there is no relation. Indeed this new being is produced by an immediate and supernatural operation of the power of God, whereas inclinations come for the most part from temperament, and habits from reiterated acts.

Be that as it may, the name which seems to me the simplest, and at the same time the most proper to make understand the little that one knows of it, is that of new inclination, and it is the one that I will give it in the sequel.

I admit that ordinary inclinations are of four orders. Some are absolutely invincible, like self-love. Others are only morally necessary, like those which are born from the

most violent passions. The third not being accompanied by any necessity make it so that one has rather difficulty resisting them like the one which makes us love life, and flee death. The last are those that we overcome without effort, like the love of rest when it is moderate.

The one of which I speak is neither of the first, nor of the third, nor of the fourth of these orders, but uniquely of the second. It is not of the first, because if it were the acts by which one converts oneself would not be free. It is neither of the third, nor of the fourth, because it is always followed by action. It is therefore of the second, and it is necessary to believe that God gives it precisely such as it is necessary to make, on one hand that it is always followed by the faith and the repentance of the sinner, and on the other that these acts are always free. There would be impiety in saying that He cannot, and temerity in maintaining that being able to He does not do it.

Besides I consider this new being only in the moment of conversion. I say nothing of what can happen to it in the sequel, either in weakening itself, or in strengthening itself. I examine neither what it becomes in the falls of the Child of God, nor if there is some new degree of strength, or some actual help, which is added to it when it triumphs over some extraordinary temptation. All that, although worthy of being examined, is not of this place.

CHAPTER VIII. That the manner in which Grace gives us new inclinations does not harm our Freedom.

I have said that when God regenerates us and pours into our souls these new qualities, which are the principle and seed of the acts by which we convert to God, He acts physically, immediately, and invincibly upon our soul, so that it is absolutely impossible that these new qualities, these new inclinations, are not produced there. What more is needed, many will undoubtedly say, not to wound and somewhat restrict our freedom, but to destroy and annihilate it completely? Haven't we seen that nothing is more opposed to it than a necessity of this order? This difficulty appears great, but in fact it is nothing.

First, the Lutherans, the Remonstrants, and the Molinists, who are the most zealous partisans of freedom, will be careful not to oppose us on this. The Lutherans and Remonstrants recognize that God acts upon us in such an efficacious manner that it is impossible for us to resist Him when He gives us, not faith, but the strength and power to believe: And they do not fear that this would harm our freedom in the least. Immediately after this chapter, one will find some of the places where these Theologians have explained themselves on this matter.

The Lutherans and Molinists go even further. According to us, man acts neither with freedom nor without freedom when he receives the first grace. This is what we shall see in a moment. But according to the Lutherans and Molinists, man acts then, and acts without freedom. According to them, prevenient and exciting grace consists of

indeliberate acts, which are all vital acts, as they say in the Schools, and come immediately from our faculties, some from the understanding, others from the will, but they come necessarily and without freedom; that is why they are neither good nor bad, and God neither rewards nor punishes them.

According to the entire Roman Church, regenerating grace acts in this manner in the baptism of infants. All the infused habits of faith, hope, and charity are conferred upon them, the indelible character is added, without any act on their part, without them even being able to perform any. Is there much likelihood that those who hold these opinions would take it upon themselves to accuse us of harming freedom by a dogma that does not make the sinner act either with freedom or without freedom? Would they not thereby do what Jesus Christ reproaches the Pharisees for: Seeing the speck in their neighbor's eye and not feeling the beam in their own?

Moreover, are these the only occasions in which God acts physically, immediately, and invincibly upon a soul? Does He not do so every time He creates one and unites it to a body? Does He not do so when, resuscitating a dead person, He reunites the soul to the body it had left? Does He not do so when He preserves it, especially in the view of those who maintain that this preservation is a continued creation and a true reproduction? Does He not do so every time He observes that part of the laws of the union of the soul with the body, which requires that such a movement of certain parts of the body be followed by such a thought of the mind? Does He not do so in ecstasies, in all indeliberate acts, and particularly in those terrors that are called Panic? Does He not do so when, receiving in heaven the souls of His Faithful, He communicates to them what is called the Light of glory, *Lumen gloriae*, by which He elevates their faculties to a degree of activity much greater than that which they had on earth? Does He not do all this without harming freedom? Why then could He not do something similar in the conversion of the sinner!

But to completely remove this small difficulty, it is good to take the matter from a bit higher up and to note that freedom is a quality that is attributed sometimes to persons, sometimes to actions. We say that a man is free, we also say that he acts freely, and that such an action he does is a free action. The freedom of the person is the power that this person has to do or not do certain actions. The freedom of the action is that which is found in each action done by a person who had this power and who exercised it.

When, therefore, one asks if some species of necessity ruins or does not ruin freedom, one can mean two things. One can first ask if this species of necessity deprives the person himself of this power, or if it leaves him in possession of it. One can, secondly, ask if, assuming that this power always subsists, a particular action that this person does is a free action.

It is certain that we can lose this first species of freedom in several ways. We can lose it absolutely and in all respects, even forever, at least for the whole of life. This is what happens in several illnesses from which one never recovers, for example,

when one dies of apoplexy, lethargy, and in several species of madness, which last without interruption and without respite until the grave. We can lose it absolutely and in all respects, but only for a time, as happens in sleep, in fits of epilepsy, in synopes, and in certain species of madness, which leave lucid intervals. We can lose it only in certain respects and retain it in other respects. For example, a man who is taken to prison goes there against his will, and when he is there, he cannot leave. He thus loses freedom in this respect, but he preserves it in other respects. In his prison itself, he can speak and be silent. He can walk in his room, stop, rise, sit down, etc.

As for the freedom of actions, it perishes every time these actions are the consequences of an invincible and involuntary ignorance, every time one is forced into them, every time one is invincibly determined by a power to which it is physically impossible to resist.

How then does one understand what is opposed to us, that what we say concerning the production of the new inclination destroys our freedom? Does one understand that God, in producing it in such a way, deprives us, strips us of our personal freedom, so that from that moment we cease to be free, as we were before? This imagination would have something ridiculous about it. It is so far from true that the production of the new inclination deprives us of this freedom that, on the contrary, it increases it. It frees us from our vices, our passions, our ignorance, which restricted it, and puts us in a state to do a hundred things that were morally impossible for us.

Does one understand that by this God makes us act without freedom? But how could one say that, since according to us the sinner acts neither freely nor without freedom in this first moment of conversion? "Habet se merè passivè," our Theologians ordinarily say. God alone acts then, and man only suffers. He is only the subject of God's action. Thus, one cannot say that God makes us act without freedom.

Let this objection therefore be made to the Lutherans and the Molinists, who say that God excites in us indeliberate acts. But let one be careful not to make it to us, since we posit nothing of the sort.

Gust. Phil. Morl, Theologian of Altorf, in Vindication of Lutheran Doctrine, page 81, writes: "Most clearly of all, however, Joach. Hildeb. and Joh. Frider. Konig express this matter, of whom the former in his Sacred Institutions, Disputation XV, § 20, writes thus: 'The primary first motions of grace, as they are indeliberate, so they cannot be prevented.' The latter, moreover, in his Positive Acroamatic Theology, which is publicly read and explained in various Academies, S. 10, says thus: 'As for the first motions excited by prevenient grace, they are inevitable because they cannot be prevented from arising.' Heilbrunner also adds in his Inaugural Disputation on the Father's Drawing, held under the presidency of D. Jog. Schmid at Strasbourg, p. 23: 'If we consider the moment of time before God's drawing, we by no means deny that there is found in man something involuntary and repugnant. For

through the drawing itself, God makes from one unwilling willing, from one repugnant consenting, from one resisting coming.' And p. 38: 'Vivification (he speaks of the first motions) is nothing other than the bestowal of supernatural powers, and in respect of it man holds himself purely passively, and necessarily feels the first motion of operation, and is unable to ward off its assistance and presence as to feeling...' D. Olearius in his Synopsis of Calvinist errors, p. 23, § 43: 'The grace of God is sufficiently given to all for the possibility of conversion: of external knocking, or persuasion to believe, it is granted insuperably, so that no one can fail to feel those inevitable first motions excited by prevenient grace.' Finally, also D. J. A. Osiander, Theologian of Tübingen... in his Disputation on the Aids of divine grace, § 23: 'As for the first sense and impulse of grace, this prevenient grace is irresistible.'

"The Remonstrants in their Synodal Writings concerning art. 4, page 62: 'Someone might perhaps object that from our deduction it can be concluded that we establish no other grace in the regeneration of man than moral: But we answer that this is by no means rightly concluded. For we say that the power of believing is conferred before all things through irresistible grace.'"

CHAPTER IX. Response to an Objection.

I do not doubt that two things will be opposed to what I have just said. It will be maintained first that Scripture is formally contrary to what I say. I say that God acts immediately upon our soul to convert us, and Scripture tells us that He acts by His word. It says that Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, that this word is the scepter of this great King, which subjects our minds and our wills to Him, that it is the principle and the seed of our regeneration, etc. It will be said secondly that if God acted immediately upon our soul, His action would in no way be different from Enthusiasm.

I could dispense with answering these Objections. Indeed, the issue here is not to know if what we maintain is true, but only to know if it harms our Freedom. To clarify the first of these questions, it would be necessary to compose a complete Treatise on Grace, which I have taken care not to undertake. I have limited myself to the second, which these objections do not concern. Nevertheless, as they readily present themselves to the mind, I will examine them, the first in this chapter, and the second in the following.

I say then on the first that one can understand two things by the terms conversion and regeneration. One is the assembly of all that is done in us when we pass from the state of sin to the state of Grace. The other is that internal operation of God upon our soul, which prepares it and disposes it to profit from the word that is preached to it, which opens the heart to put it in a state to hear what is said to it, which gives the increase at the time when men plant and water.

I admit that, taking these terms in the first of these senses, God converts and regenerates us by His word, which alone proposes the motives that determine us to

do what it requires of us. It is only in the second sense that I say that the action of God is immediate. It seems to me even that it is impossible to conceive it otherwise, at least if one grants me what I suppose, that the word will be without effect if God does not dispose the heart to receive it. Indeed, it is not by the word that God disposes the heart to receive the word, just as it was not by the light that Jesus Christ disposed the blind whom He healed to receive the impression of the light. He prepared them for it, not by the light itself, but by a secret and powerful operation, which reformed their organs and put them in a state to be actually enlightened when the light would strike them. It is not likewise by His word, but by an immediate operation of His power, that He disposes us to receive this word, to believe what it attests, and to practice what it prescribes.

One can also say that God converts us by His word because this word is one of the means that He uses to prepare us for the reception of this internal and immediate Grace that converts us. Everyone knows that according to the Theologians of England Deputed to the Synod of Dort, the conversion of the sinner does not ordinarily take place in a moment. Almost always, God follows in this the maxim that reigns everywhere, which is to make subjects pass from one extremity to the other only little by little and by insensible progress. As therefore we pass from day to night, and from night to day, only by the interposition of twilight, which leads by degrees from one of these extremities to the other, the same thing happens in the conversion of the sinner. God prepares him for it little by little, and by several repeated acts, the repetition of which He does not interrupt until this work is completed.

This can be observed in the History of the conversion of St. Augustine, which he himself relates in his Confessions. Before the hand of God performed this great miracle in the garden where His Providence had led this sinner, it had worked for the space of three years, or thereabouts, to prepare him for it. It had caused various movements to arise in his heart that disposed him to what happened to him subsequently, a vivid feeling of the sad state in which he found himself, salutary fears of the just judgment of God, a thousand distastes for sin, violent desires to free himself from it, many resolutions made to work at it with all his strength, several efforts made with this design, an extreme confusion at not being able to succeed, tears shed abundantly, fervent prayers, by which he implored the help of God. However, he did not advance much. He fell from time to time into these same faults that he detested. He was always a slave to his vicious habits, until finally God converted him and changed him entirely.

What are, someone will perhaps say, the means that God uses to prepare the sinner thus for conversion? I answer that He has several, but the two most considerable are His word on the outside and the operations of His Spirit on the inside. There are, say the Theologians of England, certain interior effects that precede conversion and that are excited by the efficacy of the word and of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of those who are not yet justified. "There are certain internal effects preceding

conversion, or regeneration, which are excited by the virtue of the Word and the Spirit in the hearts of those who are not yet justified." Ad. 3. & 4. art. pag. m. 128.

The word is thus one of the principal means that God uses to prepare sinners for conversion, and this appears by the very example that I have just reported. For one of the things that contributed most to exciting in the soul of St. Augustine the movements of which I have spoken, were the preachings of St. Ambrose.

But that being so, should one be astonished if Scripture tells us that God converts us by His word, since it is by this word that He begins and completes this great work? Thus what Scripture says on this subject has nothing opposed to what we maintain, and in this way it appears that this first objection has no force.

CHAPTER X. Response to a second objection.

It is objected to us secondly that this immediate action of God upon our soul, which gives it new inclinations, would be a true Enthusiasm, if it took place. But this objection seems to me so unreasonable that I do not understand what it is that one can base it on. Indeed, I know only three senses that have been given until now to this way of speaking.

The Greeks, who are the first who used it, and from whom others have borrowed it, understood by it a transport and a fury, caused by some Divinity, which led to doing certain actions so extraordinary that they appeared insane. That is why H. Etienne, wanting to define Enthusiasm, says that it is the divine inspiration of a fanatical fury. "Furoris fanatici, seu divini, afflatus."

As one saw something similar in the Prophets, whom God raised up for His ancient people, witness what happened to Saul when he was going to consult Samuel, this way of speaking has been employed to designate these ecstatic transports, which agitated the ancient Prophets, and which made them not at all masters of their actions.

In ordinary language, one understands by it those noble sallies of a beautiful and rich imagination that sometimes make great Orators and first-rate Poets say things so sublime and so surprising that they appear in some way inspired. That is the only sense that the Dictionary of the Academy gives to this way of speaking, defining Enthusiasm as an extraordinary movement of mind, by which a Poet, an Orator, or a man who works from genius, rises in some sort above himself.

In the language of Theologians, an Enthusiasm is an immediate inspiration, which without any exterior word that strikes the senses, presents interiorly to the mind ideas that teach it what it was ignorant of. One can relate to this all the inspirations of the ancient Prophets. For example, that of Isaiah, when this Prophet having just warned Ezekiel that he was going to die, and crossing the court of the Palace to withdraw, God ordered him to return and go tell this Prince that He granted him fifteen more years of delay. For example again, that of St. Paul, when having asked

up to three different times to be freed from the vexations of the Demon, God answered him, "My Grace is sufficient for you, and my virtue is accomplished in infirmity."

That is what Jesus Christ made the Apostles do, when He sent them the first time with orders to preach the Gospel in Galilee. "You will be led," He said, "before the Governors and before the Kings... But when they deliver you up, do not be anxious about what you will have to say, or how you will speak, because in that moment it will be given to you what you will have to say. For it is not you who speak, but it is the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you." Matt. X. 18. 19.

The low voice of the Schwenkfeldians and the internal light of the Quakers would also be Enthusiasms, if there were any reality in what they say about them, and if they were not vain imaginations produced most often, and almost always, by the somber vapors that melancholy exhales. That is why also they are ordinarily called Fanatics. For as I have said elsewhere, Fanaticism is nothing other than an imaginary Enthusiasm.

Those who make the objection that I am examining do not take this word in either the first of these senses or in the second. If they did, their pretension would be ridiculous. For what relationship can there be between these two senses and what we maintain? There is no doubt that the sense they give to this expression is the third, and thus their thought is that what God does according to us is an immediate inspiration.

But on what do they base this pretension? Do we say that God interiorly reveals the least thing to the sinner? Do we say that He presents to his mind any new idea, any idea even whatever it may be, old or new, as it is certain that He does in Enthusiasms?

What can give rise to this error is that in the operation that we attribute to God, as well as in Enthusiasm properly so called, God acts immediately upon the soul. But who does not see that this characteristic is too general to authorize giving the same name to all the subjects in which one observes it? How many immediate actions of God are there not upon the Angels, upon the Demons, and upon the Souls, both united to the body and separated, which are neither inspirations, nor revelations, nor Enthusiasms? How many have I not indicated in the preceding chapter? And how many would it not be easy for me to add to them?

I have in my hands the extract of a letter from M. Pajon, which he communicated to me with some other writings shortly before his death, where he admits that we cannot be accused of favoring Enthusiasm. But he substitutes another accusation for this one, and he believes it incomparably stronger than the other. It is to posit brute and blind impulses. "Enthusiasm," he says, "is possible, God has given it to the Prophets and to several Faithful of the primitive Church. He could still give it today if it pleased Him. But the brute and blind impulse in our soul is impossible and contradictory, our soul not being any more capable of a blind impulse than a body

destitute of feeling and reason is capable of Enthusiasm. An Enthusiasm is a knowledge that God pours immediately into our soul, by forming ideas in it without the ministry of any exterior object, or even of any interior object, that pre-existed there. But the blind impulse, since it is blind, cannot consist in knowledge, which is the life and the light of the soul, etc."

What he says about Enthusiasm is very true. As for what he adds concerning the impulses that he calls blind, one could perhaps contest it, but I am careful not to undertake it, all that not being part of my subject, and having moreover no relationship with the sentiment that I defend, and which posits, not passing impulses, but the creation of something fixed, durable, and permanent.

CHAPTER XI . What is the necessity of the acts by which the sinner converts.

I come now to the last question which tends to know what is the necessity with which the sinner, touched by God, & drawn to him by the new inclination, that Grace has put in his heart, turns to him by the acts of faith, repentance, & love, which put him in that happy state, that we call the state of Grace. I suppose indeed that this is done necessarily, so that it has never happened, & that it will never happen, that a sinner thus prevented, assisted, & strengthened, persists in unbelief & impenitence. If that were it would be necessary that the will of God remain without execution. It would be necessary to erase from Scripture all the passages that tell us that he does all that he pleases in heaven & on earth, & that there is no one who can resist his will. It would be necessary to acknowledge that it is contrary to all truth that we attribute to him an infinite wisdom, & a power without limits. Indeed such wisdom easily finds enough means to succeed in all the designs it forms, & such power overcomes without any effort the obstacles that can oppose it. Thus to not take away from him the glory of these two high perfections, it is necessary to admit that he infallibly converts all those he undertakes to convert, & that as St. Augustine says, his grace is never rejected by any heart, however rebellious, & however hard it may be, because it is only given to tear out at the root this hardness, & this rebellion. **This grace is rejected by no heart, however hard. For it is given for this, that the hardness of heart may be taken away from the first.**

But what is this necessity? All that I have said up to here has shown clearly enough that it is by no means a physical or metaphysical necessity. For first if it were, the acts that this necessity would accompany would not be free acts. Indeed I have proved strongly enough, if I am not mistaken, that such a necessity is directly opposed to liberty, so that it is impossible that an action be free being thus necessary. As therefore it is beyond doubt that the acts by which the sinner converts himself are, free, good, & praiseworthy acts; as we admire them, that God approves them, & rewards them, it must be taken for certain that if they are necessary, they are not physically so.

Moreover experience, & our own feeling, sufficiently justify that they are not. Indeed we easily do, without effort, without pain, & without repugnance, the physically necessary acts. We do not do violence to ourselves in loving ourselves, & in consenting to be happy. But it is not the same with renouncing sin, & other similar acts. It is necessary to constrain oneself, it is necessary to inconvenience oneself, & to do violence to oneself to produce them. Does this alone not prove that they are not done with an entire necessity?

Finally physical necessity is such, that with whatever effort one should try to overcome it, one could not succeed in it. Let a man troubled with the stone, with the gout, or with sciatica; strive as much as he pleases to not feel pain, he will not be able to accomplish it. But it is not the same with the acts that convert the sinner. If he should make his efforts to not produce any, it is beyond doubt that he would succeed. For if he should make them in not wishing to make them, he would not convert himself in making them, the conversion of the sinner not being able to be but voluntary, & there being a contradiction in posing that an act done with regret can be praiseworthy.

One can even be assured that if God had wished, for example, that the acts of our faith be physically necessary, he would have given more evidence to the proofs that justify that it is he who has revealed what we believe. If he had wished that we love him with a similar necessity, he would have made himself known more clearly, & so on with the rest. He would have done in grace what we know that he does in glory. He would have in a word proportioned the means to the end.

Not having done it, there is reason to believe that this was not his intention, & that he solely proposed to make that the acts that convert us, be morally necessary.

It is beyond doubt that he could give to his Grace the degree of efficacy that pleased him. And what can there be more reasonable than to think that that which he has effectively given to it, is that which is followed by a moral necessity.

Indeed a stronger efficacy would have been fatal to liberty, & a weaker one would not have responded enough to that sovereignty & to that empire, which it is so just that he have over his creatures.

Whatever the case may be one cannot prove the contrary. Let one not tell me indeed that it is not credible that the new inclination that carries us to do good actions, being produced by an operation which it is impossible to resist, the acts to which it carries us come to be formed but with a necessity simply moral. How many times has one not seen something much stronger?

Every time that God has resurrected some dead person, he has submitted to his will the use of a very great number of powers & faculties, which he restored to him by an operation which it was physically impossible to resist, for example the power to speak & to be silent, that to walk & to stop, &c. I say the same thing of the blind whom he has healed, of the paralytics & the lame whom he has restored, &c.

If a power conferred by an action absolutely invincible, has been able to depend in its use on a will perfectly free & indifferent, why should a power conferred by a similar operation not be able to be subjected to a will bound by a necessity simply moral.

I do not therefore believe it possible to make it seen that the necessity with which we convert ourselves after grace has acted on us, is more than moral. I even believe I have proved sufficiently the contrary. Thus it being beyond doubt that moral necessity has nothing contrary to Liberty, I believe I have justified that the second of the dogmas that I indicated from the entrance of this Treatise, has nothing opposed to this privilege, which it has pleased God to grant us: So that when one disputes on the truth of this dogma, it is necessary to set aside this objection as a useless thing & which serves absolutely nothing to determine oneself thereupon, & if one undertakes to decide this question, it is necessary to found oneself on other principles.

III. DISSERTATION . Where it is shown that, neither the Providence of God, nor his Decrees, nor his Foresight, wound in any way our Liberty.

CHAPTER. I. Where the Liberty of Man is compared with the Providence of God.

It only remains for me to compare our Liberty with three subjects, with the operations of Providence on our Wills, with the eternal Decrees, by which God has resolved our actions, & with the certainty of the knowledge that he has always had of all that we were to do.

But after what one has read in the preceding Dissertation there remains to us almost nothing to say on the first two of these points.

It is first beyond doubt that in a great number of occasions, which have no relation to salvation, God acts efficaciously on the Wills of men, & carries them to do what pleases him. Solomon affirms it in particular with regard to Kings. The heart of the King, he tells us Pro. XXI. 1. is in the hands of God. He turns it to all that he wills as the course of the waters.

And indeed did he not incline the heart of Ahasuerus to protect his people persecuted by Haman? Did he not incline that of Cyrus to release this same captive people? Did he not incline that of Artaxerxes to give to Ezra the power to bring it back into Palestine? Ezra. VII. 27.

He has the same empire over the spirits & the hearts of individuals. Thus the sacred Historian teaches us I. Sam. X. 2. that the men of war, whose heart God touched followed Saul. Another tells us II. Chron. XXX. 12. that the favor of the Lord was in Judah to give them one same heart to do the commandment of the King, & of the principal ones.

Finally Nehemiah speaking of himself, says that God put it into his heart to assemble the principal ones & the Magistrates. Neh. VII. 5.

We know besides that nothing can resist efficaciously his Will, & that he would not be, as he is without difficulty, infinitely powerful, & infinitely wise, if simple creatures could elude his designs.

But, it is said, if that is what will become of our Liberty? And how shall we be able to accord it with the impossibility where we find ourselves to render any of his projects useless?

To answer this question it is necessary to remark that we do three sorts of actions, the good, the bad, the indifferent. The preceding Dissertation has shown clearly enough how it is that God carries us to do good without wounding our Liberty, without it being necessary to return to it: the following will prove that he never

pushes us to whatever is bad & criminal. Thus it only remains to us to consider what he does to carry us to indifferent actions by their nature, such as were most of those which I have indicated.

Someone will perhaps stop me in this place, & will say that although there are actions indifferent in their kind, & by their nature, there are none which are absolutely such as one does them, because the manner in which one does them draws them from this state of indifference, & renders them good or bad.

One will add that sinners could not do but criminal ones, & that thus God determining them to those which they render such, it is true to say that he determines them to evil.

This objection would not fail of force if God should determine, either mediately, or immediately, these sinners to that which renders their actions bad. But it is what he does not do. It is not God who pushes them to it. It is they themselves who carry themselves to it freely, & by choice. Thus it is only they who are the Authors of it. It is what one will see more distinctly in the sequel.

Let that be, one will say perhaps, that this action of God does not interest his purity. Does it not wound at least our Liberty? For is it not true that it is impossible for us to resist him?

I answer that that depends on the manner in which he determines us. If it is by a physical operation, the action to which he will determine us in this manner will not be free, & I would not dare to say that this never happens. How indeed would it be possible to know it? I say only that if God does it sometimes, the action which he carries in this manner to do, will be worthy neither of blame, nor of praise, no more than those undeliberated acts, of which we have spoken in the preceding Dissertation.

But if God determines to it but morally, as happens, either always, or almost always, what he does has no difficulty. For as one has seen it in the preceding Dissertation, our Liberty is not at all wounded when God acts on us but in this manner, I mean to say in proposing to us objects, & motives, which determine us.

Now who can doubt that it should not be very easy to God to find them & to employ them of such, & to choose them in such a manner that he should know with certitude that they will produce their effect?

He can even do it in several fashions. He can inspire himself immediately the thoughts which determine the mind & the heart. He can make appear certain objects, which will make them be born. He can make them be proposed by others. In a word he has for that a thousand ways, & a thousand means, & we must not fear that he should lack any.

It is necessary besides to remark that we are not here by a great deal as constrained as when it is a question of the operations of Grace. When one speaks of these last, it is necessary to take care not to give too much to man, & not to leave him the least

part of the glory which returns to God from the conversion of the sinner. Here we have more liberty, there being nothing to fear, provided that one give no blow to the ' power of God.

Thus all that the Congruists put forward on the subject of Grace, & that we cannot admit in this regard there, can be of use when it is a question of according the Liberty of man with the efficacy of the operations of Providence.

CHAPTER II. Where one compares our Liberty with the permissive Decrees of God.

The few reflections that I have just made on the operations of Providence, will suffice without doubt to make it seen that they do not wound our Liberty. Thus I will not stop there any longer, & I will pass to the consideration of the Decrees of God, to see if they have any opposition to the Liberty of man.

I remark first that there are two orders of them, permissive, & effective. By the first God resolves, neither to do himself what he resolves in this fashion, nor to push, induce, or determine men to do it, as happens in the effective Decrees but simply not to prevent men, or the other free & intelligent agents from doing it, in case they find it proper.

Such was the Decree by which God resolved to permit the first sin of men & Demons. Such also is that by which he has resolved to permit generally all those which have been committed by the ones & by the others in consequence of their fall. For as God actually pushes no one to sin, as one will see in the sequel, he resolves not also to do it.

As he does nothing in time, which he has not resolved from all eternity, he has also resolved nothing in eternity which he does not execute in time. These two things always follow each other, & there is nothing which can separate them.

This permission supposes that if God wished it, he could prevent that same which he lets happen, & it is also a truth which cannot be contested, & which is not even, as one has been able to see it in another work. Indeed God is All-powerful, & nothing can oppose itself efficaciously to his will. Thus if he does not prevent something, it is because he finds it proper to let it happen.

But here is something more important. One asks if the permission of God is necessarily followed by the permitted action. Many people believe it, & on this foundation persuade themselves that the first men & the Demons fell necessarily by that same that God did not find it proper to prevent their fall. Their principal reason is that there is a visible relation between the permission & the permitted action, & that each one knows that the things which have relations the one to the other pose themselves & take themselves away mutually. Related things mutually posit and remove each other.

I have reason to believe that that is but a quibble of the School, & I can prove it by an example which could not be more similar. Indeed the permission of right, both divine & human, & the human permission in fact, are two beings as relative as the divine permission in fact. However neither the one, nor the other of the first two is necessarily followed by the permitted action. The reason therefore which one takes from this property of relative beings has no solidity.

But to say what I think of it, I fear that that may be but a simple question of words. Indeed this reason will have, neither force, nor likelihood, if one forms the question in another manner, & if instead of asking if the permission is necessarily followed by the permitted action, one contents oneself with asking if it is necessary & inevitable that an action should be done in supposing simply that God does not prevent it.

In proposing thus the question each one will answer first, & without hesitating that there is no necessity. For how many things are there not that God does not prevent, & which with that will never happen?

As therefore the question is always the same in whatever manner one proposes it, it is clear that all the difficulty which there can be in this it is to know if it is necessary to employ the term to permit, when it is a question of an action which God does not prevent the free agents from producing, & which they do not do, which is but a pure question of words.

It will be more real & more important, supposing that one asks if from that God does not prevent an intelligent creature from sinning, it follows necessarily that it will sin.

To take it thus it will be necessary to distinguish the diverse orders of subjects to which the question can be applied. If it is a question of an innocent creature, such as were the first men, & all the Angels, when they issued from the hands of their Creator, it will be necessary to say determinedly that the permission is not necessarily followed by the permitted action.

If it were it would be necessary to believe that men & Angels, still innocent, were of themselves, & by the primitive & original constitution of their nature, determined to sin. For finally if being considered in this manner, & without the help of God, they could equally sin, & not sin, it would follow as little from that God would not have given them this help, that they would sin, as it would follow that they would not sin from that he would not push them to sin.

And if God not acting on them, neither to carry them to sin, nor to prevent them from doing it, it was certain & infallible that they would sin, it would appear clearly by that that they were of themselves, & by all that they had received from the hand of God, determined to sin, which would differ in nothing from Manichaeism, & would confound the state of innocence with the state of sin.

There is therefore very little accuracy in the reasoning of those who claim that from that God permitted the first sin, it followed necessarily that men & Demons would fall into it. This consequence is very badly drawn, since notwithstanding this

permission of God men & Angels always had the power to persevere, that to fall, & nothing prevented that they should not reduce it to act, as it would please them.

If, it is said, one simply ceases to hold up a stone that one holds it will fall. I agree with that. But why will that happen? It is because the stone is determined by its weight to fall. For if what I hold in my hand is not determined in this fashion to move itself towards the center of the earth, if it is, for example, a living bird, it is very possible that it does not fall, on the contrary it is more than probable that it will fly away.

If in the same way the creature was determined of itself to sin, it would suffice that God did not restrain it in order to make it sin. But as it is not, it is very possible that it persists in innocence, without this help.

I do not say quite the same thing of men & Demons already fallen into crime. As the ones & the others are determined to evil since they have lost innocence, the simple permission is more necessarily followed in them by actual sin than in the innocent creature.

However determined men may be to sin in general, they are not at all to each particular sin. As we have seen in what precedes, they are quite free in this regard. Thus it is very possible that a sinner who finds the occasion to commit a particular sin, & whom God abandons to himself, without restraining him by his grace, either sanctifying, or reprimanding, abstains from it voluntarily of himself.

As for what regards, sin in general, I have nothing to add to what I have said of it in the first Dissertation.

CHAPTER III. Where our Liberty is compared with the effective Decrees.

It is not necessary to dwell any longer on the permissive Decrees. I come to the effective ones, which appear more opposed to Liberty. For, it is said, if God has resolved that we will do something, it is certain & inevitable that we will do it. And if that is with what Liberty will we be able to do it? For, as we have seen, to act freely it is necessary to have the power not to act.

This difficulty does not appear to me very considerable after what we have seen in the preceding Dissertation. It is necessary indeed to distinguish two things in each Decree, its formation, & its execution. If there were one of these two things which must wound our Liberty, it would not be the first, but the second. The reason for it is that this second is the only one which influences positively & really on its object. It is when God executes a resolution that he has taken touching what we will do, it is then, I say, that he acts on us, not when he takes it. Consequently it is then that he can wound our Liberty, not in forming simple resolutions.

Indeed these resolutions not yet executed, do not really influence their object, which does not even actually exist, & which consequently being nothing, can receive no influence, nor be the term of a physical action.

Moreover the resolution is one of those acts, which one names immanent, & which not going out of the cause which produces them, do not pose anything real in that which is their term.

And indeed if, by an impossible supposition, the Decree should remain without execution, being revoked, or otherwise, it is clear that it would not wound in the least our Liberty, so true it is that if there is something which wounds it, it is the execution.

Even if all should concur there, it would nevertheless be inconceivable that the formation of the Decree should contribute to it more than the execution. It is also a thing that I do not fear that one denies me.

If therefore the execution of the Decrees of God does not wound our Liberty, their formation will not do it. Now it is beyond doubt that the execution of the Decrees of God leaves our Liberty entire. This is what we have seen in the preceding Dissertation. It is therefore necessary to necessarily recognize that the Decrees do not ruin it, & that thus this difficulty is very little thing.

I am sure that this will not be contested by the Molinists. They do not deny that God gives the Graces which they name congruous, in the design of converting those to whom he grants them, & that thus he resolves absolutely their conversion. However they do not claim that this resolution interests in the least the Liberty, for this reason that the congruous Grace, which executes it, leaves the Liberty entire.

If therefore what he does according to us in determining us efficaciously, but morally, to conversion, does not wound any more the Liberty, as we have seen it in the preceding Dissertation, & as the Molinists recognize it, they will not claim that the Decree, which this Grace executes, makes this effect.

What must one therefore answer to the proposed difficulty, will perhaps someone say. Here it is in a word. If God has resolved our conversion, it is certain that we will convert ourselves, & if that is still, it is necessary that our conversion arrive. This is what cannot be contested. But all necessity is not contrary to Liberty. Physical necessity annihilates it, the thing is certain, but, as we have seen, moral necessity does not wound it.

Thus all is reduced to knowing what is the necessity that there is that the Decrees of God execute themselves. I say on that that this necessity is not always the same. It is sometimes physical, & sometimes moral, according to the nature & the quality of the means that he employs for the execution.

When this execution is made by means which operate physically, the necessity which is born from it is a physical necessity. When on the contrary these means operate only morally, the necessity which is found there is only moral. Thus the

conversion of the sinner being operated by means which act morally, its necessity is a moral necessity, which has nothing contrary to Liberty.

CHAPTER IV. Where one begins to compare our Liberty with the Prescience of God, in proposing the difficulty that one has the design to examine in the rest of this Dissertation.

It only remains to me to compare the Prescience of God with our Liberty. As this comparison does not fail to have its difficulties, & that we have thereupon Adversaries who do not lack subtlety, I propose to insist there a little more than I have done on the Decrees & on the operations of Providence.

All Christians, with the reserve of the Socinians alone, hold unanimously that God foresees the most contingent future, & in particular the free acts of men, either good, or bad. However one has difficulty according this Prescience of God with the Liberty of the creature.

For, it is said, if God foresees this kind of future, at least if he foresees it with certitude, as one believes it commonly in Christianity, it is impossible that the Prescience deceives him, & consequently that what he has foreseen does not arrive in its time.

For if it were possible that what God has foreseen should not arrive, it would be possible that he should be deceived, which destroys the supposition, & is besides directly opposed to the entire & absolute perfection, which is essential to the supreme Being, whom one conceives ordinarily only as a Being supremely, & infinitely perfect.

If besides it is impossible that what God foresees does not arrive, how can what he foresees be Free? For finally all that is free can be done, & not be done, & what cannot not happen is by that same necessary, & consequently has no Liberty.

The difficulty rolls on three sorts of free actions that we can do, on the good, on the bad, & on the indifferent, especially on those of these last two kinds. For for those of the first, since God determines us invincibly to do them, as we have seen in the preceding Dissertation, & that besides he has resolved from all eternity all that he does in time, two things appear to me indubitable on this subject.

The one is that it is easy for him to foresee all that we will do good, since we do it only because he has resolved it. The other is that neither what God does in time to convert us, nor what he has resolved thereupon from eternity, wounding our Liberty, as we have seen in what precedes, it is inconceivable that his Prescience, which influences still less than all that on our actions, makes this effect.

It is not the same with bad actions. God not determining sinners to them, one does not see what necessity they can have. And having none one does not understand at all how God can foresee them, especially how his foresight can have some certitude.

I say the same thing of indifferent actions, especially of those which have no apparent connection with any of our interests, & by that same are not at all in a state to move self-love, for example to sit or to walk when one is alone in his room, or in his garden, to turn to the right or to the left while walking, to eat sooner of one meat than of another equally good when one is at table. That appears so fully & so absolutely contingent, that one does not see what can be the foundation of the certitude that God has had of it from all eternity.

This difficulty has always appeared very embarrassing, & I have remarked in another place the pain that it has made to the Philosophers of Paganism. It has made no less to St. Augustine, who has worked much to solve it, & who has not been able to come to the end of it. Several even believe it insoluble; & M. de Beaulieu in particular, who has examined it with his penetration, his exactitude, & his ordinary candor, & who has collected all that one has said best on this subject, recognizes finally that there is therein something which surpasses him, & which exceeds even the reach of the human mind.

I have not the temerity to deny that the Prescience of God is an abyss, of which it is impossible to find the bottom. But I do not fail to maintain that one can solve sufficiently the objections that one opposes to this capital truth; at least in the manner that I have indicated in my Response to the two Objections, & I hope to make it seen in this same Dissertation, provided that it please God to sustain me & to lead me, as I pray him from the bottom of my heart.

CHAPTER V. That God foresees the most contingent future.

I have not undertaken to prove in this work the truths that one disputes us, but only to respond to some of the objections that one makes us. On this foundation it seems that I should not put myself in a state to make seen that God foresees the future, but only to show that one does not prove that he ignores it.

Nevertheless two things have determined me to try to do the first as the second. The one is that I hope to say on this subject certain things, to which one has not made much attention, & which can be of some use to spread some day on this matter. The other is that what I must say in this design will give us the means to clarify the difficulties that one makes us, & to make feel the weakness of the objections that one regards as the most triumphant.

Here in a few words what appears to me the most decisive on this question. First I remark that all the peoples of the earth have always believed that God foresees the future, & particularly the free acts of our wills.

The Pagans themselves did not doubt it, witness so many Oracles that one consulted everywhere thereupon. I say the same thing of the Holy Nation. Rebecca feeling that her two children pushed each other in her womb, went from this step to consult the Oracle, which answered her, Two Nations are in your womb, two peoples will go out

of your entrails. The one will be stronger than the other, the elder will serve the younger. Gen. XXV. 23.

David having made himself master of the city of Keilah, asks God if in case he makes some stay there, King Saul will come to besiege him there; & God answers him that what he fears will not fail to arrive. David asks a second question, & asks if in case he takes the resolution to sustain the siege the inhabitants of the city will be faithful to him; & God answers him that they will deliver him to his enemy. I. Sam. XXIII. 11. 12.

That proves strongly two things. The one is that one has always believed that God knew this kind of future; the other is that God himself has confirmed this opinion in answering neatly & precisely to this sort of consultations.

How indeed could he make understood more neatly that he saw what would arrive in the sequel, & particularly what men would do? If one was deceived in believing that he had this knowledge, did he not confirm this error by this proceeding? And was it worthy of him to do it?

But it is not all. Even without one consulting him he has predicted a hundred times what was to arrive. For example does not Jesus Christ predict to St. Peter that he would deny him three diverse times, before the cock crowed? Does he not predict more than once to Judas that he would betray him? Had not David himself predicted it several centuries before?

This same Prophet, & several others who have followed him, have they not marked neatly the principal circumstances of his death, of his sufferings, of his burial? The incredulity of the Jews, & the conversion of the Gentiles, are they not found indicated in a great number of Oracles of the Old Testament?

Thus can one contest that God has not a thousand times predicted the free & contingent actions of men? And if he has predicted them, can one doubt that he did not foresee them?

Indeed if God ignored the future, it would be of his Wisdom to suspend his judgment thereupon, & to refrain, not only from saying to others, but from thinking in himself, that such, or such a thing must arrive. To act otherwise would be to expose himself to a visible danger of deceiving himself, which the new Philosophers do not pardon to simple men, & which consequently would suit very little the Wisdom, & the infinite Holiness of God.

And if God formed no interior judgment touching the future, he would refrain himself still with more care from explaining himself thereupon. For besides that sincere persons say only what they think, two other considerations would demand that God abstain from speaking of it.

The one is that being able to arrive that the event should not respond to the prediction the men who would see it, would be by that strongly tempted to have thoughts & sentiments contrary to the profound respect which it is so just to have

for the supreme Being. The other is that in not taking this precaution, he would overturn all the certitude of our faith. For what would become of this certitude, if the word of God, which is its only foundation, could deceive us?

It is however true that he has explained himself thereupon. He has predicted an infinity of times the most contingent future, & in particular the free actions of men & Demons. Consequently it is necessary to say one of two things, either that he foresees very certainly such a future, or that he has in this regard less Wisdom & precaution than simple men, which I regard as an impiety.

It is not all. God has not only predicted the future. He has still boasted that he foresaw it. Witness what he says on the subject of Abraham, I know that he will command his children, & his house after him, that they keep the ways of the Eternal. Gen. XXVII. 19. Let one weigh this expression, I know. If God did not foresee the future he would not have employed it. He would have contented himself with saying, I think, I suspect, or I conjecture. But it is not thus that he explains himself. He says without management that he knows it.

He has gone still further. For wanting to convince the Israelites that the Idols that they adored were only false Divinities, he has given them this proof, it is that there was none of them which was in a state to predict certainly the future. "Produce your cause, says the Eternal, & bring the foundations of your cause. Declare the things which must arrive hereafter, & we will know that you are Gods. Isa. XLI.21.23.

Thereupon I make this Dilemma. Either this future that God defies the false Divinities to predict, is a necessary future, or a contingent future. If it is a necessary future, why is it that the false Divinities will not be able to foresee it, since St. Paul teaches us I. Cor. X. 20. that these false Divinities were Demons, & that these evil Spirits know without difficulty what there is necessary & immutable in nature?

If it is a contingent future, it is necessary of necessity that God know it. For if he ignored it, he would have in this regard no advantage over the false Divinities, & the Idolaters would have been able to retort this objection with all the force that it had against them.

How can one draw oneself from this embarrassment unless by recognizing, & that God foresees the future, & that there is only he alone who foresees it?

Here is another proof quite similar, & which appears to me very pressing. God commands the Israelites to listen with respect to his true Prophets, & forbids them to add faith to the deceiving discourses of those who would boast falsely of being sent from him. He even wants that one makes them die. Deut. XVIII. 20.

Nothing was more natural than to ask thereupon by what it is that one will be able to know the true Prophets, & to discern them from those who will attribute to themselves improperly this quality, it not being without that possible to do surely what God commands. This is why also God asks himself this question in the following verse.

If you say in your heart, How will we know the word that the Eternal has not said? There is the question, & here is the answer that God makes to it? When this Prophet there will have spoken in the name of the Eternal, & that this thing will not be, & will not come, this word there is that which the Eternal has not said to him, but the Prophet has said it by pride. Thus have no fear of it. verse. 22.

It is clear that God wants that one regards as a false Prophet, & that one punishes with death, every man whose predictions will have been belied by the event. What would there be more deceiving than this rule, if not only the Prophets, but God himself, did not foresee the future?

That posed it would have been able to easily arrive that the Prophets the most truly inspired would have prophesied falsely, in which case one would have been held, not only to reject them, & to despise their predictions, but still to make them suffer death. And is it conceivable that God had exposed, either his Servants, or their Judges to the danger, the ones of suffering, the others of doing this injustice?

Finally there is no doubt that the design in which the Holy Spirit has spread so many predictions in the Old & in the New Testament, has been that of convincing the Unbelievers & of confirming the Believers, in seeing the perfect conformity of the event & of the prediction. This is why also the Apostles, & those who have followed them, have so much made worth this proof.

But what force would it have if the contrary arrived? And could it not arrive very easily if God did not foresee the future, & spoke of it only on suspicions?

All that clearly makes seen that it is impossible that the predictions of God do not accomplish themselves exactly, & that God himself has supposed it in this way on all these occasions.

But it is not all. He has not only supposed it. He has said it expressly & formally. For example Jesus Christ coming to predict to his Disciples what was to arrive, according to some in the taking of Jerusalem, & the overturning of the Jewish polity; & according to the others at the end of the world, or even sooner in these two great events, which contain a great number of free actions, good & bad, says to them, Matt. XXIV.35. The heaven & the earth will pass, but my words will not pass. And Matt. V. 18. Verily I say to you that until the heaven & the earth have passed, one jot, or one Single point of the Law will not pass, that all these things be done.

What will there be more extreme, & less measured than this, if God knows the future only by conjecture?

CHAPTER VI. Where the same truth is proved in another manner.

I am very deceived if the decision of this question does not depend principally on knowing if there is truth & falsity in the propositions which express what one believes will happen; if for example before Judas betrayed Jesus Christ, & that St.

Peter denied him, it was true to say that this double crime would be committed in its time.

If one can justify that this was true, the question has no more difficulty, & one will easily agree thereupon.

For first if it was true that Judas must betray Jesus Christ, & that St. Peter must deny him, that was certain, & consequently the thing could not fail to happen. Indeed it is certain that each thing is what it is. It is a first principle, that no one can deny. However contingent a thing may be in itself, if one poses that it is, it is necessarily. Thus if these two propositions are true, it is certain that they are, & if it is certain that they are, they are themselves certain & indubitable.

But if these two propositions are true, certain, & indubitable, it is beyond doubt that God perceives their truth & certitude. For finally there is no doubt that God sees in each thing all that is there. If that were not what truth would there be in what the Apostle St. Paul says Heb. IV. 13. that there is no creature that is hidden before him, & that all are naked, & uncovered to his eyes?

If that were not how could one sustain that he knows all, & that his knowledge is without bounds? With what truth could one say it if there were actually existing things that he ignored?

Who does not know that it is with his knowledge the same as with his power, & that as he can all that is possible, he also knows all that can be known, such as is all that is true?

How even could one say that he knows perfectly each thing, if he did not see in each one of these things all that is there? Would he know perfectly true propositions, if he did not perceive their truth? In this supposition would the knowledge that he would have of them be comprehensive?

But it is not necessary to prove this, since the Socinians agree to it. They avow that if it was true that the contingent future must happen, God would know it infallibly, & they only deny that he knows it, because they deny with Aristotle that this is true.

They say that it is with the knowledge of God the same as with his power, & that as this power, although infinite, does not extend over the impossible, his knowledge also, although equally infinite, does not extend over what cannot be known, such as is what is not true. See Socin Praelect. cap. 8. §. Alterius rationis.

All therefore is reduced to knowing if there is effectively truth in this sort of propositions. For if one convinces the Socinians that there is, they will not deny that God sees it, as also on our side we will avow that he sees none there if there is none, it being equally impossible that he should not see in things what is there, & that he should see there what is not there.

Let us see therefore if one can prove to them that there is some.

One can say that this has been done more than once by the Scholastics who have treated this question. But as their proofs are all philosophical, & very abstract, few people are in a state to feel their force, & even to understand them well, I go to produce others, which are more proportioned to the capacity of all sorts of minds, & which being taken from Scripture, will suit better to a work of the nature of this one.

I. Here is the first. If these two propositions, Judas will betray Jesus Christ, & St. Peter will deny him, had no truth, there was at least temerity in uttering them, to affirm what they express. I say at least, because in effect I am persuaded that there is something more, & I hope to make it seen in the sequel. Here I reduce myself to simple temerity, which cannot, it seems to me, be contested me.

For who doubts that there is temerity in affirming what one does not know to be true? We do not know if the number of Angels is even, or odd, although we know that it is one or the other. Let us figure to ourselves that it is even, & that someone who ignores it affirms that it is. Affirming it at hazard, & without knowing it, he acts rashly, since it is clear that he exposes himself to the danger of deceiving himself, which a wise man must avoid.

It is however what Jesus Christ will have done in the hypothesis of the Socinians, in saying, as we have seen, that Judas would betray him, & that St. Peter would deny him. He will have said it without knowing that that must be, & not doubting that the contrary could happen, for the Socinians will not find it bad that we suppose him well instructed in all their system.

Let one judge after that if it is possible to excuse this double prediction, or to better say let one judge if there is not something more than simple temerity, if there is not impiety & blasphemy in sustaining the principle from which one can draw a consequence so detestable.

II. Each one knows that when Jesus said to St. Peter that he would deny him, St. Peter had the indiscretion to contradict his Master, & to sustain to him strongly that what he said would not happen. In the sentiment of the Socinians there will have been on the two sides an equal temerity, what Jesus Christ said not being more true than what St. Peter affirmed.

But would one dare, neither to say it, nor to think it? And what respect would one conserve for this great Savior, if one equaled in this the Disciple with the Master? Who can prevent himself, seeing Jesus Christ in opposition with a simple man, from crying out with an Apostle, Let God be true, & every man a liar.

III. It is certain that to affirm a thing, is to say, at least implicitly, that it is true. Thus Jesus Christ having said that St. Peter would deny him, he has said, at least implicitly, that this was true. It was necessary therefore that it was, for this great Savior could not lie, neither explicitly, nor implicitly.

IV. But here is something much stronger. Jesus Christ has said, not in an implicit manner, but expressly, & formally, not only that St. Peter would deny him, but still that it was true that this Apostle would make this fault. In truth, he says to him, you will deny me three times. He has expressed himself still more strongly on the subject of Judas reiterating this strong affirmation, & saying, Verily, verily I say to you, that one of you will betray me. John XIII. 21.

He assures therefore two diverse times, one after the other, that what he says of the treason of this unhappy one is true. How after that can one sustain that it was not? Is it not to belie him to sustain that there was no truth in what he said?

V. A little before, I mean at v. 13. Jesus Christ regarding the prediction of this same event, that one finds in Psalm XLI. says expressly that there is a necessity that the thing happen. It is necessary, he says, that the Scripture be accomplished, saying, He that eats bread with me, has lifted up his heel against me. And elsewhere taking up again St. Peter who had struck the Servant of the Sovereign Priest, How would the Scriptures be accomplished, which say that it is necessary that this happen thus? It is necessary; There is therefore not only truth, but still necessity.

It is not, I avow it, but a necessity of supposition. But also I ask no other, & I have no design to claim that it was an absolute necessity, not even an antecedent necessity.

VI. Finally if what Jesus Christ has said that Judas would betray him, & that St. Peter would deny him, was not true when he said it, he has said a thing which has never been true. Indeed it was not before the event, it is what one tells us; & neither in the time of the event, nor after, has it been able to be.

The only proposition which has been able to be true at the time of the event was this one, Judas betrays, & Peter denies. And that which has been it after the event is this one, Judas has betrayed Jesus Christ, & Peter has denied him.

But for this one, Judas will betray him, & Peter will deny him, it will have been true in no time, & will never be, which does very little honor to the veracity of this great Savior.

All that makes seen that there is truth & falsity in the predictions of the contingent future. Thus this truth & this falsity not being able to be unknown to God, it is beyond doubt that he foresees this future, which is what it was necessary to prove.

CHAPTER VII. Where the first Objection is proposed & one begins to examine it

I come now to what I have principally proposed to myself, which is to resolve the objections that one opposes to this capital truth, at least those which are taken from Reason, & which are the only ones which can make some pain.

Here is the first. If God foresees the future, especially if he foresees it with certitude, it is impossible that his foresight deceives him; & if that is it is impossible that what

he foresees does not happen. And if it is impossible that what he foresees does not happen, how can what he foresees be, either free, or contingent?

What is there more essential to Liberty than the power not to do what one does, & to contingency than the possibility of the contrary of what is effectively? If for example Jesus Christ has foreseen in this manner the treason of Judas, it has been impossible that Judas does not betray him. This unhappy one has not been able to prevent himself from committing this execrable crime. And if he has not been able, how has he been able to sin in doing what he has done?

Can one, neither sin without Liberty, nor conserve some Liberty in not being able to abstain from doing what one does?

It is not necessary indeed to imagine oneself able to elude this objection by the distinction, which has been of such great use to us in the preceding Dissertation; I mean that of the necessity & of the physical impossibility, & of the necessity, & of the moral impossibility.

Two reasons make seen that one cannot apply this distinction to our subject.

The first is that moral necessity does not suffice on this occasion, because the certitude of the Prescience must be more than moral, & perhaps even more than physical, for one believes commonly that it is absolutely & metaphysically impossible that God should be deceived.

The second reason is taken from what, as we have seen in chapter II. there are diverse events that God does not resolve to do & to produce himself, but only to permit them, & to suffer that they happen, which consequently have no necessity, neither metaphysical, nor physical, nor even moral. God nevertheless foresees them as certainly as the others. Consequently this distinction, which is so useful on other occasions, is of no use in this one.

This objection appears very embarrassing to all those who have not sufficiently deepened the question. But in the truth of the thing it is so feeble, that Crellius, who had no spare reasons, has formally disavowed it, & has complained that those who attribute it to those of his sect have not well taken their thought.

He says that they have never claimed that if God foresaw the future men would not act freely, but only that if men acted freely, God would not foresee the future. That means to say that if the actions of men were free & contingent, they could not be the object of a certain & infallible foresight, it not being possible to find a solid foundation for such a foresight. Here are his words. He reports first the response of those who sustain that the Prescience of God does not really influence the objects, & does not communicate to them any necessity that they do not have of themselves, after which he replies: "Those who respond in this way do not touch the knot, much less untie it...For we do not assert, nor do we conclude according to the common opinion, that divine foreknowledge of our sins is their cause. But from it, as from a certain effect, we infer that God—or His decree—is, as with other things, also the

cause of sins. For we reason in this way: First, from the determinate foreknowledge of future contingent events—which is believed to have existed in God from eternity—we infer that these contingents were, from all eternity, determinately going to occur. From this, we then conclude that there must have already existed from eternity a cause determined for bringing about all these effects. And such a cause, which has existed from all eternity, cannot be conceived to be anything other than God and His decree.” *Crell. de Deo. cap. 24. pag. m. 353-354-*

I will examine in its place this second objection, that he substitutes for the first, & will make seen that it is not more solid, although it is more specious. Here I content myself with remarking that according to this man, who did not lack subtlety, & who was not of humor to betray his cause, & to renounce voluntarily his advantages, this objection has no force, & that thus there is reason to believe that it is not what it appears.

Socinus weakens, or to better say annihilates it, in another manner. He recognizes that God can foresee with certitude our good works, although he does not believe that he can foresee also certainly our sins. Indeed according to him God can carry us so efficaciously to good actions, that we will do them infallibly, without they ceasing for all that to be free.

For answering the objection that one makes him on this question, & that one takes from what God says that he knows that Abraham will take care to instruct his children of the truth, & to form them early to piety, he answers that it is not necessary to find it strange, because what Abraham was to do was a good action, & that thus God could carry him efficaciously to do it, & consequently predict that he would do it, without interesting the Liberty of this Patriarch. Bona, he says, can therefore often be foreknown by God, because nothing prevents God from being the certain author of many good things which are done by man voluntarily—that is, not by coercion—even though necessarily. For this is what it means for God to be their author. (*Socinianus, Praelectiones, Chapter X*).

It appears by that that according to Socin the foresight of God does not at all wound the Liberty necessary to act morally. For finally he believes that it does not prevent that one does good actions, & each one knows that Liberty is as necessary for good as for evil, & that it is as impossible that an action done without Liberty should be good, as it is that it should be bad.

Thus this Heretic avowing, as he does, that an action foreseen can be good, he avows by that same that it can be free, & that thus foresight does not wound our Liberty.

CHAPTER VIII. Where one responds more directly to the first Objection.

But these are only prejudices, which do not fully lift the difficulty. Here is something more decisive.

We have seen in Chapter II. of the preceding Dissert. that the necessity which is born of a subsequent supposition does not wound in the least the Liberty: And indeed if it did the Liberty would be nothing but a chimera, there being absolutely nothing which is not necessary in this sense, as we have remarked in the same place.

What can I do more freely than to walk alone in my room? However if I do it it will follow from that alone a hundred diverse things, all necessary in this supposition. For finally if I walk, I move my feet & my legs. The animal spirits flow there by the conduits of my nerves. The muscles of these parts lengthen & shorten, swell & flatten successively. I approach one of the sides of my room, & I move away from the other. I change situation in relation to all the bodies which are found there. At each turn that I make what was to my right is found to my left, & what was to my left is found to my right, &c.

These consequences, & a hundred other similar, that one could draw from this sole principle, are necessary. But as this necessity is only subsequent, or at most concomitant, it does not prevent in any manner that my action should be free, & as free even as it can be.

Consequently if the necessity which is born of the Prescience of God is of the same order, it is clear that it will not wound our Liberty.

Now who can doubt that it is? For finally things do not happen because God foresees them, but on the contrary God foresees them because they must happen. It is what recognize, not only the Scholastics, but still the most rigid of our Theologians. See in particular Polan Syntagm. Theol. Lib. II. cap. 18. pag. m. 158. 159. The four Professors of Leiden in their Synops.pur. Theol. disp. XIV. n. 22.

Rivet in the second of his XIII. Disputes n. 16. Hoornbeek Socin. Confut. Tom. I. pag. 345. Maresius Hydra Socin. Tom. I. pag. 353. M. de Beaulieu Thef. Theol. pag. 441. M. Markius Compend. Theol. cap. 4. n. 40. M. Pictet Theol. Chrét. liv. VI. chap. 3.

I know that the imagination has difficulty relishing this truth. As the foresight of God is eternal, it seems that the necessity which it gives birth to is an antecedent necessity. But this is only an error of imagination, which Reason must correct, & which would not be pardonable to Philosophers.

It is important indeed to well remark that the anteriority & posteriority, which distinguish the necessity which is born of an antecedent supposition from that which results from a subsequent supposition, are by no means an anteriority & a posteriority of time, but uniquely an anteriority & a posteriority of nature.

One understands well enough what an anteriority or posteriority of time is. No one ignores that a thing is anterior with regard to time, when it happens sooner, & that it is posterior when it happens later.

The anteriority of nature is that which a cause has in relation to its effect. Thus the prick of a pin precedes the pain that we feel from it in the same moment, because it

is the cause of it. It is the same with posteriority. Every effect is posterior in this fashion to the cause which produces it.

When therefore one speaks of an antecedent supposition, or of a subsequent supposition, one has no regard to time. One stops only at nature. And indeed one regards as a subsequent supposition that of an effect which exists at the same time as its cause. It is for example, a subsequent supposition that of a man whom I see walking, although his movement, & the action of my eyes which perceive it, are done at the same time.

But because my sight does not make that he walks, & that on the contrary his movement makes that I see him walk, that thus his movement precedes my sight by an anteriority of nature, although it does not precede it with regard to time, this supposition passes ordinarily for subsequent, & has the properties & the characters of it.

I say the same thing of the thought, & of the feeling that one has of it. I feel that I think, & I feel it in the same moment that I think. But the thought which exists at the same time as the feeling that I have of it, does not fail to precede it in nature, because it is the cause of it.

It can even happen that the cause follows the effect with regard to time. It is what happens often on the subject of these causes, which one names moral. For example one believes commonly among us that the death of Jesus Christ has worked the salvation of the ancient Patriarchs, as well as that of the Christians who live in these last times. It has even worked it necessarily in a certain sense, & in making diverse suppositions.

Here is therefore an antecedent necessity, although what gives birth to it is the supposition of a cause which has followed the effect in the order of time. It is true that in this example the cause which is preceded by the effect is only a moral cause. But does one claim that a present object which God sees, is the physical cause of this sight?

When I act God sees my action. Is it that this action really & physically influences God? That would be ridiculous. It acts only in the manner of moral causes, & as one speaks at the School, only objectively, that is to say in terminating the knowledge that God has of it, & in being the object of the act by which he sees what I do.

If therefore a cause, of which the existence is posterior with regard to time to that of its effect, can make an antecedent necessity, why will an effect, which precedes the cause in this same sense, not be able to make a subsequent necessity?

And this posed what difficulty can there be in comprehending that such a necessity has nothing contrary to Liberty?

Several express this in another manner. They distinguish a double necessity, that of the consequent, & that of the consequence. They call necessity of the consequent that of the thing considered, either in itself, as that of the existence of God, or in the

manner in which it depends on its causes, such as is for example that of an Eclipse, which cannot fail to happen in consequence of the Laws which regulate the movement of the Planets.

They call a necessity of consequence that which comes uniquely from the connection which is found between two events, which can be both contingent; for example that I walk, & that in walking I move away from the place from which I have departed, & approach that towards which I go.

They say that there is only the necessity of the consequent which ruins Liberty, & that that of the consequence does not make the same effect. They add that the necessity which is born of the foresight of God is of the second order, & not of the first.

This response does not differ in the substance, from the preceding one, & one can use the two differently. For me I hold myself to the first, which appears to me a little more distinct, & less exposed to equivocations, & to misunderstandings, than the second.

One uses the second to sustain quite opposed hypotheses, & then each one understands it in his manner, which does not happen with regard to the first, of which the sense is precise & determined.

CHAPTER IX. Examination of the Second Objection.

The second objection is no stronger than the first: Here is how Socinus presents it. If God has infallibly foreseen all our actions, it must have been certain that we would do them, for how could He have foreseen them with certainty, if it had not been certain that they were going to happen? Now, since there is no effect without a cause, if from all eternity it was certain that we would perform these actions, there must necessarily have always been a cause of this certainty. But what could have been the cause of such an effect? Was it God's decree? If so, then God would be the author of our crimes. Was it the will of man? But how could that be, since neither man nor his will yet existed and were nothing but pure non-being?

Socin. Prælect. cap. XI. — *Socinus, Lectures, chapter 11.*

Many people claim that there is nothing to oppose in the first propositions of this objection, and that in fact it is impossible to find a foundation for the certainty of foreknowledge anywhere other than in the efficacy of God's decrees, which cannot fail to be carried out. Rivet, in particular, implies that this is precisely what led him to support the doctrine of *predetermining concurrence*. But these theologians do not realize that in seeking to save God's foreknowledge, they are abandoning without defense His holiness and His abhorrence of sin. For if He only foresees what He resolved in eternity, and to which He determines irresistibly in time, then it must be that He resolved sin, and that He positively determines those who commit it. This will be found to be true even with respect to the *formal* aspect of sin, as well as the

material, since He foresees both with equal certainty. As this consequence seems to me no less dreadful than the very error the Socinians try to support by this objection, it is absolutely necessary to take another approach, and employ other means to defend against them the truths we uphold—and this will not be difficult for us. Indeed, I have indicated in chapter III another foundation for the certainty with which God foresees events, one that in no way offends His purity. It is the combination of two undeniable things: the certain truth of propositions which express what is to happen in its time, and the **perspicacity** (if I may use the term) of the divine understanding, which is such that there is no truth, whatever it may be, that can escape His sight. Judas sinned in his time. Therefore it was true from all eternity that he would sin. Therefore, this truth could not have been hidden from the penetrating eyes of the Supreme Being. Therefore, He foreknew this sin very certainly, and foreseeing it, He was able to predict it. Thus, without resorting either to decree or premotion, one finds in the thing itself a firm and unshakable foundation for God's foreknowledge.

Let us now examine the various parts of Socinus's reasoning one by one, and see if they contain any truth. He says first that if God foresees our actions certainly, it must have been certain that we would do them. I admit this proposition, and I believe it is incontestable. I only say that this certainty comes neither from some absolute and metaphysical necessity, nor even from an antecedent necessity that would lie in the thing itself. It comes solely from a necessity of simple supposition, which is even a subsequent supposition. Supposing that man acts actually in time, however freely and contingently he does so, it is certain that he acts, and consequently, before he did so, it was true to say that he would do it. That is the whole certainty we attribute to that act, and we must be very careful not to imagine any other.

But, says Socinus, what could be the cause of this certainty? I reply: it is the act itself, which happens in its time, and the certainty with which it is true to say that one does it then. For as soon as one does it, it necessarily follows that it had been true to say one would do it.

That cannot be, says Socinus, for this certainty is from all eternity, and the act occurred only in time. Before that time, this act was only a pure non-being. How then could it act? How could it cause and produce certainty?

Nothing is easier than to respond to this objection. Firstly, I admit that this act could not produce that certainty by any **physical efficacy**, nor by any real and proper influence on its object. But nothing prevented it from doing so morally and objectively, as is said in the Schools—I mean by *terminating* God's knowledge.

Here is a demonstrative proof that this is possible: A past action exists no more, and is no less a pure non-being, than a future action. The betrayal of Judas, for example, no longer exists today. It is a pure non-being. Yet it is the object of God's knowledge.

It is even the object of our knowledge in its own way; it makes men detest it and God punish it presently in hell.

Saint Paul says that Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, feared and built the ark. These things not yet seen were the flood and the desolation it was to bring, twenty years after the warning he received. All of this did not exist at the time Saint Paul refers to—it was pure nothingness. Yet this nothingness frightened the holy Patriarch and effectively moved him to seek the means to avoid it. So true it is that what is nothing in itself can be the object of a knowledge that effectively moves to action.

It is good to add that if sin is nothing before being actually committed, it becomes something in the time it is committed. Now it is at that moment that it becomes the object of God's knowledge. I mean to say that God sees it as it will be then. Indeed, He sees it always, but He sees it as committed in its own time.

CHAPTER X. Wherein Some Other Objections Are Answered.

Besides these first two objections, some others are raised against us, which do not seem to deserve contempt. It is said, first of all, that if from all eternity it has been true to say that such and such an action will happen, one cannot avoid admitting the **Fate of the Stoics**, which is rightly regarded as the sponge that wipes out all religions. This Fate would bind God as well as man. For if from all eternity it was true to say that God would create the world, it was not possible for Him not to create it.

I reply that this objection would be strong if we admitted one or the other of these two things: Either that the acts of our wills were of themselves absolutely and metaphysically necessary, in the same way that it is necessary that God exists, Or that they were necessary as a result of the unalterable determination of their causes, which could neither fail to act, nor act otherwise. Under either of these suppositions, Fate would apply and bind everything without exception. But who says anything like that? We say that our wills are free, and determine themselves, so that a moment before they are determined, they could have acted differently from what they did. We only say that if they do act, then before they did so it was true to say that they would. That is all we maintain. And what connection does this have with the Fate of the Stoics?

The Fate of the Stoics was nothing other than a chain of many causes, all necessary and immutable, all determined by their own nature to produce certain effects. But do we say anything that comes close to that? Do we not say that our wills can choose various paths, and choose the one that pleases them most?

The second objection is that if God does nothing but foresee the action, without determining man to produce it, then it would not be impossible that even after God has not only foreseen but predicted it, man may not do it. Let us imagine, for example, that after Jesus Christ had told Saint Peter that he would deny Him, and

Judas that he would betray Him, these two apostles, to make a test of their liberty, had taken a firm resolution not to do what Jesus Christ said they would do. Would it not have been quite possible for them to carry it out? And in that case, would the prediction of Jesus Christ not have been proven false?

I reply in one word: if these apostles had been going to take and carry out that resolution, Jesus Christ would not have been ignorant of it, and knowing what was to happen, He would have refrained from predicting that one would betray Him and the other would deny Him. Thus, to suppose that the contrary of what God has foreseen will happen is to make a supposition not only impossible, but also foolish, absurd, and contradictory—therefore such that one should in no way be troubled by any consequences drawn from it. For as Aristotle very judiciously remarked, one need only posit one absurdity to give rise to many others which will be no more reasonable:

Una posita absurditate, multa sequentur absurda. — *"Once one absurdity is posited, many other absurdities will follow."*

It is in this way, I believe, that one must respond to another very embarrassing objection that has previously caused me extreme difficulty. Let us imagine that in the time when there was the Oracle that Scripture calls *Urim and Thummim*, someone had consulted it to know what he would do at such and such an hour and moment, and that before doing it, he had resolved in himself to do precisely the opposite of what the Oracle would say he would do—for example, to remain silent if the Oracle said he would speak, and to speak if the Oracle said he would keep silent. Now imagine that after that the Oracle spoke, and the one who consulted it persisted in his resolution—which seems very possible, and even quite likely, assuming that he was a curious mind seeking only to conduct experiments to discover the truth. Would he not have thereby made the Oracle lie? And is that not a monstrous absurdity, which it seems one cannot avoid in the hypothesis I am defending?

I reply in one word that the supposition is **impossible and contradictory**. Not that I believe it impossible for a man to make such a resolution, or even to persist in it as long as one wishes. But in positing that he makes it and is to persist in it, I believe it impossible that God would reveal to him what he is going to do. This, indeed, is impossible because what he is going to do is nothing—it is a pure contradiction. In fact, to say: *I will do the opposite of what God reveals to me* is to say: *I will do the opposite of what I will do*. For God can only reveal what He foresees, and He only foresees what will happen. So to say one will do the opposite of what God reveals is to say one will do the opposite of what one will do—which is clearly a contradiction.

The answer that such an Oracle would give in that case would be one of those propositions called **insolubles**, and of which it is said that they falsify themselves:

Se ipsas falsificantes — *"Falsifying themselves."* Like if someone were to say: *Everything I say is false*.

Thus, such propositions being essentially false and contradictory, it is impossible that they should express the thought of Him who is the only wise one, the God of truth, and the first truth.

CHAPTER XI. Where Twisse's Major Argument is Examined.

Doctor Twisse, whose subtlety is well known, raises against all this an objection to which he defies all the Scholastics to respond. This is why he repeats it on every page of his large book *De Scientia Media* ("On Middle Knowledge"). After him, many people considered it insoluble and presented it as such in their works. Here it is:

"Things are possible before they are future. Consequently, they cannot become future without passing from the state of simple possibility to that of futurity. This passage necessarily has some cause that produces it, and this cause can only be the will of God. For since it takes place in eternity, it can only have been produced by an eternal cause. And what is there eternal other than God?"

In my opinion, all this is of very little value. The first proposition, which is the basis of the entire argument, is clearly equivocal. For indeed, when one says that an event is possible before being future, one can understand this in two ways. One may mean, first, that it is so in itself, and from the perspective of the thing itself (*a parte rei*). One may mean, secondly, that it is so in our ideas, and according to our way of conceiving. If one understands it in this second sense, I will not bother to contest it. Whether it is true or false, it matters little to me. We conceive of things sometimes as we please, sometimes as we are able. We separate what is indistinct. We place before and after things that go together. But no conclusion can be drawn from this type of conception—partly arbitrary, partly constrained, but always imperfect and flawed—about the thing itself.

If one understands it in the first sense, as one must necessarily do to reason justly, then one is saying the most false—or rather the most absurd—thing in the world. For if events are future from all eternity, as is assumed, it is clear that nothing preceded their futurity. What could be older than that which never began? Thus this supposed passage from the state of possibility to that of futurity is a chimera that must certainly be avoided, far from being made the foundation of an objection.

But, one may say, setting aside this "passage," can it not be said that if an event is future, its futurity must necessarily have some cause? And can that cause be anything other than eternal, since the effect is eternal?

I have already responded to this objection. I have said that the cause of the futurity of the event is the event itself, which will occur in time, since it is not possible that it will occur without it being true beforehand that it would occur. I admit it is difficult to understand how an act that is produced only in time can be the cause of an eternal futurity. But that difficulty arises only from the habit we have formed since childhood of conceiving of simple relations—or even merely external

denominations—as absolute entities, which truly exist and begin to exist by the action of a cause that produces them in the same way that true beings are each produced by their cause.

If that were the case, what I am saying would be incomprehensible. But in reality, these are only vain and empty imaginations.

Two geometers, one in Beijing and the other in Paris, each draw a line on paper. Let us imagine that these two lines are each one inch long. At that moment, they are equal. So here is a very real and very true relation that these two lines have with each other, for it is very true that they are equal. This relation is twofold: The line in Beijing is equal to the one in Paris, and the one in Paris is equal to the one in Beijing.

Let us suppose that one was drawn just before the other. When the second is drawn, the first acquires a relation of equality with the second, which it did not previously have. Who produces this new relation? It is undoubtedly the one who draws the second line. But how can a man who does not leave Paris produce a relation in a subject that is in China?

The difficulty would be great if this relation were an absolute entity produced by an action that gives it real existence. But since it is only a simple relation, perhaps even a mere external denomination, which is not properly produced but results from the placement of something else in certain circumstances, the difficulty is nothing.

It is more or less the same with our subject. The futurition of a free act is nothing but a simple relation of conformity that exists between the act produced in its time and the knowledge that God has of it. This relation results from the placement of the act in its circumstances, and is not at all the term of a real action that physically produces it.

But I notice that all this is extraordinarily abstract and thus will be little to the taste of most of my readers—perhaps of all of them. Therefore, I leave it here, after asking my reader to consider that these obscurities are not to be imputed to me. I could neither conceal the objection nor make its material less dense. It had to be dealt with just as I found it.

ADDITION, Where it is proven against Spinoza that we are Free.

CHAPTER I. Where Spinoza's opinion is stated.

Everything I have said thus far sufficiently shows what I believe liberty consists in. I am persuaded that it is nothing other than the combination of a double physical power: one to act, and the other not to act – sometimes even to do, in acting, this or that thing. I am persuaded that physical impotence, by removing the power to act, and necessity of the same kind, by removing the power not to act, both destroy our liberty. But I do not believe that it is the same with the necessity and impotence that are called moral, and which I believe I have sufficiently explained. I hold it as certain that neither this necessity nor this impotence is in any way opposed to liberty.

Thus, of the three kinds of actions that we perform – some physically necessary, others morally necessary, and the last exempt from this double necessity – I am persuaded that the first are not free, but that the second and third are. But it is a great question whether such liberty is an advantage we actually possess, or whether it is only a vain imagination, with which we flatter ourselves wrongly and without foundation.

To say nothing of the ancient Stoics, whose sect no longer exists, Spinoza has maintained clearly and formally the second view. He made it known that liberty, such as it is ordinarily conceived – and which comes back more or less to the idea I have given of it – is nothing but a chimera. According to him, liberty is nothing other than a necessity whose cause is unknown to us. Under the pretext, he says, that we do not know the cause that determines us, we wrongly imagine that this determination comes from ourselves.

“Imagine,” he says, “a stone that has been thrown, and which continues to move for some time. Imagine that, in this condition, it thinks and knows that it is striving with all its power to continue moving. This stone, which knows only its own effort, and is in no way indifferent to acting thus, will believe itself to be very free, and will imagine that it continues to move only because it wants to.”

That, he adds, is the human liberty which everyone boasts of having, and which consists only in the fact that:

“Men are conscious of their desires (*fui appetitus sunt conscii*), but do not know the causes which determine them.” *Spinoza, Letter 62, p. 584–585.*

In his *Ethics*, he clearly says that in the soul there is no absolute or free will, but that the soul is determined to will this or that by a cause, which is also determined by another, and this again by another, and so on to infinity:

“In the mind there is no absolute or free will, but the mind is determined to will this or that by a cause, which itself has been determined by another, and this again by another, and so on to infinity.” *Ethics, Part II, Prop. 48, p. 85.*

From this also comes the fact that in the letter I have cited, he calls our liberty a feigned and imaginary liberty:

“What my view is concerning free and constrained necessity, and about the feigned human liberty, I have explained sufficiently, unless I am mistaken.” *Letter 62.*

It is clear that he unmask himself – that, absolutely speaking, he does not recognize any liberty – and that, if he retains the name, it is only by explaining it in a way that changes its meaning, making it refer precisely to the opposite of what everyone else understands by it: namely, necessity.

Mr. Bayle does not go quite as far as this impious man. He wants people to believe that he is persuaded that we are free, but he makes it understood that it is only faith that persuades him of this, and that reason, on the contrary, would lead him away from it.

Here are two passages from his *Critical Dictionary*, where he expresses himself quite clearly on this subject.

On page 2039 of the second edition, he says that if there were today any Marcionites skilled in debate, they would attack at once the last stronghold of Origen, namely, free will – and they would not make three syllogisms before forcing its defender to confess that he does not understand what he asserts, and that these are abysses of the inscrutable sovereignty of the Creator, where our reason is utterly swallowed up, and where only faith remains to sustain us.

On page 1497, he says that those who know best the inner workings of the soul usually doubt their free will, and even come to be persuaded that their reason and their mind are slaves who cannot resist the force that drags them where they do not wish to go.

As for the proofs we give to demonstrate that we are free, he tries to show in various places in the *Responses to the Provincial* that they are only sophisms. He especially focuses on undermining the one that Mr. Jaquelot drew from the intimate sense we have of it.

As for me, I maintain on the one hand that we are free, and on the other that this truth can be solidly proven. That is what I will try to show in this second Addition.

CHAPTER II. That in denying liberty one denies the distinction between vice and virtue.

One of the considerations that should most inspire horror at this opinion is that it annihilates the difference between vice and virtue, and gives grounds for persuading oneself that the most outrageous excesses are no more blameworthy than the best

actions — or rather, that there are neither crimes nor good actions, and that everything without exception is indifferent.

Indeed, once it is postulated that there is no liberty in the world, and that men only do what they cannot avoid doing, it is clear that they will be just as little worthy of blame or praise for everything they do as is a stone that falls from high to low when what was supporting it ceases, or a great fire when it burns combustible matter brought near it.

No one thinks to blame a mason or a roofer who, falling from the top of a house where he was working, crushes a child who happens to be in the place where he falls. No one blames a madman who commits some unjust or extravagant action. In a word, wherever there is a physical and absolute necessity, it is impossible for there to be either virtue or vice, or anything deserving either blame or praise.

Now imagine that this opinion spreads so thoroughly — whether throughout the world or in a particular nation — that no one fails to embrace it and be persuaded of it to the depths of their heart. In what state will that people, or humanity as a whole, find itself shortly thereafter, imbued with this idea and with everything Spinoza added to it, especially his atheism?

A man persuaded that there is no other God than matter, and that all we are told about the immortality of the soul, the goods and evils of the life to come, is just a song; persuaded, moreover, that there is neither vice nor virtue, and that the greatest criminals are no more worthy of blame than those whose virtue is most pure and whose piety is most eminent — such a man, I ask, will he make much effort to observe the laws of that virtue which he regards as the vainest of all chimeras? Will he scruple to satisfy his most criminal passions, and to commit the most outrageous crimes, whenever he imagines he might derive some utility or pleasure from them? What could restrain him?

Would it be the fear of God? He acknowledges none. Would it be the hope of the goods of the life to come, or fear of its evils? He mocks them. Would it be the beauty of virtue and the deformity of vice? He considers both as illusions. Would it finally be reputation? That motive, which has some force in a society composed of people who have piety and religion — even if it includes many impious individuals — would have none in a society persuaded of this detestable maxim, that everything is indifferent and that virtue and vice have absolutely nothing to distinguish them.

Indeed, reputation is nothing but the result of the judgments individuals make about the conduct of those they know. And all these individuals, whom I suppose to be good Spinozists, will be careful not to blame those who follow their inclinations, for the reason that they cannot act otherwise. They will have for others the same indulgence they want others to have for them. Thus, that motive will be no more effective than the others.

Given this, Mr. Bayle should at least have excluded the Spinozists from the number of those atheists who, according to him, could be as honest and orderly as those who have a religion. Let him say what he will about the atheists of other sects: the Spinozists will always be a considerable exception to his claim, and such an exception that he must necessarily admit it.

But in fact, I am persuaded that, at least on this point, we should not distinguish Spinozists from other atheists. According to Mr. Bayle, it is only faith that persuades us that we are free. Reason, if we follow it, leads us away from that thought – as was seen in the preceding chapter. Thus all atheists – at least those who have some enlightenment and know how to make some use of their reason – are Spinozists on the matter of liberty. It is there that reason leads them. And as for the objections of faith, it is clear that, being atheists, they are not inclined to submit to them.

Someone might say that everything I say is true, and that indeed, once belief in liberty is removed, crime will spread everywhere, both in fact and in right, without anything to stop it or that ought to stop it – but that it still remains to be proven that this consequence is as false and absurd as it is necessary. That, if I'm not mistaken, is the only possible reply.

I admit that to destroy it one would have to prove the necessity of preserving the distinction between vice and virtue. But since many have done so, and since, if I undertook to do so, the task would take me too far, I am content to say that, at the very least, this unmasks the atheists and shows that they can no more claim the title of honest men than that of good Christians. This utterly destroys the Apology for Atheists to which Mr. Bayle has applied himself so diligently. Finally, this shows that one cannot accept Spinoza's hypothesis about liberty without opening the door to the most horrible excesses. And is this not enough to restrain those who have not entirely lost all sense of shame, and whose conscience is not completely hardened?

CHAPTER III. That Spinoza's sentiment annihilates the use of Prudence.

Among the virtues that Spinozism reduces to nothing, there is one that deserves particular attention, because all the world feels and recognizes its necessity and utility. I speak of Prudence. We know that it has two principal uses. One is to procure for us the goods that we desire; the other is to shelter us from the evils with which we are threatened. Prudence applies itself to trying to make us succeed in both of these designs, and as we see that it succeeds very often, there is no one who does not value it, and who does not try to observe its rules as exactly as possible. It is nevertheless true that Prudence would be useless, or to better say, should pass for a chimera, if all events happened according to the laws of a blind and fatal necessity. For who does not know that Prudence has for its object neither the impossible, nor the necessary, but the contingent, which can be, and not be?

To see this more distinctly, let us stop at the most frequent, and at the same time the most important, function of Prudence, I mean deliberation. It has no place, I admit, in clear things, which suffer no difficulty. The most limited common sense suffices to conduct oneself well in these occasions. But when the thing is doubtful, obscure, and uncertain, when no means present themselves that appear appropriate, when several present themselves but one ignores which are the best, when one has reason to fear that those which appear good will make bad effects; in all these occasions, which are so common, and in several other similar ones, one must not determine except after having examined everything with care, and after having weighed up to the slightest degree of probability and likelihood that the reasons have which lead to prefer one of these means to the other.

This is what the wise do, and this is what they only do by deliberating. They examine the thing themselves with all the care that it seems to them the subject deserves, and when they do not feel enlightened enough to pronounce on it, they consult others whom they judge to be more skilled than them, and ask them to share their insights, and to give them their advice. This is what is practiced everywhere. Even the Savages observe it. Above all three sorts of people, whose blunders and false steps are accustomed to having the most troublesome consequences, those who govern States, those who command armies, and those who practice Medicine, make it a law.

I now ask if it would not be pure extravagance, I will not say to apply oneself with so much care, and to give oneself so much trouble, to deliberate, but to employ the shortest moments, and to make the least effort, if there were no event, which was not necessary and inevitable. This appears in two principal regards, in relation to success, and in relation to work, and generally to all that one does to procure this success, and to make it such as one wishes.

For the first, one never deliberates on events that one regards as inevitable. A traveler who sees that the Sun is going to set in a very short time, and who would need a little more daylight to arrive safely and comfortably at his lodging, does he decide to deliberate to seek means to slow the course of this star, and to make it so that it remains on the horizon a little longer than it is going to do? Does a wise man deliberate to find the means to make himself immortal, and to remain eternally on the earth?

I say the same thing of the most contingent events when they do not depend on us. Let us imagine a man paralyzed in all parts of his body, and absolutely incapable of moving, neither feet, nor hands. Let us imagine that reduced to this sad state he finds himself in a house, where fire has caught, and which is already beginning to burn, or on a vessel already partly open, which is going to finish breaking against rocks, or sinking into the sea by the effort of a violent storm. Will he amuse himself by deliberating on what he has to do to avoid this misfortune, not being in a state to do anything whatsoever?

This, however, is the state in which we find ourselves according to Spinoza. All events without exception are necessary and inevitable. We can only act ourselves in the manner in which the concatenation of physical causes demands that we act. This impotence, and this necessity, do not extend only to our external actions, to our sensible work, and to our efforts, but still to our resolutions, our designs, our desires themselves, and our thoughts. We can neither think, nor wish, nor resolve, nor make the least effort, nor produce any action, internal, or external, except following the laws of necessity which binds us, and which carries us away.

This being so, what can it serve us to deliberate?

I see only one single response that one can make. Perhaps it will be said, that all that I have just said is very true, and that in effect deliberations are useless, and that prudence is only a vain name which signifies absolutely nothing. In a word, one will admit my consequences in all their extent, but one will deny that they are false, or absurd.

But I have three things to reply.

The first is that if what is said is true, one is entitled to give the lie to any man, who deliberating on whatever it may be will maintain that he is a Spinozist. If he were, he would never deliberate, since as we have just seen, one never deliberates on things that one believes necessary. As all do it in the occasions, all abjure this belief as many times as they do it, and one can say of this sect what has been said of that of the Pyrrhonians, that it is a sect of liars.

I say secondly that I do not understand how it is that one can resolve to entrust the government of a State, or the command of an army, to a man who one knows to be a Spinozist on this subject; how again being dangerously ill one can put oneself in the hands of a Physician engaged in the same error. Does one not have reason to fear that these persons will act in the occasions in a manner conforming to their prejudices, and that believing that everything happens necessarily, they will neglect to take cares and precautions, which they regard as useless.

I know that everyone does not act consequently, and it has been some time since I complained of it. But I also know that as it is natural to do it, it often happens that one does it. This being the case, is there not reason to presume that those in question will do it? And this supposed, is there not imprudence in entrusting them with affairs of such weight? Whatever one says. It will never happen to me to put my life in the hands of a Physician that I will know to be a Spinozist, and if I do it, and he kills me, I forgive him my death. It will be my fault, rather than his.

I say thirdly that one is wrong to say that deliberations are useless, and that prudence is nothing. I appeal to experience. I ask each of my Readers that it please him to ask himself, if it is not true that he has a hundred times remarked that a wise and prudent man usually succeeds more happily than a reckless person. I know that this is not perpetual. But can one deny me that it does not happen almost always?

Thus I maintain that one must blind oneself not to recognize that nothing is more absurd than Spinozism.

But, it will be said, prudence does not always succeed. I agree. But whence does that come? It is from the fact that this prudence is very limited. It is from the fact that it knows only imperfectly the subjects of its reflections. If it had more perfection and extent, it would never be mistaken, and in effect it is mistaken more rarely in proportion as it is more perfect.

It is more or less the same with Medicine. Medicine does not cease to be an art, and a useful art, and worthy of being cultivated, although it does not always succeed. It suffices that in general one succeeds more often in treating the sick following the rules, than in not taking any care of them. It suffices still that a skillful Physician succeeds more often than an ignorant and reckless one. It is the same with Prudence, and what I say of the two is even more perceptible in the other functions of Prudence, than in the practice of Medicine, those having ordinarily more good successes than this one.

CHAPTER IV. That Spinozism abolishes Laws, punishments, rewards, the authority of Magistrates, and all that is most essential to Society.

I take my third proof from a very necessary usage, and moreover received and approved by all the earth. It is that of Laws, both imperative and prohibitive. There is no form of government which does not have several. Even the most barbarous have some, and one conceives well enough that without that Society could not last even a little, and life itself would not be supportable.

From there I conclude that it is to declare oneself an enemy of the human race to undertake to abolish the usage of Laws, and consequently to expose oneself to the just resentment of all those who would suffer from it, if it were possible that so pernicious a design should succeed.

That, however, is what all those do who say that nothing is free, and that all is necessary. For, after all, nothing is more unjust, or even more ridiculous, than to make Laws on things necessary and inevitable.

What would one say of a Prince who would forbid the Sun to set, and the sea to cover its shores by its flow, or to leave them dry by its ebb? Would one not believe that he has lost the use of reason, and would one not be founded to believe it?

Let it not be said in effect that this comes only from the fact that neither the Sun, nor the sea, are in a state to have some knowledge of what this Prince would prescribe to them, which one cannot say of men. I admit that this reason is good, but I maintain that it is by no means the only one which makes one judge thus, as appears clearly from the fact that this Prince would not be more reasonable if he forbade one of his Subjects to feel pain when he would have him put to torture, or to let himself die when he would have his head cut off.

Is it not certain in a word that just and reasonable Laws have for subject, neither inevitable things, nor impossible things, but solely those that one can do, and from which one can abstain?

Here is another consideration which has much relation to the preceding one. Nothing is more necessary than to punish those who transgress the Laws. Without that these Laws would be useless. No one would observe them. But what can there be more unjust than to punish the infraction of Laws, if it is true that this infraction is necessary and inevitable, as it is without difficulty, if everything is done by a blind and inevitable necessity?

There is no Law so just that one does not violate with impunity in the case of an absolute necessity. The Governor of a place is never punished for having surrendered it when food, powder, and soldiers have failed him. One would not punish a Son who would let his Father die of hunger, if he had no means, no way to help him. One does not punish Frenzied people when they do some violence, which in another state would be criminal. Consequently one would punish no one, and whatever the case may be one should not do it, if one believed that everything was done with a similar necessity.

I say more or less the same thing about rewards. One never promises them, nor grants them to those who have not been able to prevent themselves from doing what they have done.

It is therefore clear that Spinozism making Liberty pass for a chimera, annihilates by the same the usage of Laws of punishments and rewards. And if there are neither Laws nor punishments, nor rewards, what good will Magistrates be? What function will remain to them, if they can neither command, nor forbid; nor reward, nor punish? Will they not be the most useless parts of society? Or rather will they not be phantoms without reality? For what is a Magistrate without authority? And what authority will remain to him if he can neither give orders, nor have them executed?

Let us now imagine that one removes from a Republic its Magistrates, its Laws, its rewards, and punishments. What will remain to it? Or rather what will become of it? Deprived of these parts so essential, of these rights so necessary to its subsistence, will it be a true Republic, a true society? Will it not rather be a miserable crowd, a confused chaos, a perfect anarchy where everything without reserve will be permitted, and which besides a hundred other inconveniences will have that of not being able to subsist for a long time. For how could such badly joined parts delay to separate.

These are the necessary and inevitable consequences of Spinozism. They are born naturally, and immediately from it. This is why I cannot marvel enough to see that one does not open one's eyes to such a danger, and that one allows to take foot an evil so great in itself, and which could not have the upper hand without giving birth to a great number of others, which can all pass for extreme.

CHAPTER V. That denying Liberty means abolishing the use of treaties and conventions

It is not only the laws, punishments, and rewards, that is to say the strongest bonds of society, and the principal sources of civil happiness, that Spinozism abolishes by contesting our Liberty. It also annihilates treaties and conventions, which are of such great use throughout the course of life. If we are not free, all this falls, and becomes useless, and of no effect.

According to Spinoza, everything that does not yet exist is either necessary or impossible. It is necessary if the causes that exist must produce it, and are determined to do so. It is impossible if these same causes are determined not to produce it. This necessity and this impossibility are moreover a physical and absolute necessity and impossibility. For, says Spinoza, the power of man is infinitely below that of the rest of the causes. "*Potentia hominis à potentia causarum externarum infinite superatur.*" Ethic. part. IV. prop. 3.

Everything that one obliges oneself to do when one makes a treaty is of this order. Everything is either absolutely necessary or absolutely impossible.

If it is necessary, nothing is more useless, nothing even more ridiculous, than to obligate oneself to it. For what can it serve to commit to doing what cannot fail to be done? What would one say of two men who, by a solemn treaty, accompanied by all the formalities that the laws prescribe, and all the precautions that the most refined Jurisprudence can add, would promise, one that the Sun will rise on a certain day at such an hour, and the other that Spring will come after winter? Would one not regard both of them as fools? And would one not be right to do so?

If what one obliges oneself to do is impossible, the treaty is no less extravagant. For who does not know that one cannot validly obligate oneself to the impossible? Who does not even know that the most valid contracts become null when what one obliges oneself to do, and which was possible at the time of the passing of the contract, becomes impossible some time after?

Thus, what one obliges oneself to do being, for sure, either necessary or impossible in Spinoza's system, this system once established, and passing for incontestable, there will be something ridiculous in obligating oneself to anything whatsoever, and consequently in making treaties.

Even when one does it, those who violate their treaties will have their excuse all ready. They will only have to say that according to the laws of all the earth, no one is bound to the impossible, and that it appears clearly that what they have not done was impossible, by this very fact that they have not done it, everything that is not done being impossible according to Spinoza, as everything that is done was necessary.

Let one see now what confusion this abominable dogma would introduce into the world, if it were universally received, and above all if it were followed exactly in practice. What would society be if there were no contract, since it is itself only a contract, a convention, by which men have united under various conditions, and have obligated themselves to various things towards each other, and since besides this primitive and fundamental treaty they make each day a great number of others, from which they draw a thousand utilities, and of which one can say that it is impossible for them to do without?

Let us imagine that becoming Spinozists they recognize the nullity, uselessness, and absurdity of this sort of engagements, which they have made so much of, and which it was so right to despise. Let us imagine that they judge them quite differently. Let us imagine that they make no more of them, and hold all for certain that those which they have made until this moment do not bind them, and that they should have no regard for them, no more than if they had never made them. Into what chaos, into what abyss of confusion does the human race not fall in this manner?

First, society, which as we have seen, is itself only a treaty, will dissolve of itself, and men will fall back into the savage state of nature, from which this convention had drawn them. There they are then engaged in this frightful war of each individual against all, at the misfortunes of which one cannot think a moment without being frightened. There they are engaged without any hope of being able to get out of it. For how to do it except by treaties?

At least Hobbes seemed to indicate a remedy for this great evil, I mean this same society, and these treaties. But Spinoza discredits this remedy and poses principles which could not be true without showing with the utmost evidence that this remedy is useless, and of no effect. If one admits these treaties themselves, this society, will be the most vain, the most frivolous, the most illusory thing in the world, since there being nothing free, nothing contingent, there will absolutely be nothing on which one can treat.

There is a second order of treaties almost as necessary as the preceding, and which one cannot violate without throwing the world into an infinity of disorders. I speak of those that Sovereigns and free and independent peoples often make between themselves to prevent and to terminate the wars, which never ignite without causing a thousand evils to those who suffer from them. Let us imagine that the use of this sort of treaties is abolished. Let us imagine that none of them are made anymore, or that in making one, no regard is paid to it. What means will remain, either to prevent, or to make cease the misfortunes that war causes?

Marriage is another order of treaties, which does not appear all at once as necessary as the preceding, but which does not cease to be so very much, and whose sanctity is rarely violated without causing great disorders in families, and sometimes even in States.

Let one add to all these treaties that Spinozism abolishes those that individuals make between themselves on various occasions. Let one pay attention to the utilities that come from them, and let one judge what obligation one has to this impious person, whose principles tend so visibly to deprive us of so many advantages that we could draw from them.

He still makes the same effect in another manner, which appears to me a little more direct. He maintains that everyone has the right not to keep what he has promised whenever he judges, rightly or wrongly, with reason or without reason, that it is in his interest not to do it. " If therefore he himself, who by nature is by right his own judge, has judged—whether rightly or wrongly (for to err is human)—that more harm than benefit follows from the given promise, he deems, by the judgment of his own mind, that the promise must be broken, and by natural right he breaks it." Tract. Polit. cap. II. n. 12.

After that, what can one count on, and will there be any but fools who trust the promises of Philosophers.

CHAPTER VI. Where one gathers together all that has just been proved in the preceding chapters, and shows what was the crime that Spinoza committed in attacking truths of this nature.

Before proposing the other proofs which justify that we are free, it will be good to weigh a little those which have been proposed in what precedes.

We have seen that Spinoza's sentiment on the necessity of events abolishes first of all the distinction of good and evil, and confounds virtue with vice. We have seen secondly that it annihilates the use of prudence, and gives rise to the persuasion that the advantages that one flatters oneself with drawing from it are imaginary. We have seen thirdly that it banishes the use of laws, punishments, and rewards. Finally, we have seen that it reduces to nothing the most necessary treaties, and of which it is most difficult to do without.

This supposed as well proved, I make this reasoning. Either what Spinoza has said on this subject is true, or it is false. Whichever of the two one says, one cannot deny that this wretched man has not committed a frightful crime in spreading such a pernicious dogma, and one cannot regard his action with too much horror. This is what must be proved distinctly, and in detail.

If this dogma is false, as one can be assured that it is, it has not been due to the impious person who spread it, that he has not persuaded all the human race, and that in persuading it he has not plunged it into an abyss of evils, of which it is impossible to imagine, either the number, or the greatness.

These evils are those that I have indicated. All the crimes that there is reason to believe that men would commit until the consummation of the world in consequence of such a dangerous imagination. All the misfortunes that most of

these crimes would attract, either on those who would commit them, or on others who might suffer from them. All the other misfortunes that we have just seen that the persuasion of Liberty prevents, and which would be the inevitable consequences of the contrary error, if it were received.

If this dogma is true, either Spinoza was quite sure of it, or he was not. If he was not, he has been no less guilty, than if he had known that it was false. For what fury would it not have been to spread such a pernicious dogma without being well assured of its truth? Is it permitted to expose such a prodigious number of persons to such dangers, and above all to do it without necessity? One cannot therefore exculpate him except by saying that he was quite sure of what he said.

But if one says this I will have two things to reply, one that that cannot be, the other that even if that were, Spinoza would not be innocent.

One must voluntarily blind oneself to maintain that Spinoza was assured that we have no Liberty. What proofs did he have of it? He produces only two, one direct, the other *ad hominem*, as they say. The first is weakness itself, as I hope to show in its place: And as for the second, even if it were unanswerable, it would prove at most that we contradict ourselves in maintaining on one side that nothing happens that God has not absolutely resolved, and on the other that men do not cease to be free. We have already seen that these two truths do not clash. But let us suppose that they do. Let us even suppose that it is demonstrated. Will it follow that the second of these propositions is false? One or the other indeterminately will be, I agree. But by what right will one claim that it is precisely the second? Cannot falsity be found in the first, which so many people deny? It is therefore impossible that Spinoza, who did not lack intelligence, believed he was quite sure of what he said on the subject of liberty.

But let us imagine that he believed it, and even believed it with reason. I maintain that even in this supposition, he has not ceased to perform a barbarous action in spreading a dogma so unnecessary, and which could produce such pernicious effects.

I admit indeed that one must never throw anyone into error. I admit that one must neither lie, nor deceive, nor make illusion to anyone. But I maintain that there are occasions, where one can leave certain people in errors, in which one sees them prejudiced, and into which one has not thrown them, and where there is an extreme barbarity in disabusing them. This is what happens when these errors do no harm, and when the truths opposed to these innocent errors do frightful ones.

Two examples will put this truth in its light. An honest man is afflicted with an incurable illness, and the Physicians have abandoned him. He has a son who is traveling, whom he believes to have probity and honor, but he is mistaken. He is a scoundrel, who has just done an infamous action, and died on a scaffold. His friends learn of it. But is it their duty to disabuse this dying father, and to hasten his death

by the pain that they will cause him in teaching him this truth so useless on one side, and so overwhelming on the other.

Assassins are looking for a man of eminent virtue to stab him. They meet him without knowing him, and taking him for another let him pass. Must one disabuse them, and tell them, "This is the one you are looking for"?

These two examples, without speaking of others that could be added to them, show clearly that there are occasions where it would be to display barbarism, and to act in a manner opposed to the most common notions of humanity, to disabuse those who are engaged in certain errors.

Is it however possible to imagine an occasion where the truth of this maxim is more palpable than that of which we speak? Do the two examples that I have produced approach it? Are the evils that one would cause in teaching this tender and dying Father, the crimes, and the disastrous end of his son, or these assassins that they have in their hands the one they are looking for to take his life, comparable to those that Spinoza would have caused, if his detestable dogmas had been universally received?

One must not therefore imagine being able to excuse him by this, and what I have said of this wretched man, I say of his Disciples, at least of those among them, who have the audacity to dogmatize, and to try to engage others in their errors. They deserve to be regarded as declared enemies of the human race; poisoners, assassins, and other pests of society, doing nothing that approaches the evils that they do, and still less of those that it is not up to them that they do not do.

Above all one must have a great fund of moderation not to become angry when one sees certain people, who on one side combat Liberty with all their strength, and on the other affect to pass for Pyrrhonians. What a monstrous assembly! But at the same time what excess of wickedness! To spread a dogma which can cause such pernicious effects, and which would cause them infallibly if it were received, and to spread it without knowing if it is true or false! Can one imagine anything more horrible?

What would one say of an Apothecary, who not knowing if a certain powder that he finds in his shop, and which resembles corrosive Sublimate enough, is not effectively so, would make it enter into all his compositions, and would give it to all his patients? And what would this poisoning Apothecary be compared to those who do what they can to spread on all sides the venom of an error capable, not of taking the life of fifteen or twenty men, but of throwing all the human race into the most frightful state in the world?

CHAPTER VII. That nothing is more absurd than to think that men are in all respects simple machines.

The proofs that I have produced in the preceding chapters were all taken from the most natural consequences of Spinoza's sentiment, which I had undertaken to refute. Those that I am going to produce presently will be taken from this sentiment itself, and from the characters of falsity that it is easy to remark in it. Here is the first of this second order.

Everyone knows that the Cartesians to disentangle themselves from a rather pressing objection that was made to them to overturn the proofs that they give of the spirituality of our souls, and which was taken from the attentive consideration of animals, which having nothing but material appear to have some knowledge, have maintained that these animals are only simple machines, made in such a way that as soon as certain springs are released, they do necessarily, and without knowledge, a good part of what we do freely.

Everyone knows still in what manner people have risen up everywhere against this sentiment, even to the point that it has been treated as absurd, and ridiculous. It has been believed that it was impossible that a machine could be made with enough precision to do exactly all that we see animals do.

The thing appears in effect rather difficult to understand, which is why the Cartesians to close the mouths of their Adversaries have had recourse to the wisdom and power of God. They have asked them if in their opinion God is not capable of doing infinitely more than we can conceive, and if our small understanding should be regarded as the measure of the lights and power of the infinite Being.

One can judge by this of the difficulty of the thing. However, this thought of the Cartesians is only a game compared to that of Spinoza. According to this impious person, it is not only animals that are machines. But what is particular, they are machines that think, that reason, that deliberate, and that make very complex works, very well understood, and of which the parts have a marvelous relationship with each other.

Such are for example the well-imagined systems, either of Physics, or of Geometry, or of Astronomy. Such again certain works of Poetry of the most accomplished, like the Aeneid. Such, finally, certain masterpieces of art, for example of Architecture. All this is done mechanically according to Spinoza, and by the laws of a blind and inflexible necessity.

What comparison can one make of these two sorts of machines? Who does not see that those of Descartes are children's toys compared to those of Spinoza? What is for example a swallow that makes its nest, or a spider that spins, and that stretches its web, in comparison with a skillful Architect, who builds a magnificent Palace, and who embellishes it with all that the other arts can make of most accomplished.

Consequently if the thought of the first of these Philosophers appeared bold, what judgment should one make of that of the second.

But here is another very remarkable difference. Descartes, as we have seen, finding what he had imagined too difficult to execute to be believable, had recourse to the wisdom and power of God, which he charged with it. Spinoza on the contrary, as if what he proposes were very easy, wants it to be done with a blind necessity, and without knowledge. According to this impious person it is not an infinitely wise God who makes all these machines, taking all the necessary precautions to succeed in a design so difficult, and so apparently impossible. It is a brute necessity, without light, without knowledge. The thing is done, the work is produced, and success corresponds to it, because it is necessary that that be done.

What can one imagine more incomprehensible than all this? And what in particular can Epicurus's chance, which produced the world, without anyone having formed the design of it, and having guided, and directed the execution, have that is more incredible? Indeed this chance and this necessity are equally blind, and consequently equally incapable of making works of the nature and of the order of this one. I am even persuaded that what Epicurus called chance, and what Spinoza calls necessity, is the same thing, and I do not believe that it would be difficult for me to prove it, if the thing were necessary. Thus all that is ordinarily said against Epicurus falls with the same force on Spinoza.

Just as a man who will see a magnificent Palace perfectly well built, adorned with beautiful furniture, rich paintings, delicately worked statues, accompanied by the most delicious gardens, and the most agreeable walks, will never think of thinking that all this was done by chance, he will also hardly think that all this was done by itself, and because it could not be done otherwise. These two imaginations are equally bizarre, and equally incapable of presenting themselves to minds even slightly just and enlightened.

CHAPTER VIII. That one cannot say what are the causes which one claims determine us invincibly.

Spinoza claims that we are invincibly determined in our judgments, in our resolutions, and generally in the actions that one believes to be free, by the causes that act upon us. On which it must be remarked before all things that we do not deny absolutely, and without exception, what he says.

As one has seen in what precedes, we believe that there are certain causes which determine us physically and invincibly, for example in madness; that others do it morally, and invincibly all together, and others more weakly, in such a way that one resists them sometimes, sometimes with difficulty, and sometimes without any effort. What we deny, and that Spinoza maintains, is that this order of causes, on one side always determines us; and on the other, that every time that they do it, they

do it invincibly. We maintain on the contrary that there are an infinity of occasions where our soul determines itself.

Above all we believe that this happens in indifferent things, for example when, dealing with things in which we take no interest, we prefer to speak than to be silent, or to be silent than to speak; when being able to walk we sit down, and being able to sit we walk. It is this sort of actions that I will stop at presently to make the dispute less encumbered, leaving to each of my Readers the care of applying what I will say to the other subjects which resemble this one, or which approach it.

I say then that in this, as in all the rest, Spinoza has not explained himself enough. He does not say what are these causes which determine us. One has seen above that there are two orders of them, physical and moral. Is it to the first, is it to the second, is it to the concurrence of the ones and the others, that one must attribute the power to determine us in the occasions that I have indicated?

Whatever it may be of these three thoughts that he had, what he has said cannot subsist.

What I say is clear and incontestable regarding moral causes, which are objects, reasons, and motives. All that has so little efficacy, so little power, that one resists it without pain, without effort, and without contention. When for example I resolve to take a turn in my room, it is that it seems to me that in walking I will be somewhat more at my ease than in being seated. But can I not despise this little reason, and remain seated despite it? If this reason determined me invincibly, it would determine me always, and it is certain that that is a thing which does not happen. Sometimes I defer to this reason, sometimes I do not defer to it. And what I say of this one, I say of all the others similar.

To say something more general, if moral causes always infallibly made their effect, it would be easier than it is to persuade men, and to bring them, either to believe certain things, or to do others, or to abstain from them. It would only be necessary to propose to them good and powerful motives, solid reasons, etc., which ordinarily is not very difficult. However, the contrary happens at each moment, as experience makes plain enough to see.

Is it then physical causes alone, which make this effect? Just as little as the moral ones. There is none that good reasons do not make us overcome. This even happens in certain occasions, where physical causes act very strongly, for example when a timid man, despite the repugnances of temperament, exposes himself to a great danger, which he knows very distinctly. In one the love of glory, in another the fear of infamy, in a third the consideration of duty, overcomes this repugnance, and makes one expose oneself to the greatest perils. If one triumphs then over physical causes, why could one not do it when they act as weakly as they do in the occasions that I have indicated, and to which I have restricted myself?

If physical causes always determined us to do what we do, we would always feel this impulse, as we feel it sometimes. Very often we feel ourselves strongly inclined to do certain things, which are in conformity with our temperament, or with the passion which dominates us. Why would the same thing not happen in the actions for which we have indifference, if the same causes carried us to them? That, however, is a thing which does not happen. Thus we have reason to persuade ourselves that these sorts of causes do not have the power that one attributes to them.

If physical causes always determined us, moral ones would be useless. It would serve no purpose to undertake to divert anyone from the actions to which his temperament carries him. Motives, reasons, exhortations, promises, threats, would not have the least efficacy. They have some, however. This is what experience does not permit us to doubt. Consequently that of physical causes is not as great as one imagines.

Must one then attribute it to the concurrence of physical and moral causes, and say that they are all invincible when they unite their forces, and when they act jointly? This is apparently the side that most Spinozists will take.

But first this imagination could have some plausibility if it were impossible to break this union of these two sorts of causes, and to put the ones out of combat. However, what is easier than this? Can it not happen that the physical causes remaining the same, and acting always with an equal force, one stiffens against the moral ones, and that opposing reason to reason, motive to motive, object to object, one prevents them from acting, after which the physical ones deprived of this help, and remaining alone, can be easily overcome?

Besides, I am persuaded that the physical and moral causes, which determine me to get up when I am seated, and to sit when I am standing, have, joined together, much less power for the production of this effect, than each of these two orders apart has to determine me to other actions. For example I am persuaded that the movement of the blood, and of the animal spirits, in a violent passion pushes us much more strongly to satisfy it, than all that one can imagine pushes me to sit, or to walk when I am alone in my room. I have difficulty believing that one will contest this with me. However, if one admits it to me, one abandons this last entrenchment of Spinoza. One recognizes that in an infinity of occasions we can resist physical and moral causes joined together. For how could one not do it every time that these physical and moral causes joined together have less power than the physical ones alone have in other occasions, where one actually resists them?

Finally even when the physical and moral causes joined together have made their effect, and have determined us to act, we can stop short, if only to convince ourselves of our liberty, which proves that the effect of all these causes joined together, is by no means necessary. But this deserves to be considered with a little more application.

CHAPTER IX. That we feel our Liberty, and that that must suffice to convince us that we are free.

One of the proofs which must persuade us most strongly that we are free, is the feeling that we have of our Liberty. We experience every time that we wish it, not only that we can do what we do not do, and not do what we do, above all in indifferent things, to which I have restricted myself, but further that we actually do it as many times as it pleases us, in such a way that in the shortest space of time we change our will as many times as it takes our fancy to do it. I can twenty times in a row move my hand, and stop it as many times, without any necessity, which comes from elsewhere, preventing me.

What can I oppose to this feeling, which prevents me from persuading myself of what I discover by this way? Is it not this which convinces me of my existence? And if the feeling that I have of my existence suffices to banish from my mind all doubt on this subject, why will a feeling all similar not suffice to convince me that I am free?

It is, says Spinoza, that being inclined to do what we do, ignoring what inclines us to it, and feeling only that we are inclined to it, we falsely imagine that it is we ourselves who incline ourselves to it. Rather like, he says, a stone thrown, which goes with all its strength to the place to which this impulse conducts it, would imagine, if it felt its movement, that it was the cause of it.

I will not amuse myself with pointing out the bizarreness of this example, which is taken from a supposition the most absurd that ever was. What is more extraordinary in effect than to suppose a stone which feels its movement, and which imagines that it is the cause of it, as if a stone were capable of imagination and feeling. I admit this example, all ridiculous as it is. I say that even in admitting it there will be very great differences between what would happen to this stone, and what happens to us each day.

Firstly this stone would not remember having formed the design to move itself before executing it, as we remember it, being able even sometimes to mark the precise quantity of time which has passed between the project and the execution.

Secondly, this fact being supposed, one of two things would happen, either that the stone could not wish to stop, or that wishing it, it could not do it, instead of which when we move ourselves voluntarily we stop when it pleases us. There is thus in us something more than in this stone, and what there is more cannot be any other thing than what one calls an active indifference, a power to determine ourselves as it pleases us.

But here is something more precise. As this stone can be thrown, and move itself in consequence of its projection, the same thing can happen to us. One can push us ourselves, one can throw us, we can fall, and this fall will be, according to the new Philosophers a true impulse, of the same nature as that of a stone that one throws

with violence. In falling thus we move ourselves, we go with impetuosity from one place to another, we feel that we go there. However, we do not imagine that we are the cause of our movement. We feel, we experience the contrary. We do not doubt that we are falling despite ourselves. Trying to stop ourselves we cannot. Thus there is an abyss of difference between what would happen to this stone, and what happens to us in these occasions.

I say nearly the same thing of Mr. Bayle's weathervane. "Do you not clearly understand," he says, "that a weathervane to which one would always impress all at once the movement towards a certain point of the horizon, the desire to turn to that side, would be persuaded that it moved itself to execute the desires that it would form?" Rep. au Provinc. tom. II. pag. 764. "I suppose," adds he, "that this weathervane does not know that there are winds, that an exterior cause made change all at once, both its situation, and its desires."

But firstly this addition spoils everything. The weathervane does not know that there are winds. It does not then resemble us, for we know very well that there are various causes which determine us in the occasions, some physical, others moral. We even feel their impulse. We feel on the other side that this is not perpetual, that it happens sometimes, but not always. Thus we are quite sure that this weathervane, such as Mr. Bayle imagines it, would not resemble us.

Secondly I ask if this weathervane feeling itself pushed towards a certain point of the horizon, and doubting if it is itself the cause of this impulse, as we doubt if we are the causes of ours, could to assure itself of it take the resolution to change twenty times in a row its direction, as I am witness that I can do it. If it cannot, the example does not resemble, and does not weaken my proof. And if it can I will say without hesitation that it is free. For even if the wind changed in effect twenty times in the row, it could not before all these changes inspire in the weathervane, either the resolution, or the knowledge, of the precise number of changes, of which it is going to be the subject.

This is what appears convincing to me. A blind necessity, like that of which they speak to us, does not know the future, nor can make it known to anyone. But I know it. I know what I will do in a moment, in two, in three, etc. There is thus in me something more than in Spinoza's stone, and in Mr. Bayle's weathervane. There is in a word an internal, and free, principle of my actions.

Here is another consideration, which appears very pressing to me. Neither Spinoza's stone nor Mr. Bayle's weathervane, nor anything in a word which is not free and intelligent, could establish occasional causes of its actions, still less vary them, as I can. I make as many of them as it pleases me. For example I can subject myself voluntarily to repeat all the words that another will pronounce, to repeat them even in another language, in Latin, for example, if he pronounces them in French. I can oblige myself to repeat half of them, a third, a quarter, etc. I can oblige myself to repeat each of these words once, twice, three times, etc. I can subject myself to do

all that a man will advise me, and to do all the contrary. What other cause of this effect can there be than my will alone? And who can after that doubt that it determines itself?

I have said that it was good to consider the prodigious variety of what one can do in this way. In effect necessity is a principle of uniformity, and liberty on the contrary a principle of variety. Necessary causes are determined to one action, and to one manner of acting. "Determinata ad unum," as the Philosophers speak. Thus the Sun can only illuminate, fire can only burn, etc. But free Beings can do a thousand different things. Thus the infinite multitude of acts of various orders, and of various species, that our will can produce, is a proof of its Liberty.

Here is yet another reflection which does not appear to me to be despised. If Spinoza's sentiment were true, there would be only one single species of judgments and of volitions. All these acts would be equally necessary. I would be as determined to judge that it will rain tomorrow, as I am to judge that one and one are two; to wish to move my hand, as to wish to be happy. However, I feel in myself that there is an extreme difference between these two sorts of acts. I feel that I cannot prevent myself from making the first, and that I am master of the second. A thousand tests that I can make of it persuade me of it. From where could this difference come if these acts were of the same order, and as necessary the ones as the others?

CHAPTER X. Where one responds to the Objections.

These are our proofs. Let us see now those which are opposed to us. Here is the one that Spinoza produces in his *Morals* Part. II. prop. 48. "The mind, *Mens*, is a certain manner, and determined to think as it appears by the proposition XI of this part. Consequently it cannot be a free cause of its actions, nor have the faculty to wish, and not to wish. *Mens certus & determinatus modus cogitandi est* (per prop. 11. hujus) adeoque (per coroll. 2. prop. 17. p. 1.) *suarum actionum non potest esse causa libera, sive absolutam facultatem volendi & nolendi habere non potest...*"

The Antecedent appears to me evidently false. For, after all, the mind, *Mens*, is something more than a simple manner of thinking. It is a spiritual substance, of which the particular thoughts are only the modifications. The mind remains the same although it does not always have the same thoughts. When it affirms a thing, it thinks of it otherwise than when it denies it. It is however always the same mind.

But one must see how Spinoza proves the contrary. He refers us to the eleventh proposition of this same part. Here in what terms this proposition is conceived. "The first thing which constitutes the actual being of the human mind is nothing other than the idea of some particular thing, which actually exists. *Primum quod actuale mentis humanae esse constituit, nihil aliud est quàm idea rei alicujus singularis actu existentis.*"

I do not examine if this proposition is true, or false, nor even what is its sense, which does not appear very easy to determine. I say that whatever this sense may be, it does not prove, either directly, or indirectly, the 48th prop. and I do not see how this Author could conclude one of these things from the other. That made me believe all at once that there was a printer's error, and that one had taken one number for another. But having consulted Wittich's Antispinoza I found that the latter had read the same as me. Whatever it may be this proof, such as one finds it in Spinoza's work, appears to me worthy of the utmost contempt.

He proposes another towards the end of his letter 62, which has something more specious. He says that it is impossible to reconcile the Liberty of the Creature with the preordination of the Creator. But firstly that is only a simple argument ad hominem, as they say, and which can be good even if what one undertakes to prove by it were false. At most those whom one is combating would contradict themselves, but it does not follow from that that what one wants to persuade them of is true.

Besides, I have shown in the third part of this Treatise that this reconciliation of the Decrees of God, and of the Liberty of man is not as impossible as Spinoza imagines.

Mr. Bayle produces another reason of the same order, although he wants to make it pass for direct. It is the one that he takes from the benefit of conservation. This conservation, he says, is a true reproduction. In each instant of our duration God creates us all anew, with all our faculties, and all our manners of being, in the number of which one must put our volitions. These volitions thus are necessarily such as God produces them, and thus not depending at all on us, they could not be free.

I believe this principle false, taking it in the sense that it offers first to the mind, and that one must necessarily give it to use it efficaciously against us. I believe even that it would not be difficult for me to prove its falsity. But as Mr. Jaquelot has already done it with care in his Examination of the Theology of Mr. Bayle Part. II. chap. 7, I can dispense myself from undertaking it.

I will only make a small remark, that I do not find that Mr. Jaquelot has made, and which appears to me worthy of some consideration. Mr. Bayle, and several others, are based on a reason that I believe very weak. They say that it must be that God reproduces us at each moment of our duration, because from the fact that we exist in this moment, it does not follow that we must exist in the moment which will immediately follow this one. This is what I deny. I maintain on the contrary that from the fact that I exist in this moment, it follows necessarily that I will exist a moment after.

But what is the necessity of this consequence? It is not, I admit, a metaphysical necessity, since the contrary could happen without contradiction. It is a physical necessity, founded on the efficacy of general laws, of which the first, if I am not mistaken, is the one which implies that each thing which exists will continue to exist until it pleases God to annihilate it. This law being posited it is physically necessary that each thing retains and conserves its existence, without positing a new creation.

Everyone knows that the ancient Philosophers said something approaching, or to speak more justly went beyond what I have just said. They believed that it was absolutely, and metaphysically impossible that what exists be annihilated, and that as from nothing nothing is made, there is also nothing which can be reduced to nothing. One must not then regard as chimerical what I have just advanced, and which is much less strong than this maxim, which has passed for constant for so many centuries, and which, if I am not mistaken, is the true thought of those who make this objection to us.

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EXAMINATION OF TREATISE B. Insofar as it Concerns the System of Supralapsarians

CHAPTER I. Examination of the first three chapters of the first dissertation of Treatise B.

§. 218. The Author in his first chapter, where he informs us of the occasion for this dissertation, advances several propositions as incontestable, which nevertheless deserve some reflection. This chapter even merits being quoted here almost in its entirety. Here are his words: "Those who claim that reason and faith are not always in good agreement never fail to produce as one of their most convincing proofs the opposition they imagine they notice between what reason teaches us about human freedom, and what faith teaches us on various subjects."

§. 219. "Reason teaches us very distinctly these three truths. The first, that there is a freedom which consists in being so much master of one's actions that one can do them or not do them as one wishes. The second, that this is an advantage we effectively possess in many respects and on a great number of occasions. The third, that whenever one lacks this power, as happens quite often and in several ways, one is incapable of acting morally, that is to say, in a manner conforming to or contrary to our duty, and which could bring us blame or praise, and make us worthy of being punished or rewarded."

Since here we are simply concerned with the freedom necessary to act morally, as indicated by the very title of the Author's work, I note that the Author is not clear enough in his first positions. What he calls here the first truth that reason teaches us on this topic could be regarded as the definition of freedom of indifference, which the Jesuits, as well as the Arminians, believe to be necessary to act morally; that is why, as it is clear from what follows, that the Author does not have this thought, it seems to me that the truth and his own sentiment would have been better understood by the following words, which would clearly express his first truth: Man has a freedom which consists in him being so much master of his actions that he can do them if he wants to do them, and not do them if he does not want to do them. That is to say, in fewer words: to do them and not do them given his choice. This may also be the Author's thought in the terms he uses, but this seems clearer to me and less equivocal. Now in this matter one cannot be too precise.

§. 220. If one therefore takes exact notice of everything, making mature and wise reflections, one will find that reason dictates to us that moral freedom consists only in that property which is in us, which makes us act or refrain from acting according to our own choice, without being forced or compelled by someone more powerful than us to determine against our own inclination, or against what we find most appropriate, or what pleases us more in each case, after having reflected and thought about it as much as we wished. The Author himself confirms this present

definition from the bottom of page 1 to the end of the second chapter; but he does not always remain constant in his principles. If one examines this definition well, one will also recognize that the whole world regulates itself according to these thoughts and these ideas alone and without other consideration, to praise or blame an intelligent Being in its actions, according to whether it conforms well or poorly in this way to its known duty, or to the laws with which it is justly charged. The Author continues:

§. 221. "On the other hand, faith teaches us five cardinal truths. The first is that man is so depraved since sin that it is impossible for him to convert himself, and even to do anything good without grace. The second is that this grace, which assists us, is so effective that it never happens that it is frustrated, and that those whom God undertakes to convert do not remain obstinate in sin. The third, that even outside of conversion, and on occasions that have no relation to salvation, God disposes our hearts as He pleases and effectively leads us to certain actions that we would never do on our own. The fourth, that not only does He determine us in time to what pleases Him, but also that He resolved it from eternity; and that, besides, the Decrees He has formed about this cannot fail to be executed. The fifth, finally, that we never do anything that God has not foreseen with certainty from all eternity (the Author could have added here), and that He has not decreed should happen in the manner that it actually happens."

These are five very beautiful and very orthodox truths. But I ask, if one wanted to treat the Author harshly, as he treats his colleagues, and use against him the same machinery he uses against them, would one not derive just as legitimately as he does the same horrors that he draws from the doctrine of his brothers? I leave it to the conscience of any upright but intelligent person to answer this question as they see fit, and I am greatly mistaken if I do not have their vote for the thought I have in this regard. The Author then conveys in the rest of this chapter the great difficulty there is in reconciling these five theological truths with the three that he said reason teaches us; but as he may have been mistaken in the thought or expression of the first, which is susceptible to a false meaning that he admits quite often in what follows, one should not be surprised if he finds more embarrassment in his path than there should be. A little further on, speaking of the five preceding truths, he says Tr. B. P.4:

§. 222. "It is true that there is none of these dogmas that is not contested for us. But it is also true that there is none that is particular to us, for several other Christian societies admit them as well as we do. All Christians, except the Socinians alone, recognize the foreknowledge of God. All Christians, except the Socinians and the Remonstrants, admit the powerlessness of the sinner to convert without grace. The Thomists and the Jansenists strongly maintain that the grace that converts us is effective in itself and always infallibly produces its effect. On the other hand, the Lutherans are not far from this thought, since they admit that one cannot resist that kind of calling which they name extraordinary..... One must not therefore imagine

that this dispute concerns only the Reformed. On the contrary, one can be certain that it concerns all of Christianity. It is also much older than the Reformation. St. Augustine and his disciples were made the same objections that are made to us presently."

I have been pleased to report these words as well, in order to show that we are not alone charged with what inconsiderate reason finds hard to digest in Theology, as those who do not love us always try to make it believed. A little further on, Tr. B. p. 7:

"But as the objection made here contains two, one of which is taken from the opposition that one believes to see between freedom and powerlessness, and the other from the incompatibility that one imagines there is between freedom and necessity, I propose to examine them separately, and one after the other, the first in this dissertation, and the second, which has various branches, in the two following ones."

This was also necessary to report, to give the Reader a clear and precise idea of what is going to be examined.

§. 224. The Author in his second chapter, in order not to argue in vain, makes an enumeration, as is proper, of the various things to which the name of freedom is given, so that subsequently one does not, because of these equivocations, dispute about things on which one agrees, as often happens. The first he names is the freedom called freedom of right, *Libertas juris*, because it consists in the right one has to do and not do certain things, such that whether one does them or omits them, one does not sin. This happens whenever there is no law requiring or forbidding such things. And it is in this sense that St. Paul said that when a husband is dead, his widow is free to marry whom she wishes: 1 Cor. 7:39. But there is nothing about which the Apostle uses this term more often in this sense than when it comes to the privilege of Christians, discharged by Jesus Christ from the heavy yoke of Mosaic laws. See Gal. 2:4. And 5:1, 13.

§. 225. The second is a freedom called civil, which is opposed to servitude properly so called, and which consists in not having a despotic master whom one is bound to obey as a slave. See 1 Cor. 7:21, 22, 23. Eph. 6:8.

§. 226. There is thirdly a freedom that can be called Spiritual and metaphorical, which consists in being exempt from the tyranny of sin and the slavery of vice. In this sense the Son of God told the Jews that all those who commit sin are slaves to sin, and that only those whom his grace has freed are truly free. John 8:34, 36. Rom. 6:16-18. 2 Pet. 2:19. It is none of these three kinds of freedom that is being disputed here, but rather the one that follows.

§. 227. Finally, there is a freedom that can be called natural, because one has it from birth, and it flows in some way from the principles of nature, which distinguishes it from civil freedom, which is a result of society, and from Spiritual freedom, which is

an effect of grace. This freedom makes us masters of a great number of our internal and external actions. One does not see that there is a single place in Scripture where this term is used in this last sense. But it is ordinarily given to it in works of Philosophy, Jurisprudence, Theology, and even in ordinary language; and it is this very freedom that I called Moral Freedom in §. 220. Be that as it may, this last kind of freedom is the only one necessary to be in a state to act morally. But what does it mean to act in this way? This is what must be explained. I have already done so in few words in the § I just cited; but here is how the Author himself explains it, Tr. B. p. 11, in a manner fairly consistent with mine; but he is not constant in this definition or explanation, and that is what often ruins everything.

§. 228. "It is important to note that we perform actions of two kinds, natural and moral. Natural actions are done in us and by us with a blind necessity and without knowledge, which is why they are neither blamed nor praised, neither rewarded nor punished. In this category one can place the digestion of food, the beating of the heart, the circulation of blood, snoring while sleeping, turning from the right side to the left side, and some other actions of sensitive and vegetative life.

Moral actions are those that one only does because one wants to do them, and which, according as they conform to or are contrary to our duties, are reputed good or bad, and worthy of blame or praise. For example, lying or telling the truth, returning a deposit or retaining it."

I wish my Reader to remember these words: they tell the truth, but one will often see that the Author does not always remember them himself.

"Tr. B. p. 13. Thus to act morally is to act in such a way that what one does is conforming or contrary to our duty, and worthy of being blamed or approved, punished or rewarded; such that after having done it, one can say to oneself, 'I was right,' or 'I was wrong to do it'."

But to say a word by anticipation, which opposes a thought that will follow from our Author: when I love and seek good as good, or when I hate and flee evil as such, can I not say that I am right to do that? Without doubt. Therefore this is moral, contrary to a strange claim of the Author that will be seen in what follows.

§. 229. "This is what it means to act morally. It is agreed that not all kinds of causes are in a state to act in this manner. Everyone agrees that neither inanimate Beings nor beasts are capable of it. Only intelligent Beings are. Even these do not always act this way and in all sorts of states. There are such states where one is incapable of doing either good or evil. Such is, for example, that of infancy, that of sleep, that of delirium."

§. 230. "One ordinarily gives the name of freedom to the assembly of what one regards as necessary to be able to perform these sorts of actions; and this alone shows that this freedom is very different from the three others that have been discussed. Indeed, not one of the three is necessary to act morally. One acts morally

even when one is subject to laws, and consequently deprived of the freedom of right. It is even rather difficult to understand how it is possible to act in such a way if one does not have some law that one is bound to observe. One acts morally even when one has lost that freedom which is called civil. Slaves can perform and do every day good and wicked actions. One acts morally even when one does not have Spiritual freedom. Sinners who are deprived of it nevertheless do evil and deserve to be punished for it."

§. 231. "This makes quite clear the equivocation of certain Protestant Theologians, who, when accused of destroying freedom, which was understood only as the freedom necessary to act morally, have admitted this consequence and have maintained that it is very consistent with Scripture, which formally states that sinners are so many slaves, and that it is to grace, not to nature, that the righteous owe their freedom. They have not noticed that the freedom which Scripture tells us sinners are deprived of is not the freedom necessary to act morally, since if they did not have it, it would be impossible for them to sin. For how could they sin if they lacked what is necessary to be able to do so? It is of Spiritual freedom that Scripture speaks in all these places, and not of that which we are accused of destroying. Consequently, to respond in this manner is to miss the point and to show that one does not understand the meaning of the objection one proposes to resolve."

This remark of the Author seems to me beautiful, judicious, important, and solid. It cannot fail to be approved by all wise people. It is also capable of smoothing out many misconceived difficulties, apparently very great and embarrassing, but which in the end amount to nothing, and which dissipate like smoke by this single remark.

§. 232. The second characteristic, according to the Author, which distinguishes the freedom that we are accused of destroying from the rest of the things that bear the same name: "It is that the actions in which this freedom is found are the true matter of laws and can be commanded or forbidden without absurdity and without injustice. I say disjunctively, commanded or forbidden, and not conjunctively, commanded and forbidden, because etc."

As the Author's decisions in this matter here are not drawn from the word of God, they must consequently be supported by reason, or one can reject them without ceremony: for it is not right to rely on them blindly. I say then that this characteristic here of moral freedom is not, in my opinion, exactly true, and that the Author consequently has been mistaken in giving it. This is clear in that it does not agree perfectly with the one he gave us first, which can be seen in §.228.

We do many things which cannot be, it seems, the matter of any law without some absurdity, and which nevertheless belong to the freedom in question here according to this first characteristic. For example, we naturally flee evil as evil: and similarly we naturally aspire to good as good, which is why, as we do this unfailingly and inevitably, it seems there would be absurdity in giving us laws that would order us to do these sorts of things, and even more to abstain from them. However, these

things belong to moral freedom, according to the first characteristic, since we only do them because we want to do them; and in doing them we can say to ourselves: I am right to do that; which is the first characteristic of a moral action that the Author himself has given us.

I believe therefore that it is sufficient to note here that although a thing cannot very reasonably be the subject of a positive and external law, it is sufficient that it be the subject of a natural law, but one which can only be executed by our will, to say that it belongs to the moral freedom in question. And one will also agree with me that if, by supposition, someone were to fail to do the aforementioned things, he would be blameworthy; and that is sufficient to say that the action is moral and free in the sense in which we must speak here.

Moreover, the matter has not remained in mere supposition, it is reduced to act: or at least some have given precepts contrary to this natural law, which perfectly proves its morality. Molinos in his *Spiritual Guide* truly stumbled against this natural law. He wants his Perfect One to hate himself with a perfect hatred, these are his words. He wants him to recognize himself as unworthy to possess the virtue of being praised; and to embrace with a calm and equal spirit all occasions of contempt, persecution, shame, affront, and infamy; and to give thanks to God when he finds himself on the point of being treated as he deserves. Does this not mean in clear terms that one should recognize oneself as unworthy of serving God with care, with Zeal, and in a word of serving him according to his will, in which true virtue lies? That one must give him thanks when one sees oneself on the point of being precipitated into the abysses of hell, where the worm does not die and where the fire is not extinguished? The Author will blame this, I am sure, so this is moral and its contrary consequently also. However, who would have believed that it would ever have been necessary to have a positive law or exhortations to dissuade men from falling into this fault?

Therefore, this second characteristic that the Author gives here to distinguish moral freedom from all other freedoms is not exact; the first is more so. It would be more accurate to form this second characteristic by saying: That the actions in which this freedom is found are all the things that are executed according to our choice and according to our will, and which can positively make the matter of laws, and can be commanded or forbidden without absurdity and without injustice; or which are commanded or forbidden by nature itself: but to which we nevertheless only obey in these things by acts of our will. Or again: That all the things that we do, or from which we abstain by ourselves and by our own will, and for which we can reasonably be approved or praised, or for which we could reasonably be blamed or praised if we do the contrary, belong to the freedom in question. But all this, in fewer words, falls back to the first characteristic that the Author has given us. It is that moral and free actions in this sense are those that one only does because one wants to do them; And also those of which one can say having done them; I was right or I was wrong to do that.

§. 233. The Author gives yet a third characteristic of this same freedom in these words: "It is that free actions depend so much on the will that one does them whenever one wants to strongly and sincerely; and that one abstains from them whenever one has a similar will not to do them. I say, when one wants it strongly and sincerely, because indeed I am speaking neither of ineffective wills, otherwise called velleities, nor of languishing wills. The first are followed by no effort, and the second make only very weak ones to succeed. I speak of firm and determined wills, which act with all their strength whenever necessary."

This characteristic is very true up to that point: but when the Author wants to explain it in the following words, he uses expressions that would be subject to giving rise to useless disputes, even between people who would agree with each other on the fundamentals of the doctrine, without them noticing it. For to explain himself he says: "This characteristic is a necessary consequence of the first two. For by the first, an action must be in our power to be free, if it must be free to be good or bad."

However, the Author himself has told us previously, Tr. B. p. 2, that man is so depraved since sin that it is impossible for him to convert himself, and even to do anything good without grace, and similar things. Which seems entirely contradictory to the preceding words, although they are not in his sense; since he says afterwards that spiritual freedom is not necessary to act morally. See §. 230 and 231. And although one can admit the ordinary maxim that he alleges afterwards: *In moralibus, tantum possumus quantum volumus*. That is to say, in terms of Morality, power extends as far as will. I believe that one must be content for all explanation to express this third characteristic by these words or equivalent ones: It is that free actions depend so much on the will that one does them whenever one wants to resolutely and determinedly; and that one abstains from them whenever one has a similar will not to do them. So that if one does them, one can always give this true reason, it is that one wanted to do them: and that if one does not do them, one can also always give this true reason, it is that one did not want to do them.

§. 234. Before proceeding further, I believe it is appropriate to use at this point everything I have ever seen most excellent in the best Authors of our century on this matter. I say then that our mind can examine in two ways all the objects that present themselves to it. First, it examines them simply in themselves, to conceive what is contained in their idea, and what relations they have or do not have with other objects, without regard to the interest we may take in them. Then it is a kind of pure speculation; and when the mind applies itself only in this way, it is properly what should be called Understanding, the idea of it will be distinct. We can consider in this way not only what has no relation to our utility, or what has only a minor relation to it; but also the things that are most important to us, when we content ourselves with considering them in themselves, without paying attention to the interest we have in them. We can meditate in this way on the nature of God himself, in a life of simple speculation.

Secondly, our mind still examines things in another way when it does not consider them simply in themselves, but studies them in relation to our interest, and tries to know them well only to judge at the same time of what importance they are to us. This sort of study is a study of usage and utility: the mind uses its light to discern what is good or bad for us, so that this light may then serve it to make its choice. When the soul applies itself and acts in this way, it must be noted that it is not a pure and simple light; but that it is a light modified by self-love, and joined to this love which pushes it and puts it into action. It is then a mixed and composite principle, in which a light and an inclination are found in concert in us, to carry us to the search for what can be for our good. It is this principle considered in this way, to which one can give the name of will.

§. 235. To form a more accurate idea of it, one can compare this will to a scale. Of itself it is in a state of indifference and equilibrium, and it cannot incline either one way or the other, except some reason or some perception serves as weight to it. And as these reasons and these perceptions can be at the same time in great number, and pull it in various directions; then by the same reason, it is the greatest weight that prevails. When these reasons and these perceptions are almost in equal opposition, it inclines successively one way and the other, according as it successively pays attention to the strength of these opposing perceptions. When the reasons and perceptions that are in opposition and counterweight are very unequal, then it determines itself infallibly to the side that prevails. And as it can pay attention to all of them through a thorough examination, if it does so and clearly perceives that it should determine itself to one side rather than the other, its determination is just and reasonable. But if instead of paying all the necessary attention to all the reasons and perceptions, it turns away from those it should consider principally, to dwell only on the others, then it lets itself be carried away and determines itself against reason, and consequently sins. However, in whatever way it may be, it never determines itself except when there is some reason or perception that prevails over the others; and if, paying attention to all, none prevailed over the others, it would always remain undetermined: but this case can hardly occur.

§. 236. This is clear and certain to those who reflect on themselves. One infers from this that one cannot recognize an active indifference in the will, if by that one means, as it seems that it is the thought of those who maintain this indifference, that the will has a proper power (independent of the reasons to act or not to act that are presented to it) to determine itself to one side rather than the other. One cannot conceive a power of this nature in the will. Whenever it determines itself, it can only be by the force of some reason or some perception, whatever it may be, distinct from the will itself, which is like a weight that makes it then willingly incline to that side.

§. 237. Indeed, the will being a reasonable and enlightened faculty, it can only act in conformity with its nature. There must therefore be some perception that makes an

impression on it for it to determine itself to action; otherwise it would be a brute cause and a brute determination. Suppose equal reasons, there remains no reasonable cause that can prevail for it to act in one way rather than another. It would therefore no longer be a determination of reason but of caprice. That cannot befit a reasonable faculty. And if you suppose strong reasons to act on one side, and you give it the power to determine itself to the contrary, or that of not acting at all, you then make it a mad and senseless faculty, and not a reasonable faculty.

§. 238. One can further prove the same thing by an incontestable principle: that nothing produces nothing. One concludes from this that the will, being an essentially reasonable faculty, there must necessarily be some reason or some motive to make it act; otherwise it will not act. If one responds that it is the will itself that has the power to determine itself, one merely evades the difficulty without resolving it. For it is not a question of the action of the will, which one admits belongs to it properly; but it is a question of knowing if it can act on nothing, for nothing, without reason, without motive, and for naught. Otherwise, if there is no cause or reason for its action, it is therefore a determination without reason and without cause: and consequently nothing will have produced something. This determination is real yet there is no cause for it. One cannot say why it is this way rather than otherwise. It is therefore a brute determination or of caprice, as we have said. That cannot befit the will, since it is an enlightened and reasonable faculty. A body cannot be naturally moved except by the impression of another body. A mind cannot be moved except by causes capable of moving it. The difference that exists between minds and bodies does not weaken this reasoning. The body is a dead principle, the mind is a living and active principle, I admit. But where does this difference lead? Is it to prove that the mind tends toward actions contrary to its nature? Not at all. The difference consists in that the body does not have the power to move itself, nor to determine its movement when it has received it, but that this determination depends absolutely on the body that first impressed the movement with a certain determination, and on the other bodies it encounters in its path, which diversely change this determination. For the mind, on the contrary, it is of itself disposed to action and movement. It moves and it acts actually as soon as objects are presented to it, that is to say, the reasons to act. For these objects constitute the reasons or cause them to arise. However, it does not act on nothing, without reason and without cause; for in that case it would act in a manner contrary to its nature.

§. 239. We can confirm this by comparing the operations of the understanding with those of the will. The understanding is an active principle as well as the will, according to the definition that has been seen above. However, suppose it without any object, it cannot act, and it can only judge on what it discovers about it. What judgments are with regard to the understanding, determinations are with regard to the will. They are either its judgments themselves or their necessary consequence. Thus that always depends on what it discovers in the objects it considers. If the understanding judged, not on what it perceives, but on what, without attention to

what is in the object, it pleased it to judge in a certain manner, without reason and without foundation, that would be ridiculous, and would not be a judgment of the understanding, but a caprice of madness. It is the same with the will. Thus this active indifference attributed to it contains a manifest absurdity; for the will is a reasonable faculty as well as the understanding. Now one could show by a very extensive detail and a perfect enumeration, as much as the matter may require, of all the various kinds of our determinations, that our will never determines itself to anything whatsoever, neither in the most important things, nor in the lightest and most indifferent, without there always being some reason or perception that has preceded and induced it to determine itself as it did. This is always true and constant, both in the most necessary actions and in the freest and most contingent ones, as one will easily notice if one wants to pay attention a moment after having acted: For one will easily remember what moved us on each occasion. This same thing is assumed as necessary and inevitable in the minds of all people in the world, without any exception, as is incontestable when reflecting on their conduct. No one sees another perform an action, whatever it may be, who, if he is interested in it, does not oblige him, even by force, to declare to him the reason why he did it, if he has enough authority over him for that. Solid and manifest proof of what I say, and that those who dispute here against us, dispute against their own sentiment and against their persuasion.

§. 240. But there are in the soul various kinds of lights and perceptions; and as there are some that lead us to our duty and to our true happiness at the same time, there are others that go toward taking us away from our duty, while making us tend toward a false happiness at the same time. Distinct lights always lead us to our duty and to our true happiness jointly. There are confused lights that lead us there too, as is found in the feelings of conscience, or in the feeling of natural law. But there are other confused lights in the soul, which are only the perception of the present state of the body, which almost always lead to determining oneself against one's duty and toward a false happiness. It would be desirable that men never determine themselves except according to distinct lights; for in confused lights, even those that lead us to our duty are not always without danger, as appears by the effects of what many call an erroneous conscience.

§. 241. But here we must say, however, that although the will never determines itself except by the force of the last reason that the mind considers; although it does not have this active indifference of which we speak here; it does not follow that man has no freedom of indifference. He has one: but it does not consist in a direct power to not do what one does, or to do what one does not do, without reason or against all reason; it consists in an indirect and more remote power to act in this way. It is in that it depends on the will, when several objects, several circumstances, several feelings present themselves to it, to consider them as it wishes. It feels the force and weight of each circumstance, in proportion to the attention it pays to it; and it pays as much and as little attention to it as it wants to. This is precisely what this freedom

consists in. The soul has the power to apply itself or not to apply itself, and to choose the objects to which it wants to apply itself: it even chooses and examines its matter, and it is only in conformity with this examination that it determines itself; which it does well or poorly, according to whether it weighs what must be weighed and as it should be: or that it neglects to pay attention to the main reasons: or that it prefers to follow its present interest, to keep itself in a false rest, which delivers it at the same time from the pain of such a scrupulous and exact examination. But at the moment it determines itself, it nevertheless has a reason that predominates in its mind over all the others, some that it has considered, and others that it has neglected to consider: and it is infallibly that it follows this reason which then predominates. It is thus that men infallibly incline to good and evil, and at the same time freely, in the sense of which we speak. But this word freely does not in any way indicate here a power to act and not to act, omnibus positus, at each moment, and on each thing where we determine ourselves. It is therefore in this that consists the freedom of indifference that can be attributed to man; and it is from the bad use he makes of it that proceeds all this diversity of wanderings, errors, and faults into which we precipitate ourselves, in the conduct of our life, and in the search we make for happiness; when we determine our judgment too promptly to act, before having well examined what course we should take. To prevent this inconvenience, we have the power to suspend the execution of such or such desire, as everyone can experience every day in himself. This is undoubtedly the source of that freedom of which I speak: it is in this that one can say consists what is called, though improperly, free will. For by thus suspending our desires, before the mind has determined the will to act, and before the action that follows this determination is done, we have during all that time the convenience to examine, to consider, and to judge what good or what evil there is in what we are going to do.

§. 242. But so far from this manner of always acting by some reason being what diminishes or abridges freedom, it is what it has most perfect and most advantageous. It is the end and use of freedom, far from being its diminution; and the more we are far from determining ourselves in this manner, the closer we are to misery and slavery. Indeed, suppose in the mind a perfect and absolute indifference, which cannot be determined by the last judgment it makes of the good and evil, which it believes its choice should follow; such indifference would be so far from being a beautiful and advantageous quality in an intelligent nature, that it would be as imperfect a state as that in which this same nature would find itself if it did not have the indifference to act or not to act, until it was determined by its will. A man is free to raise his hand to his head, or to leave it at rest: he is perfectly indifferent with regard to either of these things, and it would be an imperfection in him if this power were lacking, or if he were deprived of this indifference. But it would also be a great imperfection if he had the same indifference, whether he wanted to raise his hand or leave it at rest, when he wanted to defend his head or his eyes from a blow by which he would see himself about to be struck. It is therefore as great a perfection that the desire or power to prefer one thing to another be determined by good, as

it is advantageous that the power to act be determined by the will; and the more this determination is founded on good reasons, the greater this perfection is. Moreover, if we were determined by something other than the last result we have formed in our own mind, according as we have judged of the good or evil of a certain action, we would not be free.

§. 243. If we cast our eyes on the elect Angels or the blessed Saints, we will have reason to believe that they are more strongly determined to the choice of good than we are; and yet we have no reason to imagine that they are less happy or less free than we are. I believe one risks nothing in saying that God Himself could not choose what is not good, and that the freedom of this all-powerful Being does not prevent Him from determining Himself necessarily and infallibly for what is best.

§. 244. But to make known exactly the error into which one falls on this particular article of freedom, I ask if there is anyone who would want to be an imbecile, for the reason that an imbecile is less determined by wise reflections than a man of good sense? To give the name of freedom to the power to act foolishly and to make oneself the toy of shame and misery, is this not to debase such a beautiful name? If freedom consists in shaking off the yoke of reason, and in not being subject to the necessity of examining and judging, by which we are prevented from choosing or doing what is worse; if that is, I say, true freedom, fools and madmen will be the only free ones. But I do not believe, however, that for the love of such freedom, anyone would want to be mad, except he who already is. No one, I think, except our Author, had ever regarded the constant desire to be happy, and the necessity that is imposed on us to act in view of happiness, as a diminution of his freedom. Or at least certainly one cannot say that it is a diminution of it, nor similar ones, of which one has reason to complain. God Himself is subject to the necessity of being happy; and the more an intelligent Being is in such a necessity, the more it approaches an infinite perfection and felicity. In order that in the state of ignorance in which we find ourselves, we may avoid mistaking the path of true happiness, we have the power to suspend each particular desire that excites itself in us, and to prevent it from determining the will and carrying us to act. Thus, to suspend a particular desire is like stopping where we are not well enough assured of the way. To examine is to consult a guide; and to determine one's will after a solid examination is to follow the direction of an enlightened guide; and he who has the power to act or not to act, according as he is directed by such a determination, is a free agent; and this determination in which freedom consists, no more than the power or indifference of a scale to incline to right or left, is not diminished by being determined to incline to the right by a weight that pulls it there. A prisoner, whose chains come to be unfastened, and to whom the doors of the prison are opened, is perfectly at liberty, because he can go away or stay, according as he finds it more appropriate, even though he may determine to stay because of the darkness of the night, or the bad weather, or for lack of other lodging where he could retire. He does not cease to be free, although the desire for

some comfort that he may have in prison engages him to stay there, and makes him determine absolutely his choice to that side.

§. 245. God is thus by nature necessarily happy, because He is of Himself and sovereignly perfect. And as He is the sole source of all good, no creature can possess a solid happiness without having communion with Him, without drawing this happiness from the grace of His benevolence, in a manner where this happiness is joined to the glorification of His adorable name. But the glorification of God's name cannot be joined to the felicity of an intelligent creature unless this creature remains in the order, submission, obedience, and respect that befits it toward its creator; and it cannot arrive at this unless it goes there by the ways that God has prescribed for this, and which He has revealed. Let us posit then that the sole sovereign good of an intelligent creature consists in a perfect, sovereign, and permanently lasting felicity, which has its source in communion with God and which is joined to the glorification of His name: I say that the highest perfection of an intelligent Being here below consists in applying itself carefully and constantly to the search for true and solid happiness: or in embracing it without hesitation if this good presents itself immediately to its reflections. And that the care we should have not to take for a real felicity that which is only imaginary, passing, and deceptive, is the foundation of our freedom. On this basis, I say next that the good use of this freedom consists I. in consulting, deliberating, and suspending one's determination toward the enjoyment of a particular good that one desires or that presents itself, until one has sufficiently examined it to convince oneself whether it is a real good, and whether it is a step toward or an obstacle to the sovereign good that glorifies God while making us solidly happy. II. in moving without deliberation and without suspension toward the absolute, true, and infinite good, recognized or supposed as such. III. And finally it consists in rejecting likewise, and with horror without hesitating, the opposite evil, recognized or supposed as such. On the other hand, I also say that the bad use of this freedom consists, I. in embracing inconsiderately as a true good, or in determining oneself too quickly for a good which may be only apparent, and which may lead to sovereign misery, and to moving away from God, the sole source of true happiness. II. in keeping oneself voluntarily and invincibly attached to this false good on bad reasons. III. And finally in amusing oneself with deliberating and equivocating in the presence of the true and sovereign good, recognized or supposed as such. Finally, if one now considers that it is the good and bad use of our freedom that makes all the morality of our actions; and that it is impossible, however, to perform any voluntary and spontaneous action that does not have one of the qualities I have just indicated, that is to say, which is not guided by one of the principles I have just marked; one will see that it clearly follows from this that it is impossible to perform any voluntary action that is not moral, that is to say, praiseworthy or blameworthy. I believe it is clear from all this deduction that the freedom necessary to act morally does not consist in this active indifference which, omnibus positis, can always act or not act, do the pro and the contra on the same subject; but that it consists absolutely, entirely, and in all cases, in any action that can be called voluntary and

spontaneous. Scholars will notice without difficulty that Mr. Locke has a large part in all this deduction: and I frankly admit that his thoughts have served me greatly in coming to the conclusion I have just drawn from all these reflections; but I consider it an honor and not a shame to learn from all able people where they have something good; it is still something to know how to choose and to make use of solid knowledge. It is enough that my conclusion is new as a demonstrative conclusion, not to have worked in vain.

CHAPTER II. Examination of Chapters IV, V, VI, VII, & VIII of the first Dissertation of Treatise B.

§. 246. Now the Author represents the objections made against our doctrine of the powerlessness to do good into which men have fallen through sin: and as he does it very well, I will use his terms. Tr. B. p. 21. "We are accused of ruining in two ways the freedom necessary to act morally; on one side, by the powerlessness in which we maintain that all sinners naturally find themselves with regard to the good that God prescribes to them; and on the other, by the necessity of several kinds, where some other dogmas that we teach put all intelligent creatures, to do what they do.

I will repel this double accusation, beginning with that which asserts the opposition that one believes there is between freedom and powerlessness, which we put together in each sinner. Here is the form that can be given to it, and which makes it appear in all its strength.

We believe that the sinner deprived of grace is reduced to an absolute powerlessness to convert himself, and generally to do good actions. We receive with respect this great number of clear and precise decisions of the sacred Authors who say it in so many words, and who express themselves on this with a force that is not common. They say that of ourselves as of ourselves, we are not capable of having even a good thought, far from being able to do good actions. They say that the flesh does not subject itself to the law of God, and that indeed, it cannot. They say that it is as impossible for the sinner to convert as for a dead person to change his skin, and for a Leopard to change his spots. They say that this bad tree cannot bear good fruits. They say that as a branch bears no fruit if it does not remain on the vine, we can as little do it if we do not remain in Jesus Christ. Without me, says this great Redeemer, without me you can do nothing."

"I. But this being posited, how can it be that God commands the sinner to do this good which is impossible for him? If He can command us this, He can command us to fly in the air, to stop the course of the sun, and to transport mountains. He could order a blind man to see, a deaf man to hear, a paralytic to walk."

"II. How secondly, is it possible that man sins by not doing this good, which he is so little in a state to do? Who does not know that powerlessness, when it is total and absolute, dispenses with the obligation to observe the most just laws? Is it found wrong that a prisoner confined in a dungeon does not go to the temple to attend

the exercises of Religion, that a blind man does not read the Scripture, that a man reduced to the last indigence gives nothing to those who are in the same state? etc."

"III. How thirdly, can he deserve to be blamed for it, to be punished for it, either in time or in eternity? etc."

"IV. Fourthly, what reproaches have the greatest sinners reason to make to themselves, for not having done what was commanded to them, if what was commanded to them was impossible? what sorrow can they reasonably have about it? etc. All these considerations, it is said, clearly show that it is impossible to reconcile freedom with powerlessness, and that one must necessarily recognize one of two things; either that we can do what God commands, and thus faith deceives us by assuring us that this is not in our power, or that we have no freedom in this regard, and thus reason is mistaken in imagining to see distinctly the contrary."

§. 247. There is the objection well explained; and here is how the Author explains himself, to make us understand where he believes is the source from which one must draw the true solutions to this objection.

"There is no other answer to make to this objection than to maintain two things. One is that not all powerlessness is opposed to the freedom necessary to act morally. The other is that the powerlessness that we attribute to the sinner in relation to good is of the order of those that do not prevent those who are engaged in them from still being free enough to be able to sin. That is also," he says, "the only answer that is given."

But if I am permitted to give my opinion on a matter that has been treated by so many Great men, it seems to me that this approach is not well taken. Since we have just given the exact definition and all the natural characteristics of the freedom necessary to act morally, in which the words power or powerlessness have not even entered; it seems to me that it is more natural to confront the objections with these characteristics, and to see if the things objected destroy these characteristics or not. If they destroy them, the objection triumphs; if not, it serves nothing and is itself destroyed. Let us review these objections then, and see the responses following this opening, if they will not be solid, and if they will not exempt us from several scholastic minutiae, very little intelligible to the common faithful, whatever good judgment they may have, if they have not frequented the Schools, or at least studied what is customarily taught there. Here then is how I would like to approach it.

§. 248. One says: "But this powerlessness of the sinner to do good being posited, how can it be that God commands the sinner to do the good which is impossible for him?"

I say that God can, according to the just idea that we have given of the freedom in question, command all created intelligences everything that is just, holy, and right, and for which they could be praised, approved, or rewarded if they executed it; all the things that would be done if they wanted it resolutely; all the things that are such that if they do not do them after they have been commanded to them, one can

give this true reason: it is that they did not want to do them. The freedom of which we speak needs nothing else, as has been seen in its characteristics; of what then does one complain?

"But," one says, "if God can command us impossible things, He can therefore command us to fly in the air, to stop the course of the sun, to transport mountains, etc."

I respond that one has just seen that this consequence is false; He can command, according to us, all that is just and holy: all that would be done if we strongly, seriously, and resolutely wanted to do it; and which is such that if it is not done after it has been commanded to us, it is because we do not want to do it. Now such are not the actions of flying in the air, stopping the sun, or transporting mountains, etc. From which it is clear that when Scripture says that the sinner cannot convert himself, that he cannot do good, etc., its meaning is that he never wants to, and that invincibly he does not want to do it: no more than if he had invincible demonstration, after all the necessary examination suitable to the importance of the matter, that what is proposed to him is evil as evil; although he has never reflected maturely on it, with the care and application that objects of infinite importance deserve, which aggravates his crime. And the objection takes this powerlessness in a sense that would extenuate, or rather, would abolish the crime; it therefore misses the point. Moral powerlessness to good, or rather the spiritual powerlessness of which Scripture speaks, is an inflexibility and an invincible resistance to good, the only true one, on the part of the will, a disgust and an insurmountable contempt for this good, which is the sovereign good, or the assured way to attain it; Therefore it is a great crime. And powerlessness taken according to the idea of the objection is properly a physical and innocent powerlessness, since it is the powerlessness to do things that would never be done, whatever strong, absolute, and serious will we might have for them to be done. That then is for the first part of the objection; let us come to the second.

§. 249. One says secondly: "How is it possible that man sins by not doing this good, which he is so little in a state to do?"

You always see the same false idea; for to say here, by not doing this good which he is so little in a state to do, is to say, which he is so little in a state to want to do, so much does he despise it, so much disgust does he have for it, so much does he hate it, without having reason for it, or even without wanting to examine it seriously; but which would nevertheless be done if he wanted it resolutely and seriously. Thus the objection turns into an excuse what, according to truth, according to Scripture and reason, is an aggravation of crime. Is this not a good find? It continues:

"Who does not know that powerlessness, when it is total and absolute, dispenses with the obligation to observe the most just laws?"

One sees and feels the falsity of this assertion, in relation to the powerlessness found here. It is only an invincible inflexibility and a malicious resistance to good, which

one despises and rejects by one's will, and which fails to be done only because one does not want to do it; since if one wanted it very resolutely and seriously it would be done. Following the idea of the objection, if a poor father orders his son to work, to help him earn his living, with a work that he can very well do, provided that he wants it resolutely and absolutely; and it happens that this son is of such prodigious laziness that it makes him hate work, so that one cannot make him resolve to it, so much does he love ease and idleness: There he is, according to the objectors, completely exculpated, and justly dispensed from the obligation to work. And so it is everywhere else. One continues thus:

"Is it found wrong that a prisoner confined in a dungeon does not attend the exercises of Religion, that a blind man does not read Scripture? etc."

No, I will say, according to our principles, that is not found wrong, because one knows that however resolutely, strongly, and absolutely these people might want to do these things, they would not be done. That is for the second part: let us come to the third.

§. 250. One says thirdly: "How can the sinner deserve to be blamed for his perseverance in sin; how can he be punished for it, either in time or in eternity? What idea is it to have, not only of the goodness, but also of the justice of God, to believe that He will punish throughout all eternity the impenitence and unbelief, for example, of so many miserable ones, for not having done what it was no more possible for them to do than for a blind man to see, or for a dead man to resurrect himself?"

One always sees the same blunder; one turns into an excuse the things most aggravating for the crime. A man who is as incapable of loving good and following it, of loving the glory of God, justice, equity, charity, piety, and his salvation consequently, without having well examined all these things, as a blind man is incapable of seeing, or a dead man of resurrecting himself, is he not a monster in malice and iniquity? How then does one allege as an excuse what should make the penalties be redoubled? It is always the same fault. One does not distinguish the nature of these powerlessnesses, nor the purpose of Scripture in these comparisons. These images are employed in Scripture only to make felt the voluntary, invincible, but unjust and brutal resistance of the sinner to good; and consequently the atrocity of his obstinacy. And they are employed fraudulently or through ignorance, to claim that it does not want to speak of it, or that it should not speak of it, except as of a simple physical powerlessness, where the will is not at all obeyed however resolutely and seriously it acts, and it wants it with effort and contention; and where powerlessness consequently exculpates. Let us see the end.

§. 251. One says finally: "What reproaches have the greatest sinners reason to make to themselves, for not having done what was commanded to them, if what was commanded to them was impossible? What sorrow can they reasonably have about it? etc."

One sees by the just idea of things that we have given, the impertinence of all these murmurs and all these objections. One speaks of our application to good, and of the design that we would take to follow good and justice, by examining anew the good and solid reasons there are for that, as of the project we would make to transport mountains, or to stop the sun in its course; and that in all respects and in every sense: but it is fraudulently or through ignorance. It is true that the sinner is no more in a state to truly follow good than to stop the course of the sun, or to transport mountains; but is it because however strongly, resolutely, and sincerely he might want it, he would succeed no better at it than at this transport of mountains by the same means? No. He cannot devote himself to good as he should, only because resolutely and obstinately he does not want it in that way, and because he cannot want it with the sincerity and purity that would be necessary. And the reason for this powerlessness is that he makes too little of it, that he despises it too much, and that he has too much disgust for it. That is why he cannot: Does that exculpate him? Has he no reason to reproach himself about it, and to have sorrow for it? One sees then that all these objections and these murmurs vanish like smoke provided that one remains firm on one's principles, which are true, solid, and reasonable. One could therefore stop there, since this objection is sufficiently overthrown by these considerations, whatever may be the origin and source of such inflexibility and obstinacy, which I have called moral or spiritual powerlessness. However, as the origin of such a quality in us further helps to stifle the murmurs or to show their injustice and iniquity, we will examine what the Author says about it.

§. 252. The Author examines the various responses that our Doctors have made to this objection; and as they almost all have something very good, instead of reason wanting one to try to join them, as supporting each other and lending a hand to one another, he finds it appropriate to reject them all except for one. He therefore examines three responses. And as he loves distinctions, divisions, and subdivisions very much, he also gives three different meanings to the first, and makes four chapters to examine only the first meaning. But as I wish to be brief, and to say nothing but what is necessary, I will not speak of the third meaning, which in my opinion can only serve there as scholastic display, to round out the number of School distinctions, often very vain and useless. And on the other meanings, I will also say as little as possible, without having any regard for this scholastic paraphernalia, which one can usefully do without here.

The first meaning of the first response is this: It is that the powerlessness to do good, which we put in the sinner according to Scripture, and which gives occasion to the murmur of the objection, is voluntary in its origin; in that it is by a free act of the will that the sinner has fallen into it; that is why this powerlessness cannot rightfully destroy the freedom necessary to act morally, or rather, that is why it cannot serve as an excuse, even if it were true that it could serve as one, if it had happened to him without the intervention of sin. Now although I have shown in my previous responses to the objection that if one considered only the nature of this

powerlessness in itself, and without other consideration, it is visible that it is appropriate only to aggravate the crime and not to excuse it: However, it is not useless to observe that it is not in the sinner purely by creation: but that it is the effect of an abandonment of the sinner to himself, founded on a just and holy judgment that has fallen upon him, for a voluntary and atrocious sin committed deliberately. These Authors therefore claim that this suffices to make criminal the omission of all that the sinner would be bound to do, if he found himself in the first happy state where God had put him at first. And in this connection, two examples are produced to confirm these thoughts.

§. 253. One is that of a debtor, who, dissipating his goods through all the excesses of luxury, intemperance, and debauchery, and putting himself in a state of being unable to satisfy his creditors, nevertheless does not take away from them the right to demand what is due to them, and to use against him, in default of payment, the rigors of justice, and even imprisonment. The other is that of a drunkard who, having drowned his reason in excess of wine, comes in this state to kill someone with whom he has quarreled, and is punished for it just as if he had been in his right mind when he performed this action.

§. 254. The Author is not at all satisfied with this response, nor with these examples; and nothing, he says, appears to him weaker or more poorly conceived. But I do not see that it is with much reason; one will judge. Indeed, he says, Tr. B. p. 29, "it is necessary that those who allege this to us have one or the other of these two thoughts: either that all powerlessness contracted by a voluntary action is compatible with the freedom necessary to act morally; or that this is true only of some kind of powerlessness, of the order of that which appears in these two examples, which will serve no purpose if that of the sinner is not of this same order."

But that is creating a phantom in order to have the pleasure of overthrowing it. Those who make this response may have neither one nor the other of the thoughts that you put in your alternative. Is it not enough for that, that these people have as their goal to prove that even if it were true, which it is not, that the sinner by his sin had fallen into the physical and absolute powerlessness to satisfy the law, his obligation to satisfy it would nevertheless remain: that is to say, that God would be within His rights to demand from him this obedience to the law, and in default, to use punishment? That is the very natural goal of their reasoning. Now this goal, and their reasoning in this way, is just and solid. How much more true is it then that sinners remain punishable in the omission of their obedience, if the powerlessness into which they have fallen aggravates the crime instead of excusing it, as I have pointed out? And if considered in itself simply, one notes that it is not one of those called physical and exculpating, which take away all freedom necessary to act morally; but on the contrary that it allows such freedom to abundantly subsist? Thus then by imputing to these Doctors who are wise, chimeras which they have never thought of, it is easy for you to make them appear ridiculous; but that is neither wise, nor charitable, nor useful for anything good.

§. 255. But what I see as worst in the Author's conduct at this point is not the chimerical design that he attributes to these Doctors, in order to have the pleasure of fighting against them afterward and triumphing over them; it is that it appears by the manner in which he reasons against them, in all the rest of this chapter, that he is not orthodox on the doctrine of original sin. For that sin, according to God's own declarations in His word, who certainly knows well what judgment He makes of it; and also according to what I believe the thing to be just, holy, and worthy of the all-perfect Being, obliges us here to speak of all men on the present matter as of Adam himself, their common father, notwithstanding all the despicable quibbles of the contradictors. That is to say, one must speak on this matter of each and every man, as I have just done in the preceding §. But I do not wish to broach this matter which is not my subject, to treat it in all its extent. I will say only in passing, to respond to the scandalous reasonings, offensive against God and against His revelation, and very unworthy of a good Reformed, which the Author has put in his page 34 and in all the rest of the chapter: That one sees well among men that an entire family is deprived of its goods and its honor for a crime of lèse-majesté committed by the father. And if afterward, this infamy and this indigence into which the children have fallen thereby induces them to commit crimes that they would not have committed if they had been left their goods and their honor, they are punished for it the same, or perhaps even more severely than they would be if their father had remained innocent, and they rich and honorable. That suffices to confirm the orthodox doctrine on this point, and to counter the false and dissimilar examples which the Author uses inappropriately; but not without offending God, nor without scandalizing His Church.

All our good and ancient Protestant Doctors, who walked straight and roundly, who with a docility of wise and respectful children sought in Scripture only its purest, most naive, and most uniform sense, without bringing anything of their own to it, and who did not raise an eyebrow before this Divine word; people who were not in the fashion of today, where several take the liberty of wanting to correct this divine word by their own wisdom and by their high-flown speculations, believing themselves wiser and more skilled than it; they finally who trembled rather before this holy word than raised their head in its presence; they have seen original sin in this sovereign Rule exactly as I suppose it here. And to allege nothing from the most common symbolic books, which one can have at all hours in hand; I want to put here three examples with a word of reflection.

§. 256. In 1637, the Illustrious College of Alba Regalis in Hungary had printed in the proper printing press of Princes George and Sigismund Ragotzi, a Catechism for the use of this College, and also for the use of the young Princes of this House, from which the following three questions have been extracted.

Quæst: Quid est peccatum originale? R. Est morbus hæreditarius, seu labes in quâ omnes concipimur & nascimur, sicut dicitur: In peccato concepit me mater mea. Atque hoc est peccatum originale inhærens.

Quæst: Quid est peccatum originale imputatum? R. Est inobedientia Adami, seu defectio a Deo, quatenus nobis imputatur, sicut dicitur: Per unius inobedientiam, peccatores constituti sunt multi.

Quæst: Peccatum originale, est ne poena vel peccatum? R. Si in Adamo tanquam in radice consideres totum genus humanum, est culpa, sicut dicitur: In quo omnes peccaverunt. Sed si spectes corruptionem quæ singulis inhæret est poena.

Here is the French:

Question. What is original sin? Answer. It is a hereditary disease, or a corruption in which we are all conceived and born, as it is said: My mother conceived me in sin. And that is the inherent original sin.

Question. What is imputed original sin? Answer. It is the disobedience of Adam, considered as a rejection he made of God, insofar as it is imputed to us. As it is said: By the disobedience of one, many were made sinners.

Question: Is original sin a punishment or an offense? Answer. If you consider the whole human race in Adam, as in its trunk or in its root, it is a fault or an offense, as it is said: In whom all have sinned. But if you consider the corruption which is inherent in all, it is a punishment.

In a small booklet printed in Edinburgh in 1670, and which has for title: *Confessio fidei in conventu Theologorum, autoritate Parlamenti Anglicani indicto elaborata, quin & ab eodem, deindeque ab Ecclesia Scoticana cognita & approbata, unacum catechismo duplici, Majori minorique, e sermone Anglicano, summa cum fide in latinum verso.* One finds what follows in chapter VI, which speaks of the sin of Adam and Eve.

Sect. 2. Hoc illi peccato, justiciâ suâ originali & communione cùm Deo exciderunt. Gen. 3:6,7,8. Eccl. 7:29. Rom. 3:23. itaque facti sunt in peccato mortui Gen. 2:17. Eph. 2:11. atque in omnibus facultatibus & partibus animæ corporisque penitus contaminati Tit. 1:15. Gen. 6:5. Jer. 17:9. Rom. 5:10-19.

Sect. 3. Quumque illi fuerint radix totius humani generis, hujusque peccati reatus fuit imputatus Gen. 1:27,28. & 2:16,17. Act. 17:16. eademque in peccato mors, ac natura corrupta propagata, omnibus illorum posteris, quotquot ab iis ordinaria quidem generatione procreantur. Rom. 5:12, 15-19. 1 Cor. 15:49. Gen. 5:3. Job 14:4. Job 15:14.

That is to say:

Sect. 2. By this sin they have lost their original justice and communion with God, and have thus become dead in sin, entirely soiled in all parts of their soul and body.

Sect. 3. And as they were the stock or root of all mankind, the fault or guilt of this sin has been imputed to all their descendants as to themselves, as well as the same death in sin; and the corrupted nature has been continued in all the descendants who have issued from them, by the way of ordinary generation.

In 1688, there was printed at Delft a Reformed catechism having for title: Catechism for the instruction of children, drawn up for the use of the Churches and Schools, which are in the United Provinces of the Low Countries. In article 2, which treats of sin, you will find what follows:

Question: How can you say that this sin of the first humans has rendered all humans sinners? Answer: Because I learn from St. Paul that by one man sin entered into the world, and by sin death; and that thus death has come upon all men, inasmuch as all have sinned. Rom. 5:12.

Question: Why are other humans guilty with their Father, and guilty of his sin? Answer: Not only because corruption has been communicated from the Father to the children; but because God can justly deprive them of His love, as children of a rebel, who in sinning had dragged all his posterity into enmity against God.

There is what all the Protestant Churches, and all the faithful in a word, who seek in the word of God only what is there, have seen in this holy word, and the places where they have seen it. But today there are found, even among us, bolder people who produce as an important and very considerable discovery, to flatter the delicacy of the flesh that is enemy to the rights of God, this thought: That the sin of our first parents is not imputed immediately, but mediately, and only in consequence of our corruption which deserves it. But that is exactly taking the effect for the cause, and the cause for the effect. For if it were not by a judgment of God, who finds it just to deprive children of His graces because of the sin of their Father; and if God could justly and without defiling Himself by connivance, and the tolerance of sin, consider the descendants of Adam as a pure matter, coming out innocent from His hands, could He not cause the children to be born pure, uncorrupted, and holy from this impure stock? No, you will say, for it is written, who will bring forth the clean from what is soiled? Not one. Job 14:4. That is true, I will say, God cannot: but why can He not? Is it for lack of a power great enough to be able to produce this effect? Not at all. No one among Protestants believes that the mother of the Savior was immaculate, without sin and without corruption; she herself confesses that she had a savior. And yet the Lord Jesus was born of her pure, holy, without spot or blemish, and absolutely exempt from all stain or corruption. It is true that God employed a means of distinction for that, in order to better persuade us of the entire purity and incorruption of the immaculate person of the Savior. But man is not more corrupted than woman, nor more criminal or more poisoned than she, by reason of the first fall, in which the woman herself induced him, and where she was the instrument that precipitated him into it. God, who used this way to preserve the Savior from all corruption, if it were only a matter of power, would have enough ways to preserve from the same corruption all the descendants of Adam. But what prevented Him from doing so is His own purity and holiness: it is the hatred and horror He must show for sin. If He therefore could not cause to be born pure the descendants of corrupted and sinful persons, it is for the same reason that makes Him unable to lie or to deny Himself; it is because He cannot here dissimulate sin enough, and have it

little enough in horror, to cause to be born from rebellious Subjects who have had Him in contempt, an immaculate and holy posterity, by an effect of His greatest favor, to treat it as friend, and as if it came from His friends and His faithful allies; or as if He came to create the matter of it, and it came out immediately from His holy and adorable hands. It is therefore by a just judgment of God, on Adam and on his posterity, arrived in consequence of the first sin, that we are all born corrupted, that is to say sinners and condemnable. And that is what is called immediate imputation of Adam's sin. But let us not enter further into this matter; that suffices in passing: it is not always long discourses that make the strongest proofs: let us return to our sequence.

§. 257. The Author, continuing, reasons in the following chapter with subtleties little grave, in my opinion: but, what is worse, little solid. He says then that even if it were true that powerlessness which is posterior to the law would not dispense from the obligation to obey it, as in the preceding examples, where the drunkard was obliged not to kill even before being drunk, and the prodigal obliged to pay his debts even before being ruined; it dispenses from it nevertheless, and even prevents such a law from being made, if the powerlessness is older than the law. As if one ordered under penalty a man who has had his tongue cut out to speak, etc. Tr. B. p. 40. Now he claims that the powerlessness of our first parents to believe and to repent, when this commandment was addressed to them shortly after their fall, is of this latter order; for they were already sinners, and consequently incapable, according to our doctrine, of executing this law or this commandment. But to say that is to suppose falsely. Is not the obligation to believe all that God says, to trust in all His promises, to obey all that He commands, prior to sin, and consequently prior to this powerlessness produced by sin, just as the obligation not to kill is prior to the state of drunkenness, and the obligation to pay one's debts prior to the state of indigence? The novelty of the matter makes no difference here. To believe God when He speaks is always to believe Him; to trust in Him when He promises, or to obey Him when He commands, does not change in nature by changing object or matter. Now this obligation to believe Him, to trust in Him, and to obey Him eternally, whatever it may please Him to say, to promise, or to command, was before sin; and thus, I will say, your remark is false. It is the same with the powerlessness of the Jews to believe that Jesus Christ was the Messiah, of which the Author speaks afterward. And as for us today, we have already seen in the two preceding §§ that one should speak of us as of Adam himself. Thus all these subtleties do not prevent the Doctors for whom I speak from having been right.

§. 258. The Author's design, in the following chapter which is the seventh, is entirely overthrown by what I put in §. 254. He wants to prove that if it is a physical powerlessness that one has brought upon oneself by one's sin, one indeed sins by throwing oneself into it unnecessarily; but that one does not commit a new sin by not actually doing what it prevents one from doing. But if the examples alleged prove, as these Doctors intend, that although one does not commit new sins, in this

same case one is nevertheless subject to the same penalty, or nearly so, as if one actually committed new ones, what purpose does this chapter serve? That is nevertheless their thought, or it can be; and that is what the force of their examples leads to. However, I do not believe and do not admit that the Author succeeds in the design he has, though useless to him even if he succeeded. Otherwise it will be necessary to say according to him that a drunkard who kills a man in his brutishness has indeed sinned in getting drunk, but that he does not sin in killing his neighbor. I believe few people will admit that. But he makes great reasonings on the other example of the prodigal to prove by its means what he desires. But whether he succeeds or not, the preceding example will suffice for our purpose: one example not being able to satisfy everything, that is why two are employed.

§. 259. But in my opinion, even with this one, he does not succeed either. Here is the strongest part of his reasoning. Tr. B. p. 45. "Let us imagine a man of the world who, after having made various borrowings, dissipates his goods and those of others. There he is absolutely unable to pay his debts, to repair his injustices by good restitutions, to maintain his family, to assist the poor, etc. Let us imagine that after all that God touches his heart, and that feeling keenly the irregularity of his past conduct, he groans and deplores it, and obtains pardon for it from God. This pardon will not prevent the past from being past, and thus his powerlessness having come to him by his fault, it is not voluntary in the sense of these Doctors. Being such, and all that follows those of this order being criminal, according to these Theologians, will he not sin every time he finds the occasion to acquit himself of the duties that have become impossible for him in this way? Will he not commit in each of these occasions new injustices? These excesses themselves recurring often, and some always subsisting, will they not be permanent true sins, true habitual sins, incompatible with regeneration and the state of grace? What will become of him after his death, will he be saved or will he perish? If he perishes, of what use to him are his faith, his repentance, and his piety? And what will become of the promises that God makes in the word to those who will discharge all these duties? And if he is saved, what will become of what one believes, and what one has such good reasons to believe, that there is no salvation without amendment: that a single known sin, in which one persists until the end of life, is sufficient to close the door of Heaven?"

This seems pressing and well pushed, but it nevertheless has no force. I will not make the puerile response that he lends us afterward, to have more facility in destroying it; but I will respond what follows. It is that when God pardons this converted man of whom the Author speaks, He grants him the grace that he has no doubt asked Him for; which was, that it would please Him to pardon him, not only his past excesses and dissipations; but also all their fatal and then inevitable consequences, of which he judges himself guilty and responsible before His throne. Therefore they are sins, since he must obtain God's pardon for them in order to be saved. And also although this man does not commit a sin of avarice or hardness by not giving alms through powerlessness, that does not prevent him from having to

groan before God, and to ask Him pardon unceasingly, for having voluntarily put himself in a state of being on one side as useless to the world as if being rich, he were at the same time hard, avaricious, and without charity; and on the other, as harmful and as offending justice and equity as if he stole every day from the persons whose goods he has consumed, the interest of the dissipated sums, without counting the theft of the capital. That is therefore a permanent fault, so to speak; but which is no longer voluntary then: that is why it is also pardoned, in consequence of a sharp and piercing pain, for having voluntarily precipitated himself into such an abyss: fault which he felt not only at the first moment of his conversion, but which will be itself sensible and painful to him until his death. But one can say that if he remained impenitent, the justice of God would treat him on the basis just mentioned. That suffices to destroy all the ingenious subtleties, which still follow in this chapter, and which it is no longer necessary consequently to report here, as being vain and overthrown.

§. 260. The Author is not yet content, another chapter is still needed to entirely destroy this response; it still has some defect in his opinion, which it is good to discover so that one no longer stops at it. "One wants to prove," he says, Tr. B. p. 48, "that voluntary powerlessness subsists with freedom. For this purpose we are told that one must indeed suppose that it is freely that this prodigal abstains from satisfying his creditors, since one punishes him for it, there being no justice in punishing what is not free."

In these words there is first an error of the pen; the Author has put voluntary powerlessness, wanting or having to put physical powerlessness, but which has been caused by a voluntary act, as is manifest by the nature of the dispute. But that is nothing; the important thing is that the Author attributes to these Doctors a design they do not have. Their design is not to prove that physical powerlessness subsists with freedom; but rather that this powerlessness subsists with the obligation to obey or to be punished; which is very different. And although I believe I have proven that same thing in the preceding §, that is nevertheless not necessary to maintain except by special right; since the powerlessness of the sinner, which makes the subject of the dispute here, is moral and not physical, as has already been seen. He continues: "But nothing is more false," he says, "than this first supposition, namely that one imprisons this prodigal to punish him."

After that the Author produces some ingenious subtleties to support this strong but very inconsiderate negation. To compare two things together very reasonably, it is not necessary that they be similar in all; one always says that all comparison is limping: it suffices that they resemble each other in the things that are on the subject. Be that as it may, if the Author had remembered that the Savior himself often employs this comparison, I believe he would have respected it a bit more than he did. Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors, are words well known and well respected among all Christians. And the Savior paying for us, He delivers us and

has us put out of prison. Since then this comparison is so well authorized, one cannot deny that paying debts is suffering the penalties that sin deserves; and that notwithstanding so many reasonings and speculations as one will want, prison is here necessarily considered as a penalty; that is why all that one can say to the contrary is vain and frivolous to the highest degree.

But I do not pretend nevertheless to prevail here simply by authority, although the authority I employ is such that the whole Universe should lower its eyes and put its finger on its mouth before it. I claim that experience here justifies our thoughts, even among men. If it happens that an extreme dissipator of the goods of others goes bankrupt, and that he is recaptured by his creditors, justice authorizes them to have him put in prison; even if he would not have a penny left, nor any means of being able to satisfy them. And if to take revenge only without other hope, they are willing to provide for his maintenance in prison, and to keep him there all his life, justice will grant it to them. But let us suppose that there can still be some doubt in this, it must also be noted that this case is not yet ours. Our case is, if it happened that the Sovereign himself was here the creditor, and that the debtor was his Subject, who had thus surprised him, cheated him, and dissipated large sums that he would have had from him by borrowing, pretexting to want to make excellent use of them. Can one doubt that then this Sovereign is in all possible rights to keep him in prison the rest of his days, for punishment and reparation of his crime? Few Sovereigns would even stop at this moderation. That is what finally perfectly justifies a comparison that comes to us from such a good source. Let us continue.

§. 261. There is still something to rectify, some minutia on the other example, it should not be neglected. "In the production of the other example," he says, "one supposes that the powerlessness of the drunkard to prevent himself from shedding innocent blood is total and absolute. And I say that it is very rare that it is so..... There ordinarily remains to him, and almost always, some feeble glimmer, some spark of knowledge, which makes his action not entirely mechanical, that it has some small remainder of freedom, and consequently that it deserves to be punished."

But who will our Author persuade that there has ever been a Doctor in the world among the Reformed who has maintained that men since sin commit crimes as true machines, without the slightest glimmer or spark of knowledge of their duty, and without the slightest freedom? Against whom is he speaking then? against his shadow.

"One supposes thirdly," he says, "that what one punishes in putting this drunkard to death is what he did in killing the innocent. However, it is very possible that what one punishes is the fault he committed in exposing himself to the danger of doing what he did."

Is it possible that one advances such a thing! What is not a man capable of, who wants to triumph at whatever cost, and who wants to have alone the honor that he

could justly share with his brothers! This is here the honor of responding solidly to an objection that one believes important and embarrassing. Is that really worth the trouble of exposing oneself to making such great faults as those that one sees in the two treatises that I examine? Has one ever heard say that one had put a man to death, or even dreamed that one should do so, for having stupefied himself with wine, and for having made himself capable of killing a man, without subject and without reason being drunk? Is it this pitiful thought that one has in mind when one puts such a murderer to death, as with my own eyes I have seen one executed in my presence while still being in France? Or is it to obey the law of God which says: Gen. 9:6, Whoever sheds the blood of man by man his Blood shall be shed, for God made man in His image? When a man had brutalized himself with wine a hundred times, and at the hundred and first time had made a thousand vain efforts to try to kill an innocent without succeeding, would one put him to death for this reason? Everyone knows that no. How then advance such a thought? The rest of the chapter are minutiae, which after that should not stop us.

CHAPTER III. Examination of Chapters IX to XIV of the first Dissertation of Treatise B.

§. 262. The Author finally comes to the second sense of the first response which is, that this powerlessness of the sinner against which the objection fights, is voluntary with regard to its subject; I mean, that it resides in the will, that it affects it, that it binds it, and that it prevents it from doing and willing what would be just and conforming to the law of God. Or to speak more intelligibly, it is that it is the will itself that puts obstacle to the things that are the object of this powerlessness. This is still certain and reasonable, but let us see the Author's oppositions.

"This," he says, "does not appear to me more reasonable than the preceding. First it supposes the truth of a sentiment that I believe very false, and of which I hope to show the falsity in the sequel. It is that it suffices that an action be voluntary to be free. For if the contrary is true, as it is easy to prove, it does not follow at all that an omission is free, from the fact that the powerlessness in which one finds oneself to do what one omits is voluntary. Let it be as voluntary as one wants, what does it matter, if however voluntary it is, it ruins freedom. But in fact, it is beyond doubt that there is such powerlessness which, although it affects the will, does not prevent the omission of what it allows to be done from lacking the freedom necessary to act morally. (I have demonstrated the contrary above, but let us see your proofs, afterward we will speak.) I suppose first with the new Philosophers, that it is the will that judges, that is to say, that affirms and denies, that pronounces that such a thing is true and that such another is false. And I say on this foundation, that if all powerlessness that affects this faculty were a voluntary powerlessness, and thereby compatible with the freedom in question, it would be necessary to regard as free the powerlessness in which we find ourselves to strongly persuade ourselves of the propositions that appear to us completely obscure and uncertain, that is to say, that

appear to have no mark of truth (I believe that the Author meant to say, of certainty) such as these two: The number of angels is even; The number of angels is odd."

"I say the same thing of the powerlessness in which we find ourselves to admit as certain and indubitable evidently false propositions, such as these two: One and one make five. The whole is always less than the least of its parts. I say it finally of the impossibility there is in positively rejecting as false propositions that appear evidently true: These two for example: One and one are two. The whole is greater than each of its parts. As this triple powerlessness affects the will, it will be voluntary, if to be free it suffices that this faculty be the subject of it; and it will be freely that we will abstain from doing all these things: which can only be very absurd."

But to respond to all that I say that it is indubitable that the Author loses sight here of the nature of the freedom in question, and that he claims by a mistake into which it is quite easy to fall, that the infallibility of the event is incompatible with it, and that it is contrary to it. That however is a great blunder: nothing is contrary to the freedom necessary to act morally except what is contrary to the spontaneous; that is to say, a violence which forces us to act against our present inclination, and against our own choice; or what takes away from us knowledge and makes us act mechanically. I would therefore like to ask the Author if he believes that God is more in a state of being able to lie than we are of being able to believe that one and one make five? etc. No doubt he will not say so. If he believes that the elect Angels and the blessed Saints are more in a state of being able to blaspheme the holy name of God, to cease loving Him, adoring Him, praising Him, than we are of being able to believe false the proposition which says that one and one make two? etc. However in all this, do God or the Angels act mechanically and without moral freedom; and are they neither praiseworthy nor blameworthy for these sorts of things? Thus certainty or the infallibility of the event is therefore not incompatible with the freedom in question at this point. No voluntary action can be destitute of the freedom necessary to act morally, as I have sufficiently proven in §. 245, and elsewhere. And when I unflinchingly abstain from the things that the triple powerlessness mentioned above makes impossible for me, I nevertheless do it in making a good and legitimate use of my freedom, that is to say, founded on good reasons: I do it with knowledge and deliberation: of my own movement and according to my own choice; therefore with the freedom necessary to act morally. Besides, if by impossibility I were to come to do these things, I would be blamed for them: which proves again by a very natural characteristic that all that is moral. The Author often forgets that infallible or unflinching is not opposed to free; but that it is extorted by violence against our present own choice; or necessary by a Metaphysical necessity; or to act brutally, mechanically, and without knowledge that is contrary to it. For all that is done with knowledge and in a Spontaneous manner is free in the sense in question here: that is sufficiently proven not to return to it. One should say the same thing about what the Author advances concerning love, on the following

page Tr. B. p. 58. It is true that we cannot love evil known as evil, nor hate good known as good; but we should not do so either; and however it is with knowledge and by our own choice, of our own movement, without being forced in our sentiments, that we love this good, as it is just and reasonable. Therefore that is praiseworthy and the contrary would be blameworthy if one did it. Therefore that is moral from that very fact. It is true that it would be absurd, or nearly so, to command us to love good; but it is because God has so well commanded it to us by nature, and we determine ourselves with so much cheerfulness and promptitude to this first, very just and very wise commandment, by the reasonable nature that God has given us; that it is as superfluous to command us anew what is so well and so effectively recommended to us by reasonable nature and by the nature of things themselves, and which is always constantly and faithfully executed by our will. Nevertheless it is in a spontaneous manner, with knowledge, and in making a good and legitimate use of our freedom, that we obey these sorts of orders; therefore that is moral.

Yet another new mark of morality: It is that it suffices that a thing can be wisely commanded to us, or its contrary be blamed in us if we did it; and that a thing can be wisely forbidden to us, or its contrary be praised, or approved in us if we did it, to be moral. That is to say, that all that is done with the freedom necessary to act morally. Now if it is absurd and ridiculous to command us to love good recognized or supposed as such, we would nevertheless be blameworthy if we hated it, as Molinos did or claimed that one should do: and similarly if it is absurd to command us to hate evil recognized or supposed as such, we would nevertheless be blameworthy if it happened to us as to Molinos to love it. Therefore all that is moral from that very fact. Will one say, for example, that although it is absurd to forbid us to fly in the air like birds, or to stop the sun in its course, we would nevertheless be blamed if we did it; as one can say that although it is absurd to give us a contrary commandment, we are nevertheless approved in that we do not strongly persuade ourselves that the number of angels is even, or that it is odd, or in that we do not believe that one and one make five, and similar things; and that we would be blameworthy if we did it? No one will say that one can speak of one of these things as of the other, there is therefore a difference. But what can this difference be, if not that one is purely physical and physically necessary; and that the other is moral although morally necessary? But this moral necessity takes nothing away from the freedom necessary to act morally; each faculty acts necessarily according to its nature: whether it be necessarily or non-necessarily, that does not change their nature.

§. 263. But as the Author loves high-flown speculations, he employs more of them at this point: here are his words. "Thirdly, the blessed love God with all their strength; but they are far from loving Him as much as He would deserve to be loved. That is what the quality of a necessarily limited creature does not permit them. There then is a new powerlessness which has its seat in the will, and which prevents it from acting. Thus it is voluntary in the second sense. However, it does not fail to excuse,

and to render absolutely involuntary and innocent, the omission of what it does not allow to be done."

Is that not seeking principles very clear and very known? To want to settle a question by the knowledge that we have of the exact, perfect or imperfect manner, according to which the blessed love God in Heaven, is that not wanting to prove *obscurum per obscurius*? An obscure thing by another which is even more so? But however I say on that, that the blessed love God with all their heart, with all their soul, with all their strength, and with all their understanding; and that they are not obliged to more. Let the Reader judge which of us two is right, or which of us two acts more straightforwardly.

§. 264. The last § of this chapter is vain, and so strange that one does not understand how a wise and skilled man can produce it in a book: here it is.

"If things that one could want, but that one does not want, such as the circulation of blood, the beating of the heart, etc., can be named innocent and involuntary; much more, those that it is impossible for us to want should be named innocent, involuntary, and non-free."

To which I respond that, without counting the same self-forgetfulness, which here opposes all necessary to free, as incompatible things, contradicting himself, it is that one compares by this discourse infinitely dissimilar things, so to speak; but to which, by equivocation, one gives the same name; and on this foundation, without other reason than because of the equivocal name, one wants to conclude the same things from them. The things of the first sort, such as the circulation of blood, the beating of the heart, etc., are said to be involuntary, and consequently non-free and innocent, because they are absolutely independent of the will, and because the will can contribute nothing to producing them, nor to making them continue or to making them cease to be; although one can indeed want them to be, that is to say, acquiesce to their existence, which it can neither produce nor prevent. But if one named the second that we cannot want, involuntary, such as the love of pains and of evil as such: or in the wicked, the love of justice and piety as such, etc., it would be because the will constantly resists their existence, founding itself on good or bad reasons; and that it constantly and infinitely, so to speak, wants the contrary; which makes all the obstacle that one sees to their existence, which could be without this opposition of the will. From that one will want to be able to conclude that these things whatever they may be, as well as the first, are involuntary, innocent, and non-free, speaking of the freedom necessary to act morally. I leave it to the Reader to judge if that is following the Rules of good reasoning.

Now follows in the Author, the third sense he gives to the first response of some Doctors; but I strongly doubt that any have ever had this sense in view. Be that as it may, I abandon it as false and useless. This whole chapter speaks only to speak; to round out the sphere of School distinctions, which often lead to great poverties, and to things at the very least sovereignly useless.

§. 265. The Author now comes to the second response that our Doctors have made to the proposed difficulty. But in truth he does not do them justice, in my opinion, and to have alone the honor of the decision, and of saying reasonable things, he supposes that the Greatest men, such as Ursinus, Chamier, Heidanus, Forbesius, Turretin, Heidegger, etc., have advanced childish poverties; because they have not explained in precise and express words a thing that is understood by itself, if one is not altogether stupid or dull. These Great men say therefore that there is a double powerlessness. One is a necessary and inevitable consequence of the constitution of our nature, such as it was when it came out of the hands of its creator. The other is an effect of sin, and consequently our own work. They admit that the first destroys freedom, but they deny that the second has this effect. Now it must be known for what purpose they produced this response; it is to satisfy the objection which accuses us of destroying in men the freedom necessary to act morally, by the powerlessness to do good where we believe he is at present. Thereupon they produced the preceding response, which marks enough consequently that they understood to speak only of a powerlessness which is in the will, which has its source in sin. However, the Author claims that their response cannot subsist, because several powerlessnesses have come upon us through sin, which excuse absolutely, and which take away all freedom. That, for example, of preventing ourselves from being sick, of preventing ourselves from dying; the powerlessness of a blind man to read the word of God, and of a deaf man to listen to it, etc. Is that doing them justice, if, apart from that, he is in agreement with them, as he indeed is? However, he makes an express chapter to push back and to destroy their response. Moreover I say that this quibbling distinction was all the less necessary to make here, in that it is not true, properly speaking, that these latter sorts of powerlessnesses have come upon us through sin. Is it speaking well to say that man before sin had the power to prevent himself from being sick, or from dying? No doubt. God by His goodness had granted him the right not to be subjected to these things; but not the power to prevent himself from them at his will. Similarly if God had found it good to create a man blind as a mole, or deaf as a fish, or like other animals if there are such, would his innocence have given him the power to read or to hear? But before his fall he had indeed the power to do good and to abstain from evil. This distinction is therefore rather vain and useless, than solid and well founded.

§. 266. The Author finally comes to the sole source, according to him, of the true solution to the proposed objection. It is the distinction that must be made between physical powerlessness and moral powerlessness. The first absolutely destroys the freedom necessary to act morally, it is contrary and incompatible with it; the second, not at all. In this he is right; but one should not stumble in defining the nature of each of these powerlessnesses, as he does in my opinion; as has already been seen, but which will be seen more positively in its place. One should also not absolutely reject the preceding responses as useless, since they are very good and they support or strengthen this one; or even that they amount to the same thing, if this one were

corrected of its defects. The Author also shows very well, in his chapter XII, that neither Cameron nor Amyraut succeeded well in speaking of this powerlessness of the sinner to convert himself and to do good. But let us come to himself.

"I am persuaded," he says, Tr. B. p. 81, "first, that moral powerlessness does not exclude physical power. If it excluded it, everything that is morally impossible would also be so physically; and in this way there would remain no difference between the two members of the distinction; which would make it vain and illusory. In order for it to retain some truth and some reality, it is necessary that physical power and moral powerlessness have nothing opposed, and that thus even he who cannot morally do something can do it physically."

So far all that goes very well; but let us see the sequel.

§. 267. "What then makes this powerlessness that one calls moral? It is no doubt that the things that one cannot do in this way, not exceeding physical power, do not fail to be difficult. This is what an infinity of philosophers and theologians reduce it to; and I do not see what other thing one can indicate. But one must add with most of the scholastics that there are two kinds of difficulties; some that one overcomes at least sometimes; and others that one never overcomes: and add on one side that it is solely the second that make this powerlessness that one calls moral; and on the other, that such a powerlessness has nothing contrary to freedom."

But let us finish: a little further on he says, p. 87:

"There are things that are easy to want, even strongly, and difficult to execute: others on the contrary, that one would execute without difficulty if one wanted them strongly, but that it is very difficult to want in this way.

Nothing is easier than to want to draw without a compass a perfect circle with a stroke of the pen; and to want to make while playing dice, a hundred times in a row, what is called a raffle of sixes, and what is called in Latin *Jactus Venus* or *Jactus Venereus*; but nothing is more difficult than to succeed at it, however strongly one wants it. On the contrary, it would be easy for a miser to give all his goods to the first poor person he will meet; and for a wise and judicious man to throw himself without any necessity into a precipice, provided that they sincerely wanted it; but it would be very difficult for them to resolve to it; and so difficult that one can be assured that they will never resolve to it. That being posited I say that whatever name one gives to the powerlessness of the first order, in which I take little interest, it is only the second that I call moral powerlessness; and that it is in this sense that I ask my Readers to take this expression."

§. 268. All that would seem to me quite good if only the Author did not vary, and never stumbled against it; but that is what he does sometimes, as will be seen hereafter. However, the word difficult or difficulty that he employs to denote a moral impossibility seems to me too managed, that is to say, too weak; although he says that it is a difficulty that one never overcomes. It is true that he tries to justify

himself by noting that Scripture itself indeed names impossible a thing that was only difficult with a very surmountable difficulty; when it says that Joseph's brothers could not speak to him peacefully: Gen. 37:4. Although they could indeed do so in the presence of their Father, for example, even if it were only by pretense and by treachery; for it is not a question there of the heart, it is only a question of words and of the mouth. But in my opinion, that is missing the point. For one often names impossible, by hyperbole, a thing that is only difficult; but I do not know what figure it would be that would call only difficult a thing that we cannot do any more than to resurrect ourselves being dead; no more than a Moor can change his color, or a Leopard his spots; or even no more than to throw ourselves without cause into an abyss; as the Author wants to do here? Thus in my opinion, one must not seek the morality of the powerlessness in question here in the extenuating of the word impossible, which our Author himself uses boldly and without ceremony in the present matter: see §. 221. One must seek it elsewhere. But where will we place it then, and in what will we make moral powerlessness consist? Here it is. It is in an insurmountable repugnance of the will to incline to the things for which one says that it is in a moral powerlessness to do them, or to want them; but which are such, however, that if it inclined to them, and if it effectively wanted them, it would be praiseworthy or blameworthy for them; a thing also which is for it not only difficult, but truly impossible; not that there would be a contradiction that it did the contrary, but because of the insurmountable obstinacy of its resistance, of its repugnance, or of its antipathy for these things; whether this resistance of the will is founded on good or bad reasons, as it is necessarily one or the other, as has been abundantly proven in §§. 235-244. This idea is precise, it sustains itself everywhere, it satisfies the force of the terms of Scripture, it is not contrary to the freedom necessary to act morally; and finally the Author himself confirms it in various places of his work. Let us come to physical powerlessness.

§. 269. The Author, after having made the enumeration of several sentiments that he rejects with reason on the nature of physical powerlessness, here is how he explains his own: "There is a fourth, which I truly find nowhere, but which appears to me so just and so natural that I am surprised not to find it everywhere. Before indicating it I remark that as there are a great number of events that never happen; and others on the contrary that always happen uniformly on certain occasions, it is rather natural and very ordinary to conceive what makes this double regularity as an assembly of laws that are observed, and the observance of which makes what is called the order of nature.

One conceives these laws very diversely. Some believe that they consist only in the particular nature of each thing, which determines it to act always in the same way. Others want it to be an impression that God gave to His work when He drew it from nothingness, and the effect of which will last as long as the world. Others finally want them to be laws that God has imposed on Himself, and that He takes care to observe Himself on occasions.

It does not belong to me to decide which of these sentiments is the true one: it is not necessary besides to know it in this encounter. I content myself with saying that there are four different orders of these laws. There are those that regard all substances, both spiritual and corporeal; this one for example: that everything that exists must continue to exist, until it pleases God to annihilate it. There are those that regard only bodies, such as those of the communication of movements. Others, on the contrary, concern only spirits, such as these: One will never reject as certainly false what will appear evidently true: One will love nothing that does not appear good: One will hate nothing that does not appear bad. Finally there are others that are particular to Beings composed of a spirit and a body, I mean to men. Such are those of the reciprocal succession of certain thoughts of the spirit and certain movements of the body. The necessity that there is that all these laws be executed makes the powerlessness that one calls physical. It is thus that I could not annihilate the least of Beings, nor transport mountains, nor persuade myself of what appears to me evidently false, nor prevent myself from feeling pain when I approach a little too close to fire. (And a little lower) Be that as it may, I declare that I will employ everywhere this expression in this sense; and that when I speak in the sequel of a physical powerlessness, I will always take it for the powerlessness to prevent the observance of some one of the general laws."

§. 270. These last words of the Author have two defects. One is that the design they propose is not altogether reasonable. And as on the other hand, when reason is fought against in its rights, it often comes to put itself back in its place by itself, without those who have wounded it or wanted to banish it noticing it themselves: from there arises the second defect found in these words. It is that they do not tell the truth, with regard to the execution of this design. For the Author often stumbles against the intention that he marks having there. It is against reason to put in the order of a physical powerlessness the general laws that are executed by the will of intelligent Beings, who know what they do and why they do it, and who never act without reason. The laws that such Beings execute necessarily, that is to say infallibly, can only be considered with regard to them as the primitive and fundamental laws of reason itself, which no intelligent Being can violate without degrading itself from the rank of reasonable Beings. And that same makes the reason that moves them to execute them inviolably and constantly, all Beings having a natural inclination, coming from the author of their existence, which makes them resist their own degradation, destruction, or annihilation; automatons mechanically, and the reasonable reasonably, with knowledge, by choice, and by design. Now such are the laws of which the Author speaks. Never to reject as certainly false what will appear to us evidently true. To love nothing that does not appear good. To hate nothing that does not appear bad; And similar. It is a moral powerlessness that prevents us from going against these laws, since in that it is voluntarily that we follow the precepts of the first reason and of nature; that in that we make a good and legitimate use of our reason; that we must be approved by justice and by reason itself, and that we would be blameworthy if we went to the contrary. One cannot

speak in this way concerning things that are the result of a physical powerlessness: such as that we do not fly in the air to promptly perform some message, and similar things. The inevitable necessity of the event does nothing here; it is the execution of things by the will, which never acts without reason good or bad, or the execution without the will that does everything. Are the above-mentioned laws, put by the Author in physical necessity, executed by us more inevitably than those that he has expressly given as an example of a moral powerlessness: Tr. B. p. 87. That a miser gives all his goods to the first poor person he will meet, or that a wise and judicious man throws himself, without any necessity, into a precipice? Let one reflect on it a little, and I am sure that one will admit to me that the inevitable necessity of the event contrary to that is as great on one side as on the other. But to convince the Author even better that reason itself is on my side, and that it has forced him to admit it himself without having noticed it, I need only these words that one sees in the sequel: Tr. B. p. 142. But on the other hand, the necessity with which one wishes to avoid an evil that appears extreme does not prevent one from wishing it very freely. Is that not positively placing in moral necessity what he has just ranked in physical necessity? It is impossible to disagree with it. *Naturam expellas furca, tamen usque recurret.* Not to do a thing simply because the will invincibly resists it, because one invincibly wants the contrary; or, which is the same thing, because one cannot resolve to this contrary, so much repugnance and aversion one has for it, which the will cannot do without having some reason for it good or bad, as has been proven; or not to do a thing because our will can absolutely do nothing about it, however resolutely it strives to achieve it, and to whatever it can determine itself; these are two powerlessnesses no doubt of a very different nature. If what we want so invincibly that it prevents us from wanting the contrary by always founding ourselves on some reason, as it has been proven that it cannot be otherwise, is something wicked, this will is without contradiction very criminal; if it is something just, equitable, and conforming to nature, and which is considered as such, it is very reasonable and very praiseworthy. But whatever it may be, good or bad, if it is such that the will can do nothing about it, neither to advance it nor to delay it, neither to make it be born nor to preserve it, nor to destroy it, whatever resolution it may take, one can be neither praised nor blamed for it, neither approved nor disapproved. Can one deny a word of all that? No. Consequently it is indubitable that the Author was mistaken on this capital point. Besides, is it not wanting to pay us with a play on words, and with words empty of meaning, to act as the Author does? A difficulty that is so great that one knows with certain knowledge that never has any man overcome it, nor will overcome it; and a thing that is morally impossible for man, are these different things? It is therefore almost playing with the world, or deluding oneself with others, to claim that such evasions are a solid decision of an important difficulty. But what then finally is a physical powerlessness? Here it is.

§. 271. A physical powerlessness is a powerlessness that makes a thing impossible for us because it is in no way subject to the will; and that in whatever manner the will may come to determine itself with regard to it, either to the right or to the left, either

to the pro or to the contra, it is neither more nor less with regard to it: that neither advances nor delays the event, and has no influence on these things, to make them be born, to preserve them, or to make them continue, nor to stop them or destroy them, however strongly and resolutely one wants them, or however one resists them by one's will. Everything remains in the same state as if one were asleep. That is what a physical powerlessness is. These clarifications will untangle many difficulties, and will necessarily have a great influence on the rest of the work.

CHAPTER IV. Examination of Chapters XV.....XXI of the first dissertation of Treatise B.

§. 272. THE chapter XV of the Author is titled: That physical powerlessness ruins the freedom necessary to act morally. This title is universally true according to my definitions; but it is true only in part according to those of the Author, who attributes to physical powerlessness things that absolutely depend on moral powerlessness. This chapter, as one can well imagine at present, is full of contradictions with itself for the Author; because in part it contradicts reason, and in part truth. All that precedes aims to show the meaning of the third response to the great objection that one proposes to resolve, and which admits that physical powerlessness annihilates freedom, and denies that moral powerlessness has the same effect. Now according to my definitions and the explanations that I have given, three things are certain. The first is that physical powerlessness absolutely ruins the freedom necessary to act morally. The second is that moral powerlessness allows this freedom to subsist. And the third finally is that the powerlessness of the sinner to do good is not a physical powerlessness, but a moral powerlessness. By that one sees the total overthrow of the objection. But the Author, little consistent in his principles or dazzling himself, claims that his definition of physical powerlessness is entirely in agreement with that of those who recognize that nothing is less free than what is determined to one kind of action. *Quod est determinatum ad unum*. "Thus," he says, Tr. B. p. 99, "the will is determined to a single action with regard to good, that is to love it; to a single action with regard to evil, that is to hate it. Consequently in that, no freedom."

But, I will say to the Author, if there is no freedom there, why do you say then elsewhere, Tr. B. p. 142, that the necessity with which one wishes to avoid an evil that appears extreme does not prevent one from wishing it very freely? A miser, in relation to the action of giving all his goods to the first poor person he will meet, or not giving it to him, is he not *determinatus ad unum*? Is it not the same for a sensible man, in relation to the action of throwing himself without cause into a precipice? You could not doubt it. And you even positively admit it by naming these things difficulties that one never overcomes. However, you give that as an example of a moral powerlessness. Besides, is it not being *determinatus ad unum*, if, as you admit that it must be said according to truth and according to the word of God, man is so depraved since sin that it is impossible for him to convert himself, and even to do

anything good without grace? See §. 221. However, it is only a moral powerlessness that you attribute to him regarding good. It is therefore clear from all this that your definition of physical powerlessness is false according to yourself.

A little further on the Author says Tr. B. p. 99: "I have shown at the beginning that there is no free action that cannot be commanded, unless it is essentially criminal."

Well, I will say, does that not induce by the reason of contraries that nothing can be commanded that is not free? Now could one not address with justice and with reason, to a man made like Molinos, the words of Amos, and even in their most direct and most literal sense: Seek good and not evil. Amos 14:15. And again, hate evil and not good? Therefore that is free and moral, even according to all your principles. It is therefore not a physical powerlessness that prevents doing the contrary. And it is not even true that one cannot do the contrary, or at least claim to have to do it, as this same example proves. And yet that alone suffices to be able to give wisely and very reasonably to such a man the precepts of Amos that have just been read, even taken literally; and consequently to prove at the same time, by the very characteristic that you give us there, that all that is free and moral, according to all good principles. All the rest of this chapter XV of the Author is only a self-forgetting, hardly worthy of a man as exact and as circumspect as he professes to be in all his works. He claims that nothing that executes necessarily according to general laws can be free with the freedom necessary to act morally. But where is the force of this principle? Is it not a general law for all spiritual and intelligent Beings, as for all others, that they always act in a manner suitable to their nature? That is to say here, that it is a general law that reasonable Beings always act by some reason good or bad; and consequently in a spontaneous manner, with knowledge and by their own movement? But to act with knowledge by one's own movement, founding oneself on some reason, is that not the very thing that one calls doing something with the freedom necessary to act morally? Thus from the fact that this is always done constantly the same according to a general law, it will be necessary to conclude that it is not morally free, and at the same time also that it is morally free. Is that not a palpable absurdity? As if there could not and should not be natural and general laws, proportioned to the nature of each species of Being, for the intelligent as for the brutes, and for the brutes as for the intelligent; and as if the necessity that things go thus, following the natural of each, was incompatible with the freedom necessary to act morally. For as it is a reasonable thing that brute Beings without reason act by general laws according to their nature, that is to say without freedom, it is just as much so that intelligent Beings also act by general laws according to their nature, that is to say always with the freedom necessary to act morally.

In this same chapter one sees that the Author commits this great fault that I explained in §.62. It is that he denies the compatibility of the moral order with the physical order, simply because he cannot understand their union; although each order separately has proofs of all kinds, and which are above all exception.

He also often stumbles here and elsewhere through forgetfulness, in regarding all certain and inevitable futurity as contrary to the freedom necessary to act morally; and yet he himself admits that the sinner destitute of the grace of God, in sinning acts with this freedom; and at the same time also, that his sin is of a certain and inevitable futurity, since according to him, it is impossible for him not to sin: see §.221. and that doing good is for the sinner, according to him, a difficulty that he never overcomes. One sees this last fault in these words of the Author, which are in the last § of his chapter. Tr. B. p. 102: "It is inconceivable that all species of physical powerlessnesses being equally inevitable, there are some of those that ruin freedom, and others that let it subsist. For finally if there is something in powerlessness that wounds freedom, it is that it prevents acting."

But, I will say, does the moral powerlessness that you put in the sinner not prevent him from acting holily, and does it not prevent him absolutely and inevitably according to you? Yes. And yet you leave him, and attribute to him the freedom necessary to act morally. Therefore you necessarily forget yourself here. Do the elect Angels and the blessed Saints have more the power to blaspheme against God than we have that of loving the evil of pain, or of hating felicity as such; or than the sinner destitute of grace has the power to convert himself or to do good? And is their powerlessness in this regard less absolute than ours? I do not think so. However, are they not praiseworthy in glorifying God, and would they not be blameworthy if they blasphemed Him? Yes without doubt. Besides, although they do what they do with the same necessity that makes us love good as such, they are still exhorted to it Heb. 1:6, Ps. 97:7 & 103:20, 21. Evident proof according to yourself that they do it with the freedom necessary to act morally.

§. 273. In chapter XVI the Author does nothing but assure that moral powerlessness does not ruin the freedom necessary to act morally. And he remarks at the same time very judiciously a thing that is very noteworthy. It is that he knows no one who contests this truth. Episcopius and all the Jesuits use it to respond to various objections. As, for example, why are the Demons and the damned blameworthy for hating God, if they cannot love Him? and several other similar things. One objects that this powerlessness ruins freedom, and therefore also sin, or that a powerlessness to do evil, as it is in the blessed, ruins virtue. They respond that this claim would be legitimate if the powerlessness in which these various orders of Agents find themselves were a physical powerlessness; but that being only moral, it has nothing contrary to freedom. It would be greatly desirable that all these Messrs. the Pelagians and the Pelagianizers of which everything swarms today, always remembered everywhere the necessity in which they find themselves to respond thus in certain cases; and if they wanted to render us justice then, they would notice that nowhere are we obliged to seek another remedy against their unjust outcries than that which they approve thereby. For the rest, all that precedes makes it clear enough that according to my definitions and my explanations, I am entitled to use the same response, with as much and more justice than the Author. He would not

contest this thesis in itself either, he would only contest my definitions of powerlessness, either moral or physical. But as I have already sufficiently justified them, it is not necessary to stop there any longer.

In the following chapter he also assures that the powerlessness of the sinner to do good is not a physical powerlessness. I say the same according to my principles, and the thing is manifest after my explanations. The other after assures that the powerlessness of the sinner, in relation to good, is a moral powerlessness. I say the same also, and with justice. But is that not the same thing as the preceding? or be that as it may, can one see there enough to make two chapters? But to prove that the powerlessness that he puts in the sinner to do good is only a moral powerlessness and not physical, here are his words: "But the thing appears enough by itself. I have said that moral powerlessness supposes a physical power. And can one doubt that even sinners have such a power with regard to good? (That is true, I will say, but it is in the same way that we also have one to hate our good as such, as Molinos did, or claimed to do, or claimed to have to do. Let us continue.) They have the faculties necessary for this effect. They have an understanding, a will, and a memory. These faculties are sheltered from constraint properly so called. They can exercise them freely. Their organs are well disposed. They are at an age of maturity, for it is not a question here of children. In a word, they have on the side of nature all that is necessary to do good (put also, to obey the precepts of Molinos) all that those to whom grace gives the strength have on that side. Thus physical power does not fail them. But with this power, they have an extremely strong inclination to do quite the contrary (you should say insurmountable, since it is an inclination according to you that one never overcomes, no more than that of disobeying the precepts of Molinos) And that is the second characteristic of moral powerlessness. For as I have shown in another place, nothing is more essential to it than to have its source in the repugnances or in the inclinations of our hearts. And who is it who does not notice it in the powerlessness of the sinner to do good."

And who is it who does not notice the same thing, I will say, in the powerlessness where we are to love evil and to hate good as such? All that therefore always shows perfectly that the Author was wrong to rank under physical powerlessness this powerlessness where we are to love evil and to hate good as such; and similar things.

§. 274. The Author in chapter XIX makes himself an objection, which deserves to be placed here with its true response, because it can cause difficulty. Here are his words: "Someone, perhaps, will say, that in truth the powerlessness of the sinner is at most only moral; but that there is much appearance that this expression, far from being too weak, is even too strong at least in some respects. That one suffers it, one will tell us, on the subject of the conversion of the sinner, which is a work so great and so admirable. But can one employ it on the subject of each good work that we do? Among these good works are there not a great number that are so easy that one does them not only without the help of grace, but even without any efforts? For example, telling the truth to a man who asks what time it is; showing the way to a

traveler who is going astray; giving him a glass of water that he needs to quench his thirst; returning a pin to someone who has lent it. I will be asked in an insulting manner if I believe all that as difficult and as opposed to the inclination of nature as to consent to be pinched with hot irons, torn by four horses, broken on a wheel, burned alive, etc.? I will be asked finally if Pagans, if even atheists, do not do each day things much more difficult?"

Without despising the response of the Author, who refers his reader to some other of his works, which not everyone has, and which asks for a good work conditions of such complete perfection that the best Christians and the most sincere that there are in the world would be frightened or in despair by them; but never edified nor encouraged to do good; I will say here what must be responded, in my opinion according to the Gospel, guided by the word of God joined to right reason: leaving to each the freedom to adopt whichever of the two responses he will find most to his taste, either that of the Author, or mine.

When one asks if it is as difficult to tell the truth in the smallest things, as would be to respond appropriately to a person who desires to know what time it is; as to consent to be pinched with hot irons for the glory of God, etc., one must take care that this question is ambiguous, and that to decide it well one must explain it. Does one ask if it is as difficult to tell the truth in whatever way one says it, as to consent to suffer the most cruel pains, etc.? If one understands it in that way, one will respond that one would have to have lost one's senses to find some equality between two things so prodigiously disproportionate. I will add that it is not doing a good work, in the sense of the Gospel, to simply tell the truth, if one does not say it from Evangelical motives. That is only the shadow and the appearance of a good work; humanity alone, and the nature of a sociable animal, often makes one do these sorts of good works, without any other principle. Consequently this example produced in this sense is not at all apropos. For one must compare good works among themselves, and not a work of humanity as such only, that is to say an appearance of good work, with a work truly good, esteemed as such by God Himself, as having its relation to Him.

But if by telling the truth one understands saying it in a holy manner and in a way altogether agreeable to God; I will ask further, if one asks this question in relation to a believer, or in relation to an unregenerate person? If it is the first; I respond that no: that it is not so difficult for a believer to tell the truth, etc., as to expose oneself to fire for the glory of God; although he is nevertheless in a disposition, by the assistance of the grace of J. Christ, in whom and through whom he can do all things, and who strengthens him in occasions according to need; that he is, I say, thereby in a disposition to do one and the other if it were necessary to glorify God. But finally, if one asks this question with regard to an unregenerate unbeliever; I respond that one of these things is as difficult for him as the other; since he is no better disposed to do one than to do the other, and thus of himself he is no more ready to do one than to do the other.

The reason for that is that to do the least of good works according to the Gospel, and which can be agreeable to God, according to His word and according to right reason; one must necessarily do it with the intention of obeying His orders and His will, to glorify Him and to honor Him. But to do this one must necessarily love Him, honor Him, and truly revere Him in one's heart. And to come to this latter, it is necessary to believe that He is good toward us, that He wishes us well, notwithstanding our failings and our weaknesses, and that He does not have the intention of destroying us; but on the contrary, that He wants to use mercy and indulgence toward us, to support our infirmities and to pardon our failings and our sins. But to believe this latter, one finally needs to know and to believe the great mystery of the Gospel, by which alone a reasonable mind can perceive that the good will of God toward sinners can have a sure foundation worthy of His perfect holiness; which is alone capable of giving us a solid hope, and the courage to truly employ ourselves, with Zeal, with ardor, with sincerity and truth, to glorify Him in all our conduct. One must embrace this divine mystery with faith, recognition, and love. That is to say, the great mercy of God, which He offers us gratuitously and for nothing in the Gospel; which is founded on justifying justice, and on the satisfaction and the infinite merits of His eternal and beloved Son. At the very least one must believe this great and divine mystery with enough assurance to devote oneself to the service of God, as aspiring to have part in this pure and gratuitous grace, which one sees founded on such a solid foundation; otherwise the first thing that we have posited, which is to do this good work with the intention of obeying purely the commandment of God, and His Divine authority, to glorify Him and to honor Him, is truly impossible: without that no good work according to the Gospel.

It is thus that everything is held chained together, and that it is easy to see that an unregenerate and an unbeliever cannot any more do the easiest of good works, truly good, than the most difficult. When an unbeliever does a work that God has commanded, he does it without having in view to obey Him; or without having the intention of glorifying Him and honoring Him thereby as He deserves to be, as much as is possible for him. There is always some false principle of the actions of which we speak, which do not thus directly and purely have in view the glory and the obedience that is due to God, and the desire to honor Him in the manner that He orders and which is agreeable to Him. Civility and worldly honesty have the intention of attracting the esteem and the friendship of men; and its temporal advantages are the unique principle, or nearly so, of these sorts of actions in the unregenerate; whereas however God has no part. And yet without that there is no good work; the rest as one sees are only animal, civil, and human works simply; or works that have for principle only superstition, heresy, or falsehood; and which are null, at the very least, in good morality, and often even criminal by some bad design.

§. 275. The Author makes himself yet the following objection, which I will report in his own words; I will also apply to it the response that I believe to be the most Evangelical. Afterward I will also make some brief reflections on the response that

the Author himself applies to it. Here are his words: "One will perhaps say that, in truth, what I have just said absolutely removes the proposed difficulty; but that from that very thing arises another that is no less. One will say that if it is so difficult to do good, whatever it may be, sinners who do not do it appear more worthy of pity than of blame or punishment. For is it just to expect from them that they make such great efforts, especially that they make them with a perseverance that never slackens, and which lasts from when they begin to have the free use of their reason until the end of their life? Was it of the goodness of God to impose on them such a hard law? And does it not seem that it was more worthy of Him to be content with less?"

First, to give my Response as I have promised, I say that this objection is made as coming from a justiciary, and that I am not one: believing on the contrary that everything that tends that way is heretical and pernicious. This objection speaks of sinners and supposes that God asks them for a love without limits, and an obedience without defect, persevering and which never slackens in anything, as a condition of acquisition of right to salvation; and all that is heretical, pernicious, and false, according to the word of God. And by that alone the objection falls, as being founded on a false supposition.

Secondly, let us suppose that it is turned as it should be to address the orthodox. It will then say that if it is so difficult for the sinner to embrace with humility, recognition, and love, the purely gratuitous salvation that is offered to him in the Gospel; and to want consequently to make all his life sincere and very serious efforts to obey God by this principle of duty, of recognition, and of love in all that He orders us, and to glorify Him by his conduct always better and better, until death, which is uniquely what He asks of us in His holy Gospel: willing in this case to use indulgence toward us, and to pardon our weaknesses, as a good father pardons his child who serves him; sinners who do not do it appear more worthy of pity than of blame or punishment. I respond that this objection is impudent, shameful, and insolent, and that it takes for a subject of excuse what in reason, in justice, and in truth, is a subject of aggravation of crime, and of penalty consequently. If the sinner has so much attachment for vice, for the world and for its vanities, either because of its pleasures and its voluptuousness, or because of its riches or its honors, that he cannot resolve to embrace with sincerity and humility a condition under which grace is offered to him gratuitously and for nothing; but which demands however love and recognition consequently, and a sincere design to combat seriously afterward the world and its vanities, and all our bad lusts until death; the more detestable and punishable is this sinner, for not being able to want these things. It is being wicked to excess and to the root. It is having a will that is very criminal and very punishable, and not being in a state that is worthy of pity. That is the response that seems Evangelical to me. Let us say a word on that of the Author.

§. 276. This objection, as I have said, is made by a justiciary; and the Author, against the exhortation of wisdom itself, seems to respond to the fool according to his folly,

and by approving his folly: which is not good. For he gives nothing else for all response except to show that the sinner has motives of an infinite force, as he calls them, to induce him to a love of God, constant, supreme, and infinite; and to a persevering obedience without defect: namely the following three. The supreme authority of God. The hope of an inestimable reward. And the just fear of the misfortunes of eternity. But in this way where then is the Gospel? for one speaks here of sinners. If one spoke of man still innocent and having original justice, the Response of the Author would be a little closer to being just than it is in speaking of us; since he needed then only great motives to prevent himself from sinning, and consequently to save himself, nothing else lacking for him: but is it the same for us? One would have to renounce Christianity to say so; since we are sinners in being born, and no motive can prevent us from becoming so nor from perishing, if there is nothing else. But yet this response would not fit perfectly either, for this state of innocence. For in this case, it would only be necessary to make the objector notice that it is not true that man could not obey; he could then very well, contrary to what the objection supposes and reproaches. Therefore this Response is not proper anywhere. The Author first says these words, at the beginning of his response: "I respond in the first place that if this objection has some force, it has it above all against those who hold that the powerlessness of the sinner to do good is a physical powerlessness, such as are those who are called Predeterminants."

But the Author wrongs these people by these words. For the Predeterminants do not put in sinners a powerlessness to good that deserves more to be called physical than that which a miser has to give all his goods to the first poor person he will meet; or a wise man to precipitate himself without cause into an abyss, which is moral according to the Author himself, nor that deserves it more than that where we all are to love evil or to hate good as such, which he should name the same, as I have sufficiently proven, and as he himself asserts in contradicting himself on page 142. Therefore that which they say is in the sinner in relation to good is also moral. And their response to the objection consequently will be as solid and of the same nature if they want, as that of the Author himself, which is almost drawn only from the distinction that there is between moral powerlessness and physical powerlessness. He therefore hardly has good grace here consequently to claim to have a great advantage over them. He should remember that, according to himself, the difficulty of doing good is so great for the sinner that never does any overcome it. If the sinner could be excusable would that be worth less to excuse him than to say clearly that good is impossible for him? I make the whole world judge of it. But besides if only this expression is needed to excuse them entirely, the Author excuses them like the others; for he uses it and adopts it himself as orthodox: see §. 221. What advantage does he have then here over the Predeterminants, since he speaks like them? That is what I do not see.

§. 277. Finally the Author makes himself still this objection. Tr. B. p. 125. "Others perhaps will say that the powerlessness of the sinner to do good must indeed be a

physical powerlessness, since Scripture represents it under images taken from a hundred things that are impossible in this sense. Is it not indeed impossible in this way that a Moor whitens his skin; that a Leopard erases his spots? etc. And how many times are not all these images employed in the holy books to represent the depravation of the sinner?"

I respond to that that these comparisons, no more than any other drawn from Scripture, do not have in view to prove to us a perfect resemblance in all things, but a resemblance in certain points, and in certain respects; and to inculcate certain properties that their goal, the nature of the things of which one speaks, the occasion that makes them be proposed, make known well enough to those who have no other design than to understand Scripture in its true sense, and to find the truth. Now the goal of the passages insinuated here is manifestly, not to teach us scholastic terms and distinctions, or what is the nature of the powerlessness of the sinner to do good; but how great it is. And it is easy to see that they want to teach us that this powerlessness is entire and insurmountable; so that it has never happened and will never happen that any has been able to overcome it, or that he can in the future; as also the Author himself admits this. But that does not prevent it from being moral, and does not prove at all that the goal of these comparisons is to prove the contrary. For the difference from physical powerlessness to moral does not lie (as it seems that the Author supposes here, and often elsewhere) in that one is more insurmountable than the other, but it lies, as one has seen, in that the will has no influence on one, and that it can do nothing for or against it; and the other on the contrary is in the will itself, in invincible inclinations, in resistances on its part, and in a manner of speaking, in an insurmountable obstinacy, which make it constantly and invariably resist, on false and wicked reasons, what one says that it cannot do: or else also in an inclination of the same force, founded on justice and on reason itself, which makes evil impossible for it, if one speaks of the powerlessness to do evil, which is in the blessed Saints: which depicts on one side a desperate malice, and an extreme depravation in this place, where it is a question of good, reasonable, holy, and equitable things. And when it is a question of bad things, to which, on good reasons, one says of someone that he cannot help but resist; that marks in him a very great and very praiseworthy righteousness and holiness.

CHAPTER V. Examination of the first six chapters of the Second Dissertation of Treatise B.

§. 278. We enter here into the second dissertation of the Author, which has for goal to reconcile the insurmountable efficacy of the grace of God with the freedom of man. The first chapter is intended only to propose the difficulty, which must be the subject of this dissertation, holding oneself on grace in sentiments entirely orthodox. He says therefore that we believe indeed that there are internal and supernatural graces, which do not convert sinners. Nothing, he says, is more certain than this. For St. Paul in speaking of those who sin against the Holy Spirit, and who,

according to us, have never been regenerated, says Heb. 6:4 that they have been illuminated, that they have tasted the heavenly gift, and have been made participants of the Holy Spirit. And similar things also elsewhere. But these graces, he says with reason, are very different from those that regenerate us; and this difference consists not only in the success of these two sorts of graces, but also in their nature, and in the intention of the one who grants them. We do not believe, he says, that God in granting these graces to the reprobate, does it with the design of converting them. That appears impossible and contradictory to us. If He had the design of converting these sinners He would infallibly succeed in it; for who can resist His will? He is all-powerful, and that suffices. If therefore God gives to some sinners some of this sort of graces, which do not operate conversion, He does it with other designs, which it is not permitted to us to fathom. For who has known the intention of the Lord, or who has been His counselor? Also we hold for certain that these graces are in themselves, and in their own nature, very different from that which operates the conversion of the sinner. It is this latter alone that we regard, not only as efficacious, but also as efficacious by itself. For the Molinists indeed recognize a grace always efficacious, it is that which they name congruous: But they do not want it to be efficacious by itself. It is so, according to them, only because God foresees that those who will receive it will cooperate freely with it. To the point that there is such inefficacious grace, which is stronger in itself, and has more intrinsic activity than this efficacious grace. We are very far from this thought. We believe that efficacious grace is such by its nature, and independently of man. We regard this consent, not as the cause of this efficacy, but as an effect that it produces. One does not undertake to prove all this, several of our Theologians have done it sufficiently; one contents oneself with defending this truth, not against all the objections that are opposed to it, but only against that which claims that what we believe on this ruins the freedom necessary to act morally.

§. 279. One proposes this difficulty in several manners, which all come to the same thing. Sometimes one says that if grace converts us infallibly, its effect will be necessary and inevitable, and consequently will no longer be free. Sometimes one says that freedom entails as well the power not to do what one does, as that of doing what one does not do. And from that one concludes that if man converts himself freely, he must have the power not to do it; and that thus grace can remain without effect. There is the difficulty.

§. 280. Before responding to this objection, the Author makes an express chapter to put before the eyes of his readers all the species of necessities of which one speaks, and of which it may be possible to speak, in the manner of the most subtle and most punctilious scholastics, to be sure of having made a complete enumeration; and of which there are several that cannot at all serve anything to the subject. After that, it must be remarked, in my opinion, that he always returns to a false idea of the freedom in question here, deceived by the objections. He does not hold himself firm to the principles that he has posited himself. For in the definition of this freedom,

and in the characteristics that he has given of it and that he has explained, he has not put in it that a thing in order to be free in this sense must not be done infallibly and inevitably: nor either that freedom entails the power not to do what one does, and to do what one does not do, if it is not with regard to physical power which is contested here by no one. These are therefore false ideas of the freedom in question. And however all the responses of the Author are employed only to try to manage these wanderings, and to content them as best he can. Here are the characteristics of this freedom that he gives us himself. He says first that moral or free actions, in the sense in question, are those that one does only because one wants to do them; but does he put in it this clause: provided that one does not want them infallibly and unfaillingly, or necessarily if one wants? No: Or else does he put in it this one: provided that one does not want them so resolutely and so absolutely that one cannot also not want them? Not at all. That therefore does not enter into this characteristic of the freedom necessary to act morally. The second characteristic of this freedom according to him is that the actions in which this freedom is found are all those that can be commanded or forbidden. And I have shown that they are all those that can be, or that are effectively commanded or forbidden, either by positive and external laws, or by wise but natural laws, however necessarily and inevitably obedience may be rendered to them; provided that it is the proper will of intelligent Beings that renders this obedience to them, which destroys the false restriction of the objection that would say: provided that one can not do what one does, or do what one does not do. The third characteristic that he gives: It is that free actions depend so much on the will that one does them whenever one wants them strongly and sincerely; and that one abstains from them whenever one has a similar will not to do them. (Add to speak even better) so that if one does them, one can always give this true reason for them: it is that one wanted to do them: and that if one does not do them, one can also always give for true reason: it is that one did not want to do them. But is it necessary to put in it again: provided that in wanting them, you can also not want them, or that in not wanting them you can also want them? Not at all, and also the Author has not said it. Thus the objection is therefore founded on a false supposition, or on a false definition of the freedom necessary to act morally. The Author is therefore wrong to manage it, and to treat it on another footing.

§. 281. Without therefore making an exact and complete enumeration of all the species of necessities possible and imaginable; and of which the majority serve as little to the subject as a wheelbarrow serves to form a good argument, one has only to say simply that no necessity, however great and insurmountable it may be, is contrary to the freedom necessary to act morally, except that which does violence to the will, and which forces us to act against our own inclination; or that which consists in that the thing in question is in no way dependent on the will; so that in what is done or what is not done by this sort of necessity, the will can do nothing to delay it or advance it, by its volition or nolition, if it is permitted to speak thus; and that on whichever side it comes to determine itself, these things neither advance nor recede; like the circulation of blood, digestion, the deprivation of heat in the

season, or of rain when the fruits would demand it, and similar things. But if a will inclines itself infallibly and invincibly to evil, on the occasion of certain objects; and it obstinately persists invincibly in this evil, on very weak and very bad reasons, it is a necessity, if one wants, that it always occupies itself with evil and that it succeeds in it, although it may be wicked and criminal in this case. But this necessity is not contrary to the freedom necessary to act morally, since all that being voluntary, blameworthy, and punishable, is therefore also moral. If on the contrary a will has an inclination so violent, so constant, and so insurmountable for good, equity, and justice, which it loves by itself and because of itself, or through love and through obedience toward God who orders it to do so; that it cannot be bent to do evil, or to depart from good, whatever happens; there is then necessity that it never lies, that it always follows inevitably and necessarily justice, truth, and reason, because it wants it resolutely. For that are its actions no longer moral? If that were so, neither God, nor the elect angels, nor the blessed saints would act morally any more. Therefore to say it once more, it is not the unfailing certainty, nor even, if one wants, the inevitable necessity more or less great, that makes the distinction between physical necessity and moral; or between the necessity destructive of the freedom necessary to act morally, and that which allies itself perfectly with it. But to give the exact definition of these two sorts of necessities, I would say what follows.

§. 282. Physical necessity, destructive of the freedom necessary to act morally, or that which is incompatible with this freedom, is the necessity that makes intelligent Beings act by violence, against what the proper movement of the final result of their will inclines them to; and also that, by virtue of which things happen that are not at all subject to the will of these intelligent Beings, and which neither advance nor recede, whichever way these wills may come to determine themselves, to want or not want these sorts of things. Then there is no freedom.

§. 283. And moral necessity, and that which is very compatible with the freedom necessary to act morally, is the necessity which comes from certain inclinations, or violent and insurmountable tendencies of the will, which carry it by certain reasons good or bad, to do the things that it loves, or to avoid the things that it hates, of its own movement, by itself, and according to its inclination, infallibly, inevitably, and resolutely, without anything natural being able to turn it away from its design.

§. 284. That being thus clarified, it is easy to see that grace efficacious by itself is not at all contrary to the freedom necessary to act morally. Before grace and in the state of sin, we always did constantly, inevitably, or necessarily evil, speaking of the moral necessity that I have just explained. And God creating in us a clean heart, and renewing within us a well-restored spirit, we do good; that is to say, that we follow faith, hope, and charity, with sincerity and truth; and that we fight against the world, sin, and our own corruption, with a frank heart and without any hypocrisy, until death, without being enslaved to any dominant sin; although always subject to many weaknesses, and to involuntary falls. We devote ourselves to good then in the aforesaid manner, very necessarily speaking of the same moral necessity that I have

just explained. For this efficacious grace does nothing else in this world than to recreate in us a well-rectified spiritual taste, and an inclination to the true good, up to a pure and unfeigned sincerity; which does not however make us completely victorious, but which we had totally lost through the fall of our first parents. One can therefore consider sinful man in three different states; before his conversion, at the moment of his conversion, and after his conversion. Before his conversion, he follows only evil, and he follows it necessarily; but freely however in the sense that should have place here, and that I have just explained. After his conversion, he follows good, and fights evil seriously with sincerity and truth; although not always with a triumphant success. And that also, necessarily; although freely, as above. But at the moment of his conversion he does not act at all, habet se mere passive as our Theologians say. It is God who acts in him and who makes him a new creature, recreated according to God in justice and true holiness, as to a pure sincerity. Thus in this blessed moment, he acts neither freely nor by violence; he does not act at all. In whatever moment therefore that you consider man, he never acts either good or evil, except with the freedom necessary to act morally; which is what we had to show, against the objection that is made here. It is thus that I would respond to it. In this way, it will not be necessary to follow our Author step by step in all the scholastic distinctions that he employs, which only inconvenience the common faithful, and which one can well do without. Only will we make from time to time some reflections, which will show that reason and truth often bring him back with us, without him noticing it: so true is it that truth fights for us. We will also make some from time to time, to point out the precise nature of his mistakes, where they will present themselves. Let us enter into the matter: here are his words. Tr. B. p. 150.

§. 285. "Does one conceive," he says, "that God can forbid us to receive as true what would be and what would appear evidently false; and to reject as false what would appear such and would appear so with the utmost evidence?"

No, I will say, one does not conceive that; but one does conceive that it is nature and reason itself; or rather that it is God the Author of nature, who prescribes and orders us to reject as false what is so and what appears evidently so, etc. And that it is our will enlightened by this natural light, which obeys these laws with eagerness and inevitably, it is true, but which does it however of its own movement; and that we would be blameworthy if we did the contrary. Therefore the necessity which makes us follow these laws is a moral necessity, and not physical; and the powerlessness in us to do the contrary is a moral powerlessness also.

§. 286. After several reasonings very little edifying on this, the Author concludes thus: "All that proves strongly, if I am not mistaken, that physical necessity is incompatible with the freedom of which we speak."

That is true, I will say, but you call physical a certain powerlessness which is truly moral; which often makes you deny what one should affirm, and affirm what one

should deny, contradicting yourself everywhere. All the passages in great number that you cite next, drawn from our greatest Theologians, agree very well with the definitions and the explanations that I have given. And if someone directly opposes them, he also opposes yours; which consequently will not oblige me to change my opinion. For example, what you cite from Mr. de Beaulieu *Thes. De Lib. arb. in gen. part. 1. n. 27. Itaque cum Amesio & Rob. Baronio dicere non veremur, humani arbitrii libertatem opponi necessitati cuius proprie dictae.* That, I say, is contrary to my definitions and explanations, since it rejects all sorts of necessity in moral things. But it is contrary also to yours for the same reason. For you admit *Tr. B. p. 154 and 155* a moral necessity which is such that one can apply it to the necessity where we are to love good, and to hate evil as such; and to affirm as true what is so and what appears evidently so. I can even admit this entire chapter, except for a few words, in which you speak of moral necessity: and these words themselves which do not suit me are such that by them you contradict yourself. For example you say: *Tr. B. p. 159*, "That it is certain that a man who does an action, which he cannot morally prevent himself from doing, does it because he wants to. It is certain that he wants it because he has reasons that appear solid to him to want it. It is certain finally that these reasons are taken from the consideration of a good or an evil, which appear to him, in truth, very great, but finite; such consequently that the acts which suppose the love of one and the repugnance for the other, are free acts; for that is what is most essential to freedom, as I hope to show in its place."

Note well these last words, they show that the Author still confuses himself here, in the idea that he forms of the freedom in question; and that he wants to make it consist in that a free action is when one does not incline without reserve and absolutely toward its object; but that one still has some power to abstain from it, or to do the contrary: and not simply in that one does it of one's own movement, founding oneself on some reason good or bad. It is for that that he wants the good or the evil, which makes the reason that moves the will to actions, which one names morally necessary, to be finite and not infinite. However on the following page, *Tr. B. p. 161*, he puts in the rank of a moral necessity that in which the Demons find themselves engaged to hate God, who overwhelms them with His vengeance, and who gives them no hope of seeing an end to their ills. They sin however in hating Him, who can doubt it? he says. This necessity is therefore moral and not physical: and nevertheless the evil from which these unfortunates draw the reason for their hatred is infinite, the Author will not disagree with that. Cannot one say as much of the good, from which the blessed draw the reason to love and glorify God, with an eternal and invincible constancy? Yes without doubt. By that it is visible that the morality of necessity does not come from a certain contingency, which makes one still be in a state to abstain from doing what one does, or to do that from which one abstains; but that it comes uniquely from that the thing that one does, necessarily as much as one will want, one does it however voluntarily and of one's own movement, founding oneself on some reason good or bad. That is all. And it is

palpable also by that, that the Author is not in agreement with himself: how would we be completely in agreement together?

§. 287. To clarify our doctrine concerning the efficacy of the grace of God, the Author explains on this occasion the sense that one gives in the Schools to the terms of moral actions, or of physical actions. "The School distinguishes," he says, Tr. B. p. 170, "first two sorts of causes, physical and moral. Physical causes are those which act by a positive and true influence on their subject. It is thus that one claims that fire burns, and that one body moves another when it collides with it. Moral causes are those which act only in proposing to intelligent causes, either objects, or motives, which being perceived by these knowing Beings, determine them objectively, as one says, to certain actions; or to better say, give them place to determine themselves. It is thus that he who counsels a crime is reputed to be the cause of it, and has his part in the blame and in the punishment that it deserves."

This distinction is important and well explained, and the one that follows is no less so.

§. 288. "Physical causes," he adds, Tr. B. p. 171, "are of two orders: there are natural and supernatural, or hyperphysical, which is the same thing. Natural ones are those which make their effect by virtue of the general laws that God established at the beginning. Supernatural causes are those which act independently of these laws; which even change them, and stop their execution; as we see that God does in miracles, and without miracle even every time that His wisdom finds it appropriate."

§. 289. To apply this to our subject, the Author continues thus: "In preserving this sense to these expressions, it is true to say first, that God acts physically and naturally on souls, when for example, He produces sensations in them; for then He acts naturally, because He acts in conformity with general laws. In the second place, it is true to say that He is a physical, but supernatural cause of grace; physical, because He operates it by a true influence; and supernatural, because He follows in that other laws than that of nature."

(I would say, because He follows in that very particular laws, and founded on a very singular grace; and not the general laws of nature.) So far that goes well enough; but afterward, the Author still remaining a little dazzled by the false idea that he forms, by mistake and against his own definitions and explanations, of necessity and of moral powerlessness, makes again a distinction that I will put, after having proposed the occasion that made him produce it. The Author continues:

§. 290. "I believe therefore, that the action of God which converts us, is truly a physical action. But that is not all. There are physical causes, of which the action, although physical on its side, gives to its effect only a simply moral necessity. For example, the movement of blood and of spirits in the passions, is a physical cause, of which however the effect, supposing that it has some necessity, has only a simply moral one..... I say therefore, that not only does God act physically on our soul, when grace converts us; but also that the necessity with which the immediate effect of

this grace is produced in us, is a physical necessity; and is in nothing less than that of natural, or supernatural effects, that the divine power produces on other occasions: as indeed St. Paul assures the Ephesians, that God deploys in our conversion, the same power that resurrected His holy Son. Eph. 1:19, 20." The Author continues:

§. 291. "If that is so, one will say without doubt, it is not possible to save the freedom of man, while maintaining the all-powerfulness of grace; and one must necessarily renounce one to defend the other. For has one not seen in what precedes, that physical necessity destroys freedom? how then could this freedom subsist, with an operation that gives birth to a necessity of this order?"

It is time to finish the present chapter; that is why we will put off our reflections on all that, together with the new distinction of the Author and its dependencies, to the following chapter.

CHAPTER VI. Examination of the last five chapters of the second Dissertation of Treatise B.

§. 292. The Author before giving his new distinction, which will found his response to the preceding objection, reports that of the Predeterminants; expressing it in a harsh and repellent manner, as much as is possible for him, to make believe that they and he are at the antipodes of each other. He claims that their sentiment is subject to insurmountable difficulties. However, one must have good eyes to perceive in what this opinion differs here from his own; and even better ones to understand how it can be that his is without difficulty, if it is very true that that one is inextricable. I indeed admit that in these matters, one should always follow the wisest and most moderate ways, provided that they agree equally well with the word of God. But under the shadow of a minute distinction, which we draw only from our brain or from Philosophy, and to which the word of God does not even give the slightest illumination, nor the slightest occasion; a distinction that the most skilled can barely notice, and which consists almost only in different words that one uses, but which express the same things: To want to make one of these sentiments pass for frightful, while the other will remain pure and holy, is to push things terribly, and to lack equity and charity. Yet that is the fault that the Author commits here. Let one read the five truths that he approves and that he professes above in §. 221, where I have cited them; and afterward let one read the first §. that he abhors of the chapter in question, which is the VII. Most will see there so much conformity and resemblance, that they will never be able to distinguish one from the other. However in speaking of the latter he says: It is good for us that this sentiment is not the most commonly received: as if it were an abomination. This procedure scandalizes me, given the perfect resemblance, or at the very least the great affinity of these things. I can say with truth, that although I have not yet declared myself either for one or for the other, I do not find it more difficult to reconcile the efficacy of grace with

the freedom in question here, in the method that the Author rejects, than in that which he follows. The first will call this grace an invincible or insurmountable inclination to do good; and the Author calls it, Tr. B. p. 182, an inclination which is always precisely such as is necessary to do that good; but whose acts are always free. But the first also claim that the acts of the inclination of which they speak are always free; and it is only by error in forgetting himself and in dazzling himself, that the Author regards in this place, the inevitable necessity of the event, as incompatible with the freedom necessary to act morally; and not with reason or justice. Where then is the difference? It is a difference of words, but not of things, as I have said. That then is the distinction the Author uses to respond to this difficulty. He calls very appropriately, in my opinion, the effect of grace in our hearts, a new inclination Tr. B. 181. But he notes that ordinary inclinations are of four orders. Some are absolutely invincible, like self-love. Others are only morally necessary, like those that are born of the most violent passions. The third, being accompanied by no necessity, make one have enough difficulty to resist them, like that which makes us love life and flee death. The last are those that we overcome without effort, like the love of rest when it is moderate. "That of which I speak," says the Author, (namely that which grace operates in us through conversion), "is neither of the first, nor of the third, nor of the fourth of these orders; but uniquely of the second."

There is the great resolution, and which is so important and so authorized, that it renders abominable the thought of those who would say that it is of the first order. But, I will say, who then has given such great authority to this second sentiment? Is it therefore drawn in proper terms from Holy Scripture? Nothing less than that; the first would have better grace to give itself this advantage than that one. But, says the Author, it is that if this inclination were of the first order, the acts by which one converts, would no longer be free. And I say that they are free notwithstanding that, according to yourself, with the freedom of which we should speak here; since you grant this freedom to inclinations of the first order, in your page 142, of which I have already cited the words above in §. 270. Moreover these acts are also free, according to what I have proven in §. 245, since one does them voluntarily and of one's own movement; that one would be blameworthy if one did not do them; that one is praiseworthy and worthy of approval in doing them, and that one does them being carried to it by reasons that are very solid. Does not all that suffice to say them free? There is therefore only the dazzlement of the Author, who abandons here his own principles and reason itself, which has induced him to commit such a great injustice against his brothers.

§. 293. But to respond to this objection categorically and solidly, while remaining firm on good principles, here is, in my opinion, how one could approach it. I say therefore that apart from this fault, which I have just reprov'd in the Author, by which he forgets himself and wrongs his brothers, who owe him nothing for orthodoxy, he speaks well enough of this matter.

It must be noted that our conversion, considered in its entirety, is composed of two sorts of acts, some of God, and others of man. This appears clearly enough from the fact that Scripture represents this conversion to us, sometimes as a work of God, sometimes as a work of man. Sometimes men say to God, Convert us and we will be converted. Sometimes God says to men, Convert yourselves to me, and I will convert myself to you.

The acts of God are of two sorts; some are external, namely the calling by the word, and the management of circumstances in which this calling is addressed to us. The internal ones culminate in producing in us all that can contribute to making this word effective.

The acts of man are faith, repentance, love of God and of neighbor, etc. There is not much difficulty regarding the action of God who has His word preached; or if there is some, they are not of our subject. As for the acts of man, one has just seen in the preceding §. in what lies the point of difficulty: that will come again hereafter. But it is not easy to make known the immediate effect that the grace of God produces in us, before we actually convert ourselves toward Him, nor the manner in which He produces this effect, to bring us to convert ourselves.

§. 294. For the first, it passes among us as rather constant that God produces in us something fixed, durable, and permanent, which remains there throughout the course of life, even during sleep; which is like a new taste, with regard to spiritual and intellectual things, which makes sin horrible, despicable, disgusting to us; and holy things of an excellent taste: which inclines us consequently to faith and to good works. To be assured that this is the most common sentiment among us, one has only to read the judgment of the Synod of Dort, on articles III & IV, and the votes of each of the members of this Assembly. One will find it expressed clearly and formally there. One can also see the judgment of the same Synod, on article V, with the votes of the members of the Assembly.

But what is this germ, this principle of holiness? Various expressions are employed to designate it. Scripture also calls it by various names: the Spirit dwelling in us, the Spirit that fights against the flesh, the new man, the inner man, the seed of God that remains in us, the anointing by the saint, a new sense, eyes to see, ears to hear, and a heart to understand: taste and see that the Lord is good, etc. Our Theologians also give it various names. The Synod of Dort says in a very vague manner that they are new qualities, poured into the will. *Voluntati novas infundit qualitates*. Many others say that they are infused habits. Others to determine the thing a little more, maintain with St. Augustine that it is a victorious pleasure, which makes truth and justice please us more than falsehood and sin, that we love them more, and that we make them the Rules of our conduct. The Author calls it a new inclination.

As for me, if I am permitted to say my sentiment here, I will say that the name which appears to me the simplest, and at the same time the most proper to make understood the little that one knows of it, is that of new sense, or new spiritual taste;

and consequently a new inclination, since the taste being changed, the inclination for the food is also. Several reasons make me prefer this expression to any other. First, it is authorized by Scripture as has just been seen; that is already a great point. Secondly, this holy new quality must have a relation to external objects, to perceive them in their true nature, in order to form a right judgment of them, and to esteem them justly for what they are worth. Such are, for example, the word of God, and all the objects that it proposes to us; Riches, worldly honors, the pleasures of this age, etc.

Nothing appears to me more similar in this regard to the disposition of the unregenerate sinner than a sick or feverish man, to whom the best foods make the heart rise. They are gall and wormwood to his taste; and often he will take his taste in things that a healthy man could not bear in his mouth. He can also have jaundice which alters his taste and sight, he sees all objects yellow, and different from what they are. He can be cross-eyed, who having the eyes turned sees the situation of objects, and perhaps also their size, all different from what it is. And a regenerate man on the contrary resembles a man to whom God, after all the preceding inconveniences, would have rendered perfect health. He has an exquisite taste: good and wholesome things are of an admirable taste to him; he consequently has a great appetite for them, and loves them passionately. He also has life and all spiritual senses in good condition; he sees each thing in its true color, situation, and size: what is beautiful appears beautiful to him, and what is great and well placed appears to him also as such; and the same for contrary things. Thus he is above the deception and the illusions that the vain objects of this world make to all unregenerate sinners. These vain objects deceive only the feverish, and people who have the sense depraved in every way. Be that as it may, as this idea appears to me very suitable, I use it more willingly than any other; although I do not despise the others. Moreover, we consider here this new being, or rather this new sense, this healed and renewed sense, only at the moment of conversion. Although it is also proper to explain what may happen to it in the sequel; whether in strengthening itself, or in weakening itself: As in the falls of the children of God, or in their rising again. All that although worthy of being examined, is not of this place.

§. 295. To speak now of the manner in which grace operates in us this new sense; it is that when God regenerates us, He does the same thing toward our souls that the Savior did toward bodies, when He restored health to the sick, sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, and life to the dead. And that by acting physically, immediately, and invincibly on our soul; so that it is absolutely impossible that these new qualities, these new inclinations, this new sense, not be produced there. Note, Reader, that these strong expressions marked here in *Italic letter* are from the Author himself, and judge if the Predeterminants could say more. On that the Author has the objection that one will see follow.

§. 296. What more is needed, many will say without doubt, not to wound and restrict somewhat our freedom, but to destroy it and annihilate it altogether? Has one not seen that nothing is more opposed to it than a necessity of this order?

There is the objection that the Author proposes, and to which he responds as I have represented in §. 302, and which could be better without hedging, as one will see.

§. 297. But before responding it is good to know, as the Author notes, that the Lutherans, the Arminians, and the Molinists, who are the most zealous partisans of freedom, are in no way entitled to make this objection to us. The Lutherans and the Remonstrants recognize that God acts on us in a manner so effective that it is impossible for us to resist Him, when He gives us, not faith, but the strength and the power to believe: and they do not fear that that wounds our freedom in the slightest. I will cite after the passages that the Author furnishes us to verify this.

The Lutherans and the Molinists go still much further. According to us man acts neither with freedom nor without freedom, when he receives the first grace; no more than a blind man did not act, when the Savior restored sight to him, or a sick man when He restored health to him. Habet se mere passive, say our Theologians. God alone acts then, and man only suffers: He is only the subject of the action of God. Thus one cannot say that God makes us act without freedom. But according to the Lutherans and the Molinists, man acts then, and acts without freedom. According to them preventing and exciting grace consists in indeliberate acts which are all vital acts, as one says in the Schools, and which proceed immediately from our faculties. Some from the understanding, and others from the will, but proceed from them necessarily and without freedom: that is why they are neither good nor bad, and God neither rewards nor punishes them.

According to the Roman Church, regenerating grace acts in this manner in the baptism of children. All the infused habits of faith, of hope, and of charity are conferred on them; the indelible character is added to it, without any act intervening on their part, without them even being able to do any. Is there much appearance that people who hold these sentiments would think of accusing us that we wound freedom by a dogma which does not make the sinner act either with freedom or without freedom? That would be to see the speck that is in the eye of one's neighbor, and not feel the beam that is in one's own.

§. 298. Here are the passages of the Lutherans and the Remonstrants which verify what we have just said. Gust. Phil. Morl, Theologian of Altorf in vind. Doct. Luth. pag. 81. [Latin: "Most plainly of all do Joachim Hildebrand and John Frederick Konig speak of this matter, of whom the former in his sacred institutions, Disp. XV. §. 20, writes thus: The primary-first motions of grace, as they are indeliberate, so they cannot be prevented. The latter, however, in his Positive and Acroamatic Theology which is publicly read and explained in various Academies, §. 150, says thus: As regards the first motions excited by prevenient grace, they are inevitable, because they cannot be prevented from arising."]

Heilbrunner also agrees, *Disp. Inaug. on the drawing of the Father*: under the presidency of Dr. John Schmid. Held at Strasbourg p. 23. [Latin: "If we consider the moment of time before God's drawing, we by no means deny that something involuntary and repugnant is found in man. For through this very drawing, God makes the unwilling willing, the repugnant consenting, the resistant coming."] And p. 38. [Latin: "Vivification (he speaks of the first motions) is nothing else than the bestowal of supernatural powers, in respect of which man is merely passive, and necessarily feels the first motion of prayer, and cannot ward off its assistance and presence as far as feeling is concerned...."]

D. Olearius in synopsis of Calvin's errors. p. 23. §. 43. [Latin: "The grace of God for being able to convert is sufficiently granted to all: of external knocking, or persuasion to believe, it is granted irresistibly; so that no one can fail to feel those inevitable first motions excited by prevenient grace."] Finally, also D. J. A. Osiander, Theologian of Tübingen... in *Disp. on the helps of grace* §. 23. [Latin: "As far as the first sense and impulse of grace is concerned, this prevenient grace is irresistible."]

The Remonstrants in Synodal writings about art. 4. p. 62. [Latin: "Someone might perhaps object that from this deduction of ours it can be concluded that we do not establish any grace in the regeneration of man other than moral grace: But we respond that this is by no means rightly concluded. For we say that the power of believing is conferred before all things, through irresistible grace."]

§. 299. But to come finally to the Response which seems to me the most precise, the most exact, and the most reasonable: It must be noted that the freedom of which we must speak is a quality that one attributes, sometimes to persons, and sometimes to actions. One says that a man is free; one says also that he acts freely, and that such action that he does is a free action. The freedom of the person in this sense here is properly the state of a man awake, and who is in his right mind: who does only what he wants to do, and who abstains only from what he wants to abstain from, after having reflected on it as much as he has found it appropriate to do; and who determines himself afterward on the reason that he prefers to all others. The freedom of the action is that which is found in each voluntary and spontaneous action, done by a person who was in the state that we have just depicted.

When therefore one asks if some species of necessity ruins, or does not ruin freedom, one can understand two things. One can first ask thereby if this species of necessity deprives the person himself of the freedom that I have just explained, or if it leaves him in possession of it. One can secondly ask thereby if, supposing that this freedom always subsists, an action, or certain particular actions that this person does, are free actions.....

It is certain that one can lose in several manners this first sort of freedom. One can lose it for all one's life; that is what happens in several illnesses, as when one dies of apoplexy, of lethargy: and in several species of madness, which last without interruption and without respite, to the tomb. One can also lose it for a time only,

as happens in sleep, in fits of epilepsy, in synopes, and in several species of madness, which leave lucid intervals. As for what regards the freedom of actions, it perishes every time that one is forced to them, and determined involuntarily despite oneself, by a power that opposes itself to your own choice, to which it is physically impossible to resist. The Author adds that it perishes also every time that these actions are the results of an invincible and involuntary ignorance. But that is not entirely true, as appears in re-reading what I have just said in this §. And also according to Scripture, we are obliged to ask pardon of God for our hidden faults, Psal. 19:13, that is to say committed through ignorance or through error: Therefore we are in some way responsible for them; therefore they were in some way morally free.

That being thus explained I ask: does one understand therefore that from this dogma proposed in §. 305, it follows that God producing in us in this way this new sense, this new taste, and this new inclination, deprives us and strips us of our personal freedom; so that from this moment, we cease to be free as we were previously? This imagination would have something ridiculous about it. It is so little true that the production of the new sense and the new inclination deprives us of this freedom, that quite on the contrary, it puts it in a vaster field than it was previously. It frees us from our vices, from our passions, and from our ignorance; putting us in a state to do a hundred praiseworthy, useful, and reasonable things, which previously were morally impossible for us.

Or else does one understand thereby that God makes us act without freedom in the actions that we do since He has created in us this new sense and this new inclination; I mean the actions that have relation to this new sense, if we do them at the same time necessarily and infallibly? That will then be the same thing as if one said: that if a feverish and sick man, having an insurmountable disgust for wine and for the best foods, came to be healed by the Savior of the world: to recover perfect health, and consequently an exquisite and well-rectified taste, if he then sought wine and good foods to restore himself, and according to his appetite which invites him to it, he would no longer do it and could no longer do it with the freedom necessary to act morally, which is ridiculous. And consequently the objection is absurd and unreasonable.

The actions that man does in consequence of this new sense, and to which he is invited by this new taste, are without comparison more upright and more conforming to his nature than the actions that he did previously: because this new taste is more upright and more conforming to nature than the preceding one, which was vitiated and corrupted. Thus these new actions have all the characteristics of a moral and free action, such as we have made understood above; as well as all those that Adam did, which were voluntary and spontaneous, as soon as he was created, and which had relation to the law of God. The correction, or recreation of the new sense and the new taste here, cannot prevent them from it any more than the first creation of the soul of Adam and of all his faculties could prevent his from being

morally free. There is the same reason on one side as on the other. The creation or rectification or recreation of the faculty does not destroy the quality of the actions of this faculty; it is on the contrary this creation or rectification which is the foundation of it. These things are not opposed, but subordinated one to the other.

§. 300. The last chapter of this section has for title: What is the necessity of the acts by which the sinner converts himself. One still sees manifestly in this chapter that the Author is not constant in his principles concerning the freedom necessary to act morally; and that he does not remain firm on his definitions. He puts here a difference from all to all, for morality, between the things that happen as necessarily and as easily as it happens that we love ourselves, and that we consent to be happy; and between the things of which one can say that they happen necessarily, only because it has never happened and will never happen that they fail to be done, although one does not do them as easily as these first ones. These latter, according to him, Tr. B. p. 205, are moral; and if they are good, they are praiseworthy and approved by God, or even rewarded; the others are only physical and not at all moral. They are consequently worthy neither of blame nor of praise, neither of punishment nor of reward.

I have already said that this characteristic of morality is false; and also the Author did not put it at the beginning, in the enumeration of the true characteristics of morality, when he was treating it *ex professo*. He himself in this present chapter proves the falsity of it, by not remaining firm on this principle. For proof of this, let us consider his words. Tr. B. p. 206: "Indeed physical necessity is such that with whatever effort one tries to overcome it, one cannot succeed in it. Let a man afflicted with stone, with gout, or with sciatica strive as much as he pleases not to feel pain, he cannot achieve it. But it is not the same with the actions that convert the sinner."

No, I will say, because this is of another genre; but if it is the same with these acts as with the acts by which we love ourselves; or the same as with those by which the elect Angels and the blessed Saints love God and glorify Him, your principle drawn from necessity is false, or you have poorly succeeded in giving the difference that there is between a physical necessity and a moral necessity. Now I say that it is the same; let us see that. You continue thus:

"If the sinner made his efforts to produce none of these acts that convert him, it is beyond doubt that he would succeed in it. For if he did them while not wanting to do them, he would not convert himself in doing them, the conversion of the sinner being able to be only voluntary; and there being contradiction in positing that an act done reluctantly can be praiseworthy."

Similarly, I will say, if an Angel of Heaven made all his efforts to produce no act of love of God, and of glorification of His name, it is without doubt that he would succeed in it, and for the same reasons. What would the Author respond to this? One sees from the bottom of the same page that he would respond one of two things.

Either he would say that it will never happen that an Angel of Heaven makes such detestable efforts: or else he would say that it is absolutely impossible that he make them. If he says the first, I will respond that it is the same, according to the Author, with a man who has received grace; it has never happened and it will never happen that a sinner thus prevented, assisted, and strengthened, obstinately wants to resist: these are his words. And if he says the second, without claiming thereby to destroy their moral freedom; he must permit others to speak like him, on similar subjects, without accusing them for that of destroying freedom: which they have no more design to do than he. Moreover this impossibility can be neither metaphysical nor physical, it is therefore moral. And even we know that the Demons who were blessed in Heaven, as are the elect Angels, fell into this fault.

That is also proven from the fact that the elect Angels are praised and approved by God, and beatified by Him for the love that they bear Him, and for the worship that they render Him; which is the mark of morality according to the Author himself. For as one can say that the Demons deserve at every moment by new sins what they suffer; and that they suffer what they deserve, speaking of a merit of condignity; also one can say, speaking of a merit of pact and of congruity, that the elect Angels deserve at every moment their beatitude, and that they receive the good that they deserve.

Similarly, I will say again, if we made all our efforts to hate ourselves with a perfect hatred, we would succeed in it, etc. Here if the Author responds as previously, that it will never happen that one makes such efforts: I will prove the contrary to him by the example of the Quietists, followers of Molinos who gave the precepts for it. If he says then that although these dreamers make such efforts, they nevertheless cannot succeed in it: I will reply that it suffices that they have made these efforts, and that in that they are blameworthy, to prove that not making them, and in loving ourselves as much as reason orders it, we act reasonably, and that we should be approved or praised in that; and consequently that according to the Author himself we love ourselves by a moral necessity and not physical. Which demonstrates without reply that the Author has been mistaken in explaining the difference that there is between physical necessity and moral necessity.

CHAPTER VII. Examination of the First Six Chapters of the Third Dissertation of Treatise B.

§. 301. I have begun, Tr. B. p.210, the third Dissertation of the Author, where he claims to show: That neither God's providence, nor His Decrees, nor His foreknowledge harm our liberty in any way. But the blindness in which he finds himself everywhere, contradicting himself on the nature of the liberty in question, causes him to fall into various difficulties and embarrassments, which he would not encounter if he remained firm on his first principles. For example, in the first chapter, having proved by Scripture that God acts effectively on the wills of men, and that He leads them to

do what pleases Him, through five passages Prov. 21:1, Ezra 7:27, 1 Sam. 10:2, 2 Chron. 30:12, Neh. 7:5, to which many others could be added, he continues thus: "We know, moreover, that nothing can effectively resist His will, and that He would not be, as He undoubtedly is, infinitely powerful and infinitely wise, if simple creatures could evade His designs."

After that, he raises this objection to himself: "But, one will say, if that is so, what will become of our liberty? And how can we reconcile it with the impossibility in which we find ourselves of rendering any of His plans useless?"

Before coming to the self-forgetfulness that is seen here in the Author, I would simply ask the Objector to consider that any wise and enlightened man will easily recognize that there are thousands and thousands of things whose existence is certain and indubitable, and which no one questions or can question; yet whose origin, and the manner or possibility of this origin, is perfectly, entirely, and absolutely incomprehensible to us. Such is the creation of the world, the creation or procreation of ourselves, and even that of our liberty, and a thousand other similar things.

Such a man will therefore honestly recognize that, given the limits of our nature, the incomprehensibility of the origin or possibility of things, or of their agreement and compatibility together, is no longer a valid reason for us to deny the existence or reality of any of the things that have certain and indubitable proofs of their reality and their existence, of all kinds; even drawn from experience and from the testimony of God.

Now, do we understand the creation and production of our being and our liberty itself better than we understand the agreement of this same liberty with the power that God has reserved for Himself to act on our wills and to lead them to the goal He has decreed, without disturbing their nature and without constraining them in any way?

No one will say that we understand more in one of these things than in the other. Why then would this incomprehensibility, equal on both sides, authorize us to deny one of the two, if both have proofs equally worthy of our submission and our deference?

Each of these things separately is equally well proven, and by proofs of the same nature; each also holds something incomprehensible for us; one in its origin and in the how of its production; the other in its agreement and compatibility with the first. That being the case, we must deny and reject both, or we must receive and acknowledge both, since everything is equal for us: Both the light and the darkness; both the experience and the incomprehensibility. However, it is impossible with all impossibility to deny the first; it must therefore be the same with the second. Would reason itself not acquiesce to this reasoning? Yes, without doubt. The objection is therefore rendered vain and without force by this consideration.

But besides, what difficulty can this objection cause to a man who has established the good principles that the Author admits? One cannot conceive it. Nevertheless, in forgetting himself, he always falls back into the false idea of liberty, as if it consisted in the power to do and not to do what one does, omnibus positus. See his page 187. After that, he makes a flood of distinctions to extricate himself, which are all useless and irrelevant.

He would only need to remember his principles on one side, and not to be mistaken on the other about the nature of moral necessity, and also of moral impotence, as I have explained in §. 267, 283. For then the objection he has just proposed resembles these: But what becomes of the liberty of the Blessed and elect Angels, if it is true that they cannot hate God, nor resolve to blaspheme Him and disobey Him? But what becomes of the liberty of Demons, if it is true that they cannot love God, etc? But what becomes of our liberty, if it is true that we cannot love evil as such, hate ourselves, etc?

Now one answers these three questions very solidly through the principle that the Author himself employs on page 142, and which I have reported in §.270. One must therefore respond in the same way to the present objection, as I have already shown well enough; and everything will be resolved without further distinction. This fault and this illusion of the Author continues in all the rest of the book.

§.302. In chapter II, the Author compares our liberty with the permissive Decrees of God, which he supposes in the sense that he takes them: but which he does not prove nor could he. Here are his words. Tr. B. p. 216. "I notice first that there are two Orders of God's Decrees, permissive Decrees and effective Decrees."

That is an important remark; but what authority does it have, and what is its foundation? That is what one does not see. But before proceeding further, let us make some reflections here.

We have seen in §.58 and 59 that intelligent creatures have, with regard to God, two relations that seem opposed or incompatible with each other in the same subject. These are that of means in His hand to execute His designs; and that of moral causes of their own actions, or of the actions they execute. But as each of these relations has proofs of their truth and reality of all kinds, which are beyond all exception, drawn from experience, revelation, and reason; we have also seen that for this reason, although their union and compatibility in the same subject is necessarily incomprehensible to us, we cannot reasonably deny this union, and should not do so either, if we do not want to renounce good sense, reason and piety.

The second of these relations does indeed authorize us to say that God permits sin and that He foresees it: that He permits and foresees all that we will think, that we will want, that we will say and that we will do, as long as we are in the world; But one should not put this in opposition to the other relation, which is that of means subject to His Decrees, and depending on them; or that of a condition voluntarily

admitted, for a design worthy of the all-perfect Being as if these two things were contrary and incompatible, as I have noted in §. 62.

And consequently this consideration of permissive Decrees, or founded on foresight, which the Author has imagined and of which not a single word is said in all of Scripture, can serve no purpose in freeing us from the difficulties raised by the Manicheans, on what they believe that the Unity of God, and of a first and unique Principle, entails that He is the Author of sin.

To produce these sorts of Decrees as a considerable solution on these matters, and to insult those who do not use them, or who do not want to use them; is to not understand things, or to lack reflection; or it is to lack sincerity and charity. This is clear from the fact that these kinds of softened Decrees, when well pushed and examined, finally fall back into absolute and antecedent Decrees. This is what I intend to prove here to our Author, so that neither he nor others claim to have great advantages in these matters through this, comparing themselves to the supralapsarians.

First, I will say to the Author, since you maintain that there are eternal Decrees of God, which are only permissive regarding the evil actions that intelligent creatures have committed, and that they will commit throughout the course of centuries; or at least regarding some of these evil actions; you must necessarily suppose that these actions were of a certain and unfailing futurity in His eternal foreknowledge, when He formed these permissive Decrees concerning these actions, unless He opposed their occurrence. For the foresight of an event precedes by a moment of reason or nature, as they say, the Decree to permit this event, if it depends on us to prevent it.

Now, to foresee with certainty that a thing will happen unfailingly if one wants to acquiesce to it, one must see this thing as future in its distant and mediate causes, already really existing at that time: or one must see it in its proximate and immediate causes if they exist, or in the first, original, and necessary cause for the existence of these mediate or immediate causes, and without whose will and ordinance, these immediate causes could never exist, nor find themselves in the circumstances where they must be, to cause and give rise to these events. But the proximate and immediate cause of sin is the intelligent creature placed in certain circumstances, where God has found it appropriate to put it, and which it misuses. However, these intelligent creatures nor these circumstances, did not yet exist at the time of the formation of the permissive Decrees in question, which are eternal, according to the Author.

Therefore, it is in the first, original, and necessary cause for the existence of these immediate causes, or of these creatures, and of the circumstances which they were certain to misuse, if God permitted them, that God saw these things as certainly future, if He resolved to permit them. So that all this assembled and well considered, it will have to be said: That God, seeing in His Decree, or (in the will He had to create

certain intelligences, and in the conduct He wanted to take toward them) sin unfailingly future, if He was willing to permit it; He resolved to permit it indeed. That is to say, seeing that He wanted sin, if He was willing to permit it, He resolved to permit it. Is that not well imagined and well turned? That is, however, the nature of permissive Decrees; no one can deny it. And all that together, though it is very confused, and strongly smacks of gibberish, is perfectly the same thing as an absolute Decree; which resolves the event of sin, for reasons worthy of the supreme and all-perfect Being, who Decrees that it will happen by means which cannot in any way sully or offend Himself; and finally that it will happen for an end that renders just, holy, and wise everything it authorizes, and which is worthy of the same supreme and all-perfect Being.

For these reasons, I believe therefore, that no one will easily admit these permissive Decrees, as a very important solution of the main difficulty to be resolved, which is that which claims that our doctrine makes God the author of sin, if one wants to consider well their bizarre nature, and at the same time also if one wants to notice, how useless they are, for the purpose for which one wants to use them since they fall back into absolute and antecedent Decrees.

For that is all that can be said of permissive Decrees with regard to the event simply.

But although God in His infinite omniscience, which is called simple intelligence, has seen from all eternity all possibles, that is to say an innumerable number of diverse plans, from among which He chose the existing Universe, as the best of all for the end He proposed, and which He could not prevent Himself from proposing in giving being to this great All: ultimate end which was suggested by the sovereign love, of the greatest degree of perfection of all and each of the divine virtues. And which also proposed to glorify this sovereign perfection, by the actual exercise of all the virtues, or of all the attributes of perfection, each pushed to the supreme degree, wanting to take His joy and His contentment in this exercise.

Although, I say, He has seen from all eternity in His omniscience, all possibles at the same time; He has nevertheless foreseen the futures, by His knowledge which is called of vision, only in His Decrees. For these futures were not more future than the other possibles, before one supposes His Decree, which admitted to existence by an all-powerful fiat, all that was to enter into the best of all Plans or of all systems, which He chose according to an infinite wisdom.

In this plan, sin and all its consequences, has nevertheless entered according to a perfect wisdom, as one sees by experience. Thus this sin as to the event simply, entered into this plan by a positive antecedent Decree like the rest of the futures, since there is no future without Divine Decree: as has very well said, (in the objections which are the second in my Collection, the Great man of whom I have already spoken. It is when he says these words. The ideas of things come from the Divine understanding, insofar as they contain only possibility, but without the will

of God, things could not attain existence. Thus with regard to events simply, one cannot strictly speaking properly speak except of positive antecedent Decrees.

But here is what can be added to justify the denomination of permissive Decrees when it comes to sin and its consequences. It is that in another respect, one can speak of these kinds of Decrees very reasonably in relation to sin, and here is how. When an intelligent Being finds himself in certain conjunctures, where he is obliged to admit certain things that he abhors, and for which he has an extreme aversion, or else to sin grievously himself, and to commit himself a shameful irregularity, unworthy of him, and which is of infinite consequence, so to speak: shameful or criminal irregularity, which infinitely outweighs the admission of the hated and detested thing, admission which is a condition without which one cannot avoid this shameful irregularity of which I speak.

Then although one resolves to admit this thing (hated and detested as much as one wishes) by a very positive will: and although one seeks oneself the occasion which can put it into execution; one can very well say that one only permits it, because while admitting it for powerful reasons, and very justificatory of this admission, one detests it, one hates it and one abhors it.

For example, a man has slightly injured his foot, during the great heat of Summer: he neglects this injury as a trifle: from that however it happens that gangrene sets in his leg and rises up to his thigh. Then he resolves to have a surgeon sought himself, he has his thigh cut off as quickly as possible, and has himself cured and his life saved by this amputation. Here you see that this man voluntarily admits a thing that he abhors; but the reason he has for it is so strong and so just, that he would be very criminal if he did not admit it; because if he did not resolve to it he could be said to be a homicide of himself.

Also to express this action, one usually expresses oneself by terms of permission, rather than by terms which mark a positive action. One says, he let his thigh be cut off; he suffered his thigh to be cut off; he was obliged to let his thigh be cut off, and similar things: because indeed it is not willingly that he did it, and it is not through any love or inclination that he had for such a means, that he admitted or sought it, since he abhors it. But it is for a reason drawn from elsewhere, and because in refusing or in avoiding to submit to that condition, he would have committed a great crime or some other irregularity, of capital consequence for him.

It is for a similar reason that one should call permissive Decree, the positive Decree of God which admitted sin to existence, with all its disastrous consequences. He abhors and detests it considered in itself; however, he would wrong his sovereign perfection, and would deny himself in some way, if in order not to admit it, he reduced himself to a small foot, and if he showed in his projects and in all his works, only mediocre virtues of low standing: if he even suppressed several of them altogether by that, or obscured them so much that no creature would have been able to guess them in him, although they would have remained hidden forever.

Now as he saw all these necessary and shameful consequences for him, in the nature of possibles, as inseparably attached to the refusal to admit sin and its consequences: That was of such a terrible consequence in the supreme and all-perfect Being, that there is no sin in us more enormous, than would have been in him the rejection of this event. And the admission that he made of it for that reason, is only an action of the most sublime wisdom and the greatest perfection, although he has this sin in extreme horror, and its unpleasant consequences displease him.

This admission was a condition, without which he could not have shown himself as he is; on the other hand he could not have had the contentment of exercising all the virtues, nor that of exercising to the supreme degree those whose practice and exercise remained free to him. For he could only have exercised in many respects finite and limited virtues: which would be a great imperfection in him, which befits only creatures, but not the supreme and all-perfect Being. His Greatness, His Majesty, the most sublime degree of His Goodness, of His Wisdom, of His Power, of His Purity and Holiness, etc. was obscured, overshadowed, and remained unknown thereby.

But notwithstanding these reflections, and this denomination of permissive Decree in this sense, that cannot remove the pretext from his enemies and those envious of his glory to murmur, because it is freely and voluntarily, that sin and its disastrous consequences were admitted to existence by a positive Decree. They will always grumble, and will say as usual as if to avenge themselves with odious terms, that he is nevertheless, notwithstanding all that, the author of sin, at least physically, mediately and indirectly.

But that however despite all their rage and their malignity, will prevent them from being able to conclude from it, that he is an accomplice or lover of sin and its disastrous consequences, in the cursed and detestable sense that would wrong his holiness, his goodness and his wisdom: as if sin and its consequences pleased him or were agreeable to him, which is false and abominable. God is not a strong God who takes pleasure in wickedness, he has always hated all workers of iniquity. Ps. 5:5,6. And moreover, it is not willingly that he afflicts and grieves the sons of men. Lament. 3:33. He takes no pleasure in the death of the sinner, but rather that he should convert and live. Ezek. 18:23. And finally, it is his strange and unusual work, to make the unhappy. Is. 28:21. Words which mark very naturally, that his agreeable and ordinary work is to do good and to make the blessed. They can also very well give rise to the thought, and even prove it, that in the end, all things considered, it will be found in the city of God, that at the end of the centuries and for eternity, there will be infinitely more blessed than unhappy.

But for the rest he acts as he does, because if he acted otherwise he would debase himself, by preventing himself from showing himself as he is; by abstaining from the pleasure of exercising all the virtues to the supreme degree, as his nature inclines him to: and that for fear of permitting an evil which is absorbed, by the interest of

the glory of his adorable Majesty, which would have to be stifled, or denied almost, in order not to admit it.

Thus therefore, this evil although very great to consider it in itself, vanishes and turns into good in Divine hands, by the marvelous and infinitely important use that he makes of it, and that he indeed makes of it. Thereby one sees that all things considered, God can only have a sovereign complacency in his admirable work, since in doing it he satisfies the most sublime design, the greatest and most Majestic, the most brilliant and shining with all sorts of infinite perfections; and in a word the most perfect that is conceivable to be projected, and executed by the supreme and all-perfect Being; and consequently in this view, it is the best and most perfect of all possible and conceivable plans; therefore he is content and satisfied with it, and he is right to be so.

§. 303. Notwithstanding all that, the Author claims to use (in the false and useless sense for him, which he has in view) very advantageously, these permissive Decrees, and in excelling over all other Theologians. A little further he asks himself this question: To know, if the permission of God is necessarily followed by the permitted action; as if because God wanted to permit sin, sin necessarily happened? On that he distinguishes the states of man; or in general, of the intelligent creature. If it is a question of innocent creatures, he says, such as were the first men and all the Angels, when they came out of the hands of their creator, one must answer determinedly, that permission is not necessarily followed by the permitted action, etc. with a great number of reasonings, to confirm this strange and bold answer, given the event.

That would be good, I would say, if the permission were not accompanied, and even preceded by foresight; but this being certain and indubitable, according to yourself, one must necessarily answer in another way.

But, says the Author a little further on; Tr. B. p. 221. Men and Angels always had the power to persevere, like that of falling; and nothing prevented them from reducing it to act as they pleased. Yes, I would say, they had this power, considering only the nature of their faculties, which they had to misuse to sin thus, which is enough to found the morality of their actions; but not considering the futurity, which was unfailing according to the Decrees, which however, disturbed nothing in their faculties, nor took anything away from the morality of their actions, which is not incompatible with the certainty of the event. They had this power as much as was necessary, to render their conduct moral.

But that means nothing else than, that all that they did, they did voluntarily and of their own movement, founded on reasons considered and weighed as much as they had wanted; but not considered and weighed as much as it would have been necessary, nor as they should have done, without being violently forced not to do so. That marks moreover, that the thing in question, is of such a nature, that if their will had inclined to the other side, that alone would have been enough to prevent

this event. But they did not have, morally speaking, and given all the circumstances at the moment of the action, the power in this sense, to prevent the thing from happening as God had at least foreseen it, according to yourself: which supposes that it was inevitably future, or that it had to necessarily happen.

For supposing such a foresight, the event is no longer contingent as an event, but necessarily future; although it can be said to be contingent, with regard to the nature of its proximate and immediate cause; that is to say, although it had to happen, with regard to this cause, in a spontaneous and voluntary manner, and that the cause was of such a nature, that it would have prevented this event, if it had resolutely turned to the other side; it is consequently moral, as I have proved in §.245. things which do not conflict at all.

§. 304. In the following chapter, the Author compares our liberty with the effective Decrees. And here this objection is made: If God, they say, has resolved that we will do something, it is certain and indubitable that we will do it. And if that is so, with what liberty can we do it? For to act freely one must have the power not to act.

§ . 305. To this I would respond that one can admit without pretense that it is true that to act freely one must have the power, or the ability not to act; but that this has already been explained in §. 266....273. The power that one must have for this is simply physical power, which is sufficient to establish the liberty in question, and which coexists very well with the moral impotence that would prevent us from doing this or that; which can be insurmountable, notwithstanding this physical power which always remains with us.

One can further explain this by the comparison which we have already used before. It is with the power to do and not to do a certain thing, speaking of the will, as with the indifference of a scale to tilt to the right or to the left, according to what the weight requires. This indifference, which can also be called a power to receive either state, that is to say to tilt to the right or to the left, is not ruined by the different acts which determine it; these acts certainly fulfill the power, but they do not destroy it. That is to say, for example, that although a scale tilts to the right because of the weights that have been placed on it; it is nonetheless still a scale, I mean an indifferent instrument, and capable of tilting to the right and to the left, when the quality of the weights will demand it. It is true that if it tilts to the right by a weight that pulls it there, its indifference, or its power is fulfilled; and that then, its power to tilt to the left, is only a power in a divided sense. That is to say, that it can tilt to the left, not while tilting to the right because of the weights that pull it there; but that it can do so by its nature as a scale, if the force of the weights comes to determine it to do so. This nature and this power always remain with it, even if you supposed that it would never tilt to the left again, because of a weight that has been placed on the right, and which keeps it tilted there, which one never wants to remove from there. Notwithstanding that, it always remains a scale, and an

instrument capable of tilting to the right or to the left, according to the force of the weights that will be placed on it.

Similarly, is it not true to say, of a power either physical or moral, which is in us, to do a certain thing or not to do it, that it is not destroyed by an absolute Decree, which would have resolved one of the two? For example, the strength of the body, capable of carrying a weight of one hundred pounds, and also of abstaining from it, is not incompatible with a Decree of God, which would have resolved that I would never carry it. I can never carry it, and yet keep all my life, the strength or the power, if one wishes, to be able to carry it, if the occasion presented itself. A power determined to one of the two acts, by ways not opposed, not contrary to this nature, and which do not destroy it, but by ways suitable to this nature; is not a destroyed power.

It is thus that one can say, that although God has decreed that a man will convert, and that indeed, he must in this case convert unfailingly, by manners and for reasons suitable to his nature; his nature does not lose thereby, the power to resist conversion or not to convert. That is to say, that this physical power remains in him, although he is inevitably determined to the contrary, by ways which do not destroy the nature of his power; although the event of which we speak, is as infallible in its execution, as any other that there is in the world, which would depend on a purely physical necessity. But this necessity or certainty, once again, does not destroy the nature of his will or of his moral liberty. It always remains a power capable of doing or not doing what it does, according to the reasons which will predominate in his mind, at the moment when it will determine itself; and even after being determined, it keeps this power, namely in a divided sense, as I have just explained regarding the scale.

§.306. What the Author answers to this objection is also very reasonable, though he does not explain the thing thoroughly. He says that one must distinguish two things in each Decree, its formation, and its execution. That if there were any of these two things which should harm our liberty, it would not be the first, but the second. The reason is, that this second is the only one which influences, positively and really on its subject. It is when God executes a resolution, which he has taken concerning what we will do, it is then, I say, that he acts on us, not when he takes this resolution. Consequently it is then that he can harm our liberty, and not in forming simple resolutions.

Indeed these resolutions not yet executed do not really influence their object, which does not even actually exist, and which consequently being nothing, cannot receive any influence, nor be the term of a physical action. Moreover, the resolution is one of those acts, which are called immanent; and which not leaving the cause which produces them, puts nothing real in what is their term. And indeed, if by an impossible supposition, the Decree remained without execution, being revoked or otherwise; it is clear, that it would not harm our liberty in the least: so true is it that

if there is something which harms it, it is the execution. Even if everything concurred in it, it would nonetheless be inconceivable, that the formation of the Decree would contribute more to it than the execution. If therefore the execution of God's Decrees, does not harm our liberty, their formation will not either. Now it is beyond doubt that the execution of God's Decrees, leaves our liberty in its entirety: This is what was seen in the preceding Dissertation. One must therefore necessarily recognize, that the Decrees do not ruin it; and that thus this difficulty is very little. That is the Author's answer, which I believe I can use even more justly than he, as the Reader can judge now; and which is indeed very good.

§.307. Now comes the place where the Author compares our liberty, with God's foreknowledge. He employs here all his forces to extricate himself, in his suppositions and his Decrees founded on foresight; but it is in vain, as I hope to make very clear, with God's help. First he is completely orthodox on foresight itself, and he proves it very well. First by the consent of all reasonable Pagans; witness so many Oracles that were consulted everywhere about it. This is also manifest in the holy Nation and in the sacred Authors. Rebecca in the anxiety that her two children were pushing each other in her womb, went to consult the Eternal who answered her. Gen.25: 22, 23. David being at Keilah consulted the Eternal, to know if the Lords of Keilah would deliver him to Saul, in case he remained there; And the Eternal answered him. 1 Sam.23.9....12. These stories prove perfectly, that it has always been believed that God knew all the thoughts and all future designs of men; and also that God himself confirmed this opinion, by answering clearly and precisely, to this kind of consultation. But even without being consulted, he has predicted a hundred times what was to happen. For example, did not Jesus Christ predict to St. Peter that he would deny him three different times? To Judas, that he would betray him? Had not David himself predicted it several centuries before? This same prophet and several others who followed him, have they not clearly marked, the main circumstances of his death, of his sufferings, and of his burial? Are not the incredulity of the Jews and the conversion of the Gentiles, found indicated in a great number of Oracles of the Old Testament? Thus one cannot contest that God has a thousand times predicted, the free and contingent actions of men. And if he has predicted them, can one doubt that he has foreseen them?

That is not all. God has not only predicted the future. He has even expressly declared that he foresaw it. See Gen. 17: 19. He even attributes to himself this Privilege as a mark of his Divinity, to the exclusion of the false Gods after which the idolatrous Israelites Is. 4: 21....23. Deut. 18:20...22. That is enough on this Thesis; this truth is so incontestable, among all those who deserve to be placed in the rank of reasonable men, that it is offending them to expand much on it.

§.308. However, the Author proves the same thing again in another way: and I admit that he proves it very solidly in an express chapter. Here is the turn, or the nature of his argument. These two truths, for example, Judas will betray Jesus Christ, and St. Peter will deny Jesus Christ, were true even before the event; even true from

eternity: Now God knows everything that is, and knows from all eternity all that is true: Therefore he has known, known and foreseen these two truths and all the others, from all eternity. The present chapter is employed almost entirely, to prove the first proposition: and he proves it very well in my opinion. Here is how. Jesus Christ positively affirmed these two propositions before their event; first it follows from this that if they had not been really true, and that they had been either false, or only doubtful, there was at the very least temerity, in affirming them positively. The number of Angels is even or odd. Let us suppose that it is even; however as we cannot know it, if I affirm that it is indeed even, I am rash; since thereby I expose myself to the danger of lying, which a wise man should never do; how much less will the Savior have done it? That is at the very least what Jesus Christ will have done, according to the hypothesis of the Socinians and of Mr. Potret.

Moreover to affirm a thing, is to say, at least implicitly, that it is true. Thus Jesus Christ having said to St. Peter that he would deny him, and to Judas that he would betray him, he said, at least implicitly, that it was true. Not only did he say it, but he said it with asseveration; Truly, he says to St. Peter, you will deny me. And of Judas he says, Truly, truly I say to you, that one of you will betray me. What to call this, if these propositions were not true to the letter? Let those interested think about it. Finally if these propositions were not true before the event, they never were and never will be. The only proposition that could be true at the time of the event, was this one: Judas betrays, and Peter denies. And the one that was true after the event, is this one: Judas has betrayed J.Ch. and Peter has denied him. But for this one, Judas will betray him and Peter will deny him, it has been true at no time and never will be; which would cover with opprobrium the veracity of this great Savior, and would be completely injurious to him. All that is solid and invincible, I admit: but let us see what results from it.

§. 309. The eternal and infallible certainty of these truths, and the proofs that the Author gives of them by Scripture and by reason, had given rise in me to an objection against the Decrees founded on foresight, which are of the Author's invention; and which had come to me precisely at this point, which I was very astonished to find in the sequel, as produced by Socinus. I was very surprised to see myself fallen on the same thought, with a character to whom I have so little desire to resemble. But the difference between him and me, is still great enough here, not to be ashamed of having met with him in something. This difference consists in that I produced this objection, with the intention of proving that this eternal certainty, which I admit to be real, must be founded on antecedent Decrees of God; and Socinus produces it to combat the certainty of these truths, and God's foreknowledge with respect to them. However, the objection is triumphant for my purpose, and it will be seen in the sequel in its place.

But in the meantime let us say, that one will not assert without doubt, that these truths are themselves the cause of themselves, and that they have no other cause than themselves. That would be to deify them, and one cannot speak thus of

creatures, nor of any of their dependencies; therefore one should not speak thus of simple relations between creatures, such as these truths are. Also indeed the Author himself, must be far from doing so, since to prove that God knows these truths from all eternity, he puts them in the rank of creatures, Tr. B. p. 247. alleging the Apostle who says; That there is no creature that is hidden before God, but that all things are naked and entirely open to his eyes. Heb. 4:13.

However a little lower, and everywhere, the Author puts these truths in the rank of things actually existing even before creation. Which can only be true, by considering them as simple relations to creatures; but relations however which have an existing being from all eternity, in the dependence of their primitive, distant and mediate cause, which itself exists from all eternity. Does that not show well that these truths have a relation, not only to God's foreknowledge, which is the cause of nothing according to the Author; but also to his Decrees? For he says lower down, that things do not happen because God knows them: but that God knows them because they must happen. That is true: but it was necessary to add, as the thing is of an absolute necessity, that they must happen, only because their futurity has entered into the Decree, which has admitted it, at the very least, as a thing suitable to his adorable designs.

This foreknowledge is therefore not the cause of these truths. They themselves are not the cause of themselves either: the Author puts them in the rank of creatures. However he puts them even before creation, in the rank of things actually existing. Therefore at the very least, they are relations which will be found between creatures and God, and which have their original, distant and mediate cause existing from all eternity. Now what will this cause be if not God himself and his free Decree? For my part I cannot imagine any other, if the Author knows some other, which has this eternity and this all powerful virtue, on which depend the relations which are between creatures and God, he will indicate it. I will reply in the place that I have insinuated, to all that the Author could answer here; and will refute him at the same time.

CHAPTER VIII. Examination of Chapters VII, VIII, & IX of the Third Dissertation of Treatise B.

§ 310. Now the Author comes to the objections which claim that infallible and certain foreknowledge is incompatible with the freedom of our actions. Here is the first that he proposes: If God foresees the future, especially if He foresees it with certainty, it is impossible that His foresight deceives Him; and if that is so, it is impossible that what He foresees does not happen. And if it is impossible that what He foresees does not happen, how can what He foresees be free or contingent? What is more essential to freedom than the power not to do what one does, and to contingency, than the possibility of the contrary of what actually is?

Before making reflections on the Author's own responses, it seems to me that since everyone admits that foreknowledge does not influence things; and that according to the idea we form of it, things do not happen because God foresees them, but that God foresees them because they must happen; if there is anything in this that should be contrary to freedom, it is not the foreknowledge; but it is the cause, whatever it may be, which makes things happen infallibly as foreknowledge sees them; That is to say, the Decrees or something else, if there is something else that has this virtue.

Now if one has justified the Decrees, as we have done previously, foreknowledge can no longer pose a difficulty. And also the Author notes that Crellius himself, who did not have abundant reasons here, who did not lack subtlety, and who was not inclined to betray his party; has disavowed this one. Saying that he had never claimed that if God foresaw the future, men would not act freely; but only that if men acted freely, God would not foresee the future. This second objection that Crellius substitutes for the first will be seen below, at the place where the Author will speak of it. It is enough here to note that the first is vain, even according to the most subtle among the Opponents.

Socinus also renounces it in part in another way. He recognizes that God can foresee with certainty our good works, although he does not believe that He can foresee our sins as certainly. Indeed according to him, God can lead us so effectively to good works, that we will do them infallibly, without them ceasing to be free for that reason. For responding to the objection made to him on this question, and which is taken from what God says, that He knows that Abraham will take care to instruct his children in the truth, and to form them early to piety; He responds: *Bona ideo possunt sæpe præsciri, quia nihil impedit quominus Deus, certus autor sit multorum bonorum, quæ voluntariè, id est non coactè, quamvis necessariò, ab homine fiunt, hoc enim est Deum illorum esse auctorem.* ("Good actions can often be foreseen, because nothing prevents God from being the certain author of many good things which are done by man voluntarily, that is, not by compulsion, although necessarily; for this is what it means for God to be their author.") Socin. Prælect. Cap. X.

After that the Author adds these words. "It appears from this that according to Socinus, the foresight of God does not in any way harm the freedom necessary to act morally. For after all he believes that it does not prevent one from doing good actions: and everyone knows that freedom is as necessary for good as for evil; and that it is as impossible that an action done without freedom be good, as it is that it be bad. Thus this heretic admitting as he does, that a foreseen action can be good, he admits by that very fact that it can be free, and that thus foresight does not harm our freedom."

This reasoning of the Author is just and very solid. But since it comes from him, he cannot find it wrong that one uses it everywhere where it is applicable. Let him consider therefore at this point, that his reasoning has the same force against Socinus, admitting that God can be the author of several good actions of men,

without this efficacious and divine operation preventing these actions from being free, voluntary, not forced and moral, in those who execute them. Let the Author then remember that this is his own doctrine, and that he positively establishes in several places of his treatise A, and in this one, physical premotion for good actions.

Here are his words speaking of foreknowledge. Tr. B. p. 228 & 229. "The difficulty revolves around three kinds of actions that we can do, on the good ones, on the bad ones, and on the indifferent ones, especially on those of these last two species. For as for those of the first, since God determines us invincibly to do them, as was seen in the preceding dissertation; and that moreover he has resolved from all eternity, all that he does in time; two things seem to me indubitable on this subject. One is, that it is easy for him to foresee all that we will do of good, since we only do it because he has resolved it. The other is, that neither what God does in time to convert us, nor what he has resolved thereupon from eternity, harming our freedom in any way, as was seen in what precedes; it is inconceivable that his foreknowledge, which influences even less than all that on our actions, should have this effect."

There are the words of the Author. Let us now take up his preceding reasoning, and apply it here: which he could not disapprove; and let us say. It appears from this, that according to Socinus, and according to the Author himself, the efficacious operation of God, or physical premotion, by which God makes intelligent Beings do what he wants; and moreover, that according to the Author in particular, the antecedent Decree which has absolutely resolved all that, does not in any way harm the freedom necessary to act morally. For after all they believe that these things do not prevent one from doing good actions; and everyone knows that freedom is as necessary for good as for evil; and that it is as impossible that an action done without freedom be good, as it is that it be bad. Thus the Author with Socinus admitting, as they do, that an action caused by physical premotion, and decreed antecedently can be good, free and moral; they admitted by that very fact, that physical premotion nor antecedent Decrees, do not at all harm moral freedom in any case.

What will the Author answer here? Does one not see there all his devices, and all his great uproars against the Predeterminants, overthrown by himself? This is what I especially ask him to note well here, so that he may judge thereby if there is not injustice in the cruel war that he wages against them, in wanting wrongly and through cross purposes, that this premotion overturns both the freedom necessary to act morally, and thereby faith, and repentance and charity; and in a word, absolutely all Religion, from top to bottom without anything remaining.

§. 311. To this response, the Author claims to join even more pressing and more effective ones. However one can note in this chapter and everywhere, that he always becomes confused by making false oppositions. But he should only remember appropriately, and when it is time, that the freedom in question, and which is simply that which is necessary to act morally, of which only one must speak here, consists according to himself, Tr. B. p. 11. only in that we do nothing, except because we want

to do it; which relates to what I have proved and demonstrated in §. 245. which is, that every voluntary action is moral, and consequently free, with this freedom in question. From which it follows that the non-free in this respect, or the contrary and the opposite to this freedom, is nothing other than what is forced, violent, or brute and without knowledge, opposed to the Spontaneous, to the voluntary and to the intelligent.

And nevertheless the Author opposes here free to necessary, as contrary, opposed and incompatible things. But he himself knows that there are several things, by the consent of all Scholars, which are free, in the sense of which we speak here, and which are nevertheless necessary and inevitable in their event. Such is in the elect Angels and the Blessed, the love of God and obedience to his will. In God himself, the design to always favor good and to say only truths, etc. There would therefore be no inconvenience in this respect, when all our actions would be of this nature, or that such and such which will be in question, was of this order. For after all, free in this sense, is not opposed or incompatible with necessary. One cannot therefore conclude from the position of one of these things, to the negation of the other, as the Author does here clearly and without hesitation, by a self-forgetfulness, into which he falls very often in this work. But it is also certain that in this false idea, he will never escape from the present objection. One will see it.

In making his efforts he says therefore Tr. B. p.255 That things do not happen because God foresees them, but on the contrary God foresees them because they must happen. But who is it other than God and his adorable wisdom, who has put the future events of this world whatever they may be, in the number of future things? For not every possible is future. The Author would have done well to say it, otherwise we run the risk of ignoring it for a long time. For although it is true, that it is not properly the foreknowledge of God which is the cause of events; this foreknowledge in him nevertheless presupposes, an intelligent, wise and all-powerful cause of these foreseen events, which is mediate or immediate, and existing from all eternity. Now where will we find such an eternal cause elsewhere than in God himself and in his Decrees, namely as a mediate cause; since the immediate causes of the things of which we speak, being creatures born in time, did not yet exist?

It is therefore a figurative locution which holds to anthropopathy, that which says, that things do not happen because God foresees them, but that he foresees them because they must happen. Otherwise taking it literally, it would be to say, that God has a passive power which is put into act and determined by the will of intelligent creatures, which will be the corresponding active power. But even more. It is that this active power which acts here on him, is an active power which produces its effects before existing; and at the moment when it is still nothing at all, it even acts and produces its effects from eternity, although it only exists in time. Now where is the wise man who could bear this discourse, speaking properly? That will always be an unbearable thing to every good Christian, and to every true Theologian; and even

to every mediocre Philosopher. The most that can be said on this subject, is what I have clarified above in §.57.....60.

Foresight in God is therefore not a passive power. It is nothing else to speak literally, than an active power, which we otherwise call, The foreknowledge of things that he has decided should happen according to his Decrees; but which must be executed by the will, and the free choice of intelligent creatures. Everyone admits that the foreknowledge, or the foresight of God is infallible, and that it is absolutely impossible that it be deceived. And on the other hand, one wants certain events which depend on our wills, which God foresees in the aforesaid manner, to be, as to the event itself, contingent, uncertain, and that they can not happen. Thus an uncertain, casual thing, which can happen and not happen, all this understood in relation to the event itself, will found, and will found alone, an infallible, certain knowledge absolutely incapable of being deceived about this event. That is a formal and evident contradiction; therefore a falsehood. And as one does not offend the power of God by saying, that he cannot do things which contradict themselves; one does not offend his foreknowledge either, by saying, that it cannot foresee with certainty as to the event, what would be uncertain as to the event.

Where then is the fault, you will say, for after all it is certain that God foresees all our actions, and all our sins like the rest? It is certain moreover that we act freely in sinning, and that to act freely, is to do a thing that one has the power to do and not to do, as one will? I answer that the error and confusion, lies in the sense in which one takes these last words, by which one wants to explain the freedom in question here. For as I have just noted, when we say that we act freely; that means simply, according to the Author himself, that we do what we do, only because we want to do it, and nothing more. But if you add to it that we had at that very time, the power not to do it; this power then has no relation to the event itself (the foresight of the contrary being supposed) but it has its relation to our moral power, to determine ourselves to right or to left, by our choice, according to the reasons which seem to us the best; which always remains with us in its entirety, at whatever moment you may consider us; whether before; whether during; whether after the action itself, as I have explained in §. 305. Which is the true sense in which one should take these words, when one speaks of our moral freedom; and which is nevertheless quite different from that by which one is dazzled here.

However when the Author in order to extricate himself, and while inadvertently keeping the false sense of which I speak here, considers without pretense the event itself as contingent, as the true, unique and properly called cause of God's foresight, certain and infallible, (as he takes great pains to succeed in doing from page 256 to the end of the chapter) he thereby gives an uncertain and contingent thing as to the event, as the unique cause of a certain and unfailing thing also as to the event: and gives at the same time to God, properly speaking, a passive power, which is determined by our will, which is the corresponding active power, which produces real and effective acts, before it exists and when it is still nothing at all, absolutely

speaking. And all that, note well, in forgetting himself, and the nature of the freedom of which he speaks here, such as he has explained it himself from the beginning. These faults are great, in my opinion; let everyone judge.

§. 312. To accomplish a design so surprising, so contradictory and so offensive against God, he wants to save himself in the rest of the chapter, by the distinction there is between a priority and posteriority of time, and a priority and posteriority of nature. In this latter, he says, it can happen that the cause follows the effect, with regard to time. This is what often happens, he adds, on the subject of those causes which are called moral. He gives as an example, the salvation of the ancient faithful Jews, which existed before the death of Jesus Christ which was the cause of it. Thus this death is the antecedent, although it happened after this salvation; so that one can say, this death being posited, this salvation could not fail.

But this comparison itself, will again confound and overthrow the scandalous designs of the Author. For if the death of J. Christ, although posterior with regard to time, has been the cause of the salvation of the Jews anterior in the same regard; It is only because this death, as ransom and as satisfaction for their sins, was anterior to this salvation, also by priority of nature in the Decrees, or in the design of God, and in the eternal convention of the Father with the Son, touching the economy of this salvation. In the same way therefore to be able to say that Adam's sin, although posterior in time to the Divine foresight, is the cause of this foresight; it must be said that it is only because this sin was in the divine Decrees, by priority of nature anterior to this foresight of God. Otherwise there would be no resemblance, between the things that the Author compares as similar, in order to draw the same conclusions from them. From which it clearly follows that the things that God foresees, he had previously decreed them as to the event, although this event must happen, in a manner suitable to the natural and second causes, which must produce it in time, and not in a manner which is incompatible with the nature of these causes. One will never show any example contrary to this assertion.

§.313. In the following chapter Tr. B. p. 261. which is the IX. the Author makes a second objection, which is the one that surprised me when I came across it the first time. For as I was going along, making my remarks on the present work, it happened that I had already made to the Author's sentiments, perfectly the same objection, as I said above in §. 309. And the Author informed me in this place, that this objection had already been made and well pushed by Socinus. That surprised me, because I had been up to then as careful to read the works of this Author, as to read the Talmud or the Koran, with which they have much affinity, as far as I have been able to judge by reading the Catechism of Racovie, which is the summary of his fine productions, and by that of the orthodox who have refuted him. I was therefore astonished to see myself in society with such a man; but I came back from it at once, by the knowledge that I have had for a long time, that there is no work so bad that it does not have something good; and also by that which teaches us, that the design,

or the goal of an action, often changes its nature from everything to everything, as to morality.

Here then is Socinus's objection, as the Author reports it. If God has infallibly foreseen all our actions, it must have been certain that we would do them; for how could he have foreseen them with certainty, if it had not been certain that they would happen? As therefore there is no effect which does not have a cause, if from all eternity it was certain that we would do these actions, it would be necessary, that there had always been a cause of this certainty. But what could be the cause of such an effect? Is it the Decree of God? If that is so God will be the author of our crimes. Is it the will of man? But how can that be, since neither man nor his will existed yet, and were nothing but pure nothings? Socin. Prælect. cap. XI.

There is Socinus's objection; after which the Author continues thus.

§. 314. "Many people claim that there is nothing to oppose, to the first propositions of this objection; and that indeed it is impossible, to find a foundation for the certainty of foreknowledge, elsewhere than in the efficacy of God's Decrees, which cannot fail to be executed. Rivet in particular makes it understood, that this is principally what induced him to uphold predetermining concurrence."

"But these Theologians do not notice, that in wanting to save God's foreknowledge, they abandon without defense his holiness and the horror he has for crime" (I have shown, with God's help, that this accusation is false) He continues a little further down. "As this consequence appears to me no less frightful than the error itself that the Socinians try to support by this objection, it is necessary to take other measures, and employ other means to defend against them, the truths that we uphold; and this is what will not be difficult for us."

But, I will say, if this frightful consequence that you suppose is false, everyone should be content. And for the confidence that the Author shows, of being able to easily extricate himself from this objection, by denying that foresight is founded on the Decrees; one will soon see that it has little foundation, since the thing is not only difficult for him, but perfectly impossible. Let us see that.

§ .315. "I have indicated," he says, "in chap. III. (he means VI.) another foundation of the certainty, with which God foresees events, which does not harm his purity in any way. It is the combination of two indubitable things; of the truth of propositions which express what must happen in its time; and of the perspicacity, and I dare use this term, of the Divine understanding; which is such, that there is no truth whatsoever, which can hide from his sight."

But, I will say to the Author before going further: You take as a principle, The truth of the propositions which express what must happen in its time, without speaking of any cause of the certainty of these truths, that is to say, of the unfailing certainty of the futurity of events, which these truths express. Thus you suppose what is in question. For one denies to you that these propositions are certain or true, and

consequently that they are knowable with certainty, before the event. Or one maintains to you that if they are certain, as I believe and as you have also proved very solidly, there is an all-powerful cause of the infallible certainty of these truths, or of these events, (two things which are the same or which cannot be one without the other,) and that this cause is eternal itself, and anterior (speaking of a priority of nature) to this certainty: and consequently anterior to these truths of which you speak. You have very well proved that these propositions are true, I agree; but you have not proved that they are so independently of God's Decrees; that they are true in themselves, by themselves, or by chance. Now all this is denied to you before going further, prove it. But if they are not true by themselves without other cause, nor by chance either, which is nothing itself and which can do nothing; and that they must nevertheless have a cause, eternal of their certainty such as I have indicated, as one believes that you would not dare to deny it this cause can only be God, and the infallible certainty of his Decrees. But the Author will examine the objection step by step; let us see if he will succeed better in detail, than he has done broadly.

§.316. The Author continuing speaking of Socinus, says: "He says therefore first, that if God foresees our actions with certainty, it should be certain that we would do them. I admit this proposition, and I believe it is incontestable. I say only, that this certainty comes, neither from some absolute and metaphysical necessity, nor even from an antecedent necessity which there was in the thing. It comes solely from a necessity of simple supposition; which is even a subsequent supposition."

That is indeed what you say; but it is also what you do not prove, and what you will never prove; for what will we believe if reason and Scripture say the contrary? For reason, I believe that it has just told us clearly enough, that this certainty does not come from a subsequent supposition, but from an antecedent one. And for Scripture, it says it so clearly, that one must give it the lie flatly and without other manner, to disagree, if there were only these words. For truly against thy holy Child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, Herod and Pontius Pilate have risen up, with the nations and the peoples of Israel, to do all the things that thy hand and thy counsel, had beforehand determined to be done. Acts. 4: 27,28. But add to that the following passages, 1 Peter. 2: 8. John 12: 40. 2 Thess.2.11. Ezek. 14: 9. Ps. 105: 25. 2 Sam. 12: 11,12. to which I could add many others; and judge whom we should rather believe, them or you. Let us continue.

§. 317. "Suppose that man acts actually in time, however freely and contingently he does it, it is certain that he acts; and consequently before he did it, it was true to say that he would do it. That is all the certainty that we give to this act, and one must be very careful not to imagine any other."

Those are your precautions and your considerations, but we have just seen that the word of God does not take so many. And if you had noticed that your lessons and your warnings, give instruction to the sacred Authors, perhaps you would have scrupled to treat them as schoolboys. Reason itself cannot suffer these exceptions.

Suppose that man acts actually in time, you say, it is certain that he acts, and consequently before he acted, it was true to say that he would do it. All that is true, I will say. But can one also suppose well; that man acts in anything whatsoever independently of God's concurrence, independently of what he has absolutely decreed of himself, and by himself? No, since it is in him that we have life, movement and being; that it is he who makes in us with efficacy, both the will and the accomplishment according to his good pleasure; and moreover that to God from all time are known all his works: Therefore also this concurrence and this voluntary operation, which acquiesces to the event. But to say that from all time all this is known to God, is it not to say that from all time God has decreed to concur in these events? Therefore it cannot be that the certainty of the propositions or of the truths, which express our future actions, comes only from our actions themselves, nor that they are independent of his designs and of his Decrees. You continue.

"But, says Socinus, what can be the cause of this certainty? I answer that it is the act itself." But you should have answered, that it is the act itself to which God had decreed from eternity, to concur voluntarily in time: the act that God knew that he wanted to operate mediately by his concurrence. Without which no act can be done: that all his works are known to him from all time, and that this concurrence is one of his works: and consequently that it is the act itself, which God had resolved to want to help produce, that he foresees. And that would have shown that all your considerations and your precautions, are only dust fit to dazzle, but which the wind carries away, when it comes to parrying the blows that are given to you.

Moreover to the question that is put to you, what can be the cause of the certainty of the futurity of our actions, you answer that it is our actions themselves. That is a surprising response! But thereupon one will nevertheless continue to ask you: what can be the certain and necessary cause of that action? This cause whatever it is, is it absolutely independent of the will of God? Can you assign another than the sinner or his will? And who has given existence to these things, is it not God? Now, he who is the first, original, voluntary and total cause, of the immediate, free and voluntary cause of a certain effect, and foreseen and foreknown from all eternity with certainty by this first cause, is he in no sense the cause of this effect; if with that it was in the power of this first cause, to prevent with ease this second and immediate cause from producing this effect? One would have to renounce all reason and conscience to dare to say it. Nor do you do it, far from it; since you admit elsewhere, that our actions are dependent on God and on his concurrence to such a point, that one can say that he is the author of them; as I have already reminded you more than once. One sees therefore by that that tergiversations of this nature, cannot get us out of trouble; and that one must necessarily come to the method that I have followed, if one wants to face Socinus, and many others as well. The author continues.

§. 318. "That cannot be, says Socinus, for this certainty is from all eternity, and the act was only done in time. Before that time, this act was only a pure nothing. How then could it act? How could it cause certainty?"

"Nothing is easier than to answer this objection. First, this act could not produce this certainty by a physical efficacy, and by a real influence properly speaking on its object, I admit. But nothing prevented it from doing it morally, and objectively, as they say in the Schools; I mean by terminating the knowledge of God."

But it appears by this response, that the Author does not understand the force of these words, which are found in the objection: A pure nothing, or that he pretends not to understand it. A thing, or a past action, for example, and which is still in the memory and in the knowledge of men: or else, a castle which does not exist at all in itself, and which has never existed, which is to be built in an open countryside, following the orders that a King has given to his Architect; but which is already in the King's design known by the Architect, and also in the Architect's plans, is not a pure nothing in the sense of the objection, nor in relation to the King, nor in relation to the Architect. These are the kinds of things of which one says, that they cannot produce any effect whatsoever, by a physical efficacy and by a real influence properly speaking; but that nothing prevents them from producing both knowledge and certainty, of several things and of several events, namely morally and objectively, among all those who have made these plans and these designs, or to whom one gives them to know.

But a pure nothing in the sense of the objection, is a thing which has never had real existence, which exists neither in itself, nor in memory, nor in the designs of any existing Being, nor in those of God himself; and which does not even have that moral and intellectual being, remaining in the memory of some intelligence, or formed by the design of some existing intelligent Being; that is a pure nothing in the sense of the objection. Now there is pure contradiction in supposing, that such a nothing can act morally or objectively, in any manner whatsoever, nor towards whoever it may be, nor even towards God. When the Author has proved the contrary by some example, one can accept his School distinction; but before that one maintains to him that one cannot, and that one should not do it; since his response supposes a pure contradiction. And by that goes up in smoke the claimed demonstration, of the solidity of his response, which he gives in these words.

"Here is a demonstrative proof that it can be. It is that a past action exists just as little, and is no less a pure nothing than a future action. The betrayal of Judas, for example, no longer exists today. It is a pure nothing. It is nevertheless the object of God's knowledge. It is even the object of ours. It makes, in its way, that men detest it, and that God punishes it actually in hell."

The Reader can judge by what precedes, of the force of this fine demonstration. If the things of which the Author speaks, and those which are simply in the designs, or in the meditations and speculations of some intelligent Being, were pure nothings;

one can say that most of the thoughts of men, of their studies, of their occupations and of their applications, would have for object only pure nothing. Geometry, Arithmetic, Architecture, and in a word almost all parts of Mathematics, Military art, Medicine, Jurisprudence, etc. consider and occupy themselves most of the time, only with these pure nothings. It will have to be said that God himself makes Judas and his like suffer eternal pains in Hell, for pure nothings. Would that be well said? Let the Reader judge.

The second example that the Author brings to confirm his saying, confirms mine absolutely: here it is. "St. Paul says that Noah being divinely warned, of things which were not yet seen, feared and built the Ark. These things which were not yet seen were the Flood, and the desolation that it was to cause, six score years after the warning which was given to him of it. All that did not exist at the time of which St. Paul speaks. They were pure nothings. However these nothings frightened the Holy Patriarch, and led him efficaciously to seek the means to protect himself from them."

But Sir, Indeed it is not nothings which have so much virtue, of which the objection speaks. What! God's designs declared by himself to one of his faithful, are pure nothings! That is hard to digest. Whatever the case may be of those, the nothing of the objection has regard only to things, which exist neither in themselves, nor in memory, nor in designs, nor even in the imagination of any existing intelligent Being. It is such a nothing that must be produced, and make note, that notwithstanding that, it can be the object of knowledge, either of God, or of any other intelligent Being that one wishes, and that it can produce the certain knowledge of its future existence it is nothing to do. For if like the Flood, you suppose that sin, which has had from all eternity the virtue, to be the object of the foresight and knowledge of God, and to found its infallible certainty, was by priority of nature, even before that itself, in his designs or in his Decrees, either permissive, or effective; then we will no longer dispute, since we will be in agreement in everything, and that is that very thing that we want to say and that you deny; but which is nevertheless what your examples confirm.

CHAPTER IX. Examination of the three last chapters of the third Dissertation of treatise B.

§.319. NOW follows an objection that the Author proposes to himself in Chapter X in these words:

"It is said firstly that if from all eternity it has been true to say that such and such an action will happen, one cannot avoid admitting the Fate of the Stoics, which is rightfully regarded as the sponge of Religions. This Fate would bind God as well as man. For if from all eternity it was true to say that God would create the world, it was not possible for him not to create it."

"I respond that this objection would be strong if we admitted one or the other of these two things: either that the acts of our wills were in themselves absolutely and

metaphysically necessary, in the same manner in which it is necessary that God exists; or that they were necessary as a consequence of the unalterable determination of their causes, which could neither prevent themselves from acting, nor act otherwise. In either of these suppositions, Fate would take place and would bind everything without exception. But who says anything like that?"

However, my thought is that this objection is very strong, and may be invincible against the Author, taking him at his word, though it has no force against what I defend. To form Fate according to the idea that has always been made of it, there must be a necessity that has two qualities. One is that this necessity must be absolute and metaphysical. And the other is that it must be at the same time brute, as coming from an unknown cause, which acts neither by wisdom, by counsel nor with intelligence. One of these qualities without the other is not at all what is meant by Fate.

Now if one asks the Author whether moral necessity suffices to establish the certainty of God's foreknowledge, he answers no; Tr. B. p. 250. because the certainty of God's foreknowledge is more than moral, and may even be more than physical; for it is commonly believed that it is absolutely metaphysical. Now I believe it cannot be contested that the necessity of the foreseen event must be of the same nature as the certainty of the foreknowledge that foresees it. For how can a vacillating necessity, or a truly casual and contingent event, insofar as it is an event, and which may not happen, establish a metaphysical certainty? There is, in my opinion, a true contradiction in this.

After that, if you ask the Author what can be the cause of the certainty of the futurity of our actual thoughts, or of our sins, or of the Divine foreknowledge that knows it, he will answer Tr. B. p. 264. that it is the act itself; it is the thought or the sin itself. There is then the second quality that forms Fate. It is the brute necessity which is not directed by the counsel, nor by the wisdom of any intelligent Being. That happens because it happens, without other direction; and because by a metaphysical necessity, it had to happen. Is it a very false accusation to call this the Fate of the Stoics?

For us, this objection is ridiculous. Let them say that according to us this necessity is as great as they wish; yet our thoughts on this have no relation to Fate. According to us, this event, like all others, depends on a counsel; that is to say, on the wise direction of an all-perfect Being, who is necessarily wise, and all his counsels as well. Therefore this, like any other thing, being dispensed by the wisdom and intelligence of an all-perfect Being, cannot be attributed to Fate. And we have further shown that the necessity of the event, whatever it may be, does not destroy in us the liberty necessary to act morally; nor that property in it, of being able to do and not to do the things that it does necessarily in its own way; though that may seem contradictory, but which is not at all. See §. 304.

The Author then makes two more objections in this chapter, which have no place except in the false supposition he makes, that God's foreknowledge is not founded on Decrees; and which I believe I have already sufficiently refuted here; but as they are only vain subtleties, both the objections and the answers, and which do not concern us in any way, I do not want to burden this work with them.

§.320. Finally we have come to the last objection that the Author makes to himself, and from which he believes he triumphs highly.

This objection comes from one of the strongest athletes who have ever distinguished themselves in this combat, from what I have learned since my Treatise C. was published. Although I had never seen his book before, and have not read it yet: This passage here confirms me enough in the good opinion one has of him, founded on the reputation he has acquired. For although our Author is very subtle, he only whitewashes against him, in my opinion. One will judge: here is how our Author speaks.

Tr.B.p.272. "Doctor Twiss, whose subtlety is so well known, makes an objection against all this, which he challenges all Scholastics to answer. That is why also, he repeats it on every page of his book; *De scientia Media*. After him many people have believed it unsolvable, and have produced it as such in their works. Here it is. Things are possible before being future. Consequently, they could not become future without passing from the state of simple possibility to that of futurity. This passage necessarily has some cause that produces it, and this cause can be none other than the will of God. For as it was done in eternity, it could only be produced by an eternal cause. And what can there be eternal but God?"

Here now is what the Author answers to it.

§.221. "According to me, all this is very little. The first proposition, which is the basis of all this reasoning, is visibly equivocal. For after all, when one says that an event is possible before being future, one can understand in two ways what one says. One can understand, firstly, that it is such in itself, and from the side of the thing itself, a *parte rei*. One can understand secondly, that it is so in our ideas, and according to our manner of conceiving."

"If it is understood in the second sense, I will not bother to contest it. Whether that is true or false, it matters little to me. We conceive things sometimes as we please, and sometimes as we can. We separate what is indistinct. We place before and after what goes together. But there is no consequence to be drawn from this sort of conceptions, partly arbitrary, and partly forced, but always imperfect and defective, to the thing itself."

But Sir, I will say to the Author before going further, you are not thinking. There is no consequence to be drawn, you say, from this sort of conceptions. And how is it then that at your page 256 you give yourself this privilege? And that you hold this manner of reasoning to be so solid and so well founded that it is by this means alone

that you try, but vainly then, to extricate yourself from the press? Will you alone have the credit of giving force to principles and distinctions that can be used? When you use them, they will be solid and important: but if others use them, they will be without force, ridiculous and vain. I ask my Reader to review at this point §. 312. before continuing; and he will be convinced of the defeat of our Author. He continues.

§.322. "If one understands it in the first sense, as one must of necessity to reason justly, one says the most false thing in the world, or rather the most absurd. For if events are future from all eternity, as it is supposed, it is clear that nothing has preceded their futuration. What could be older than what has never begun? Thus this passage from the state of possibility to the state of futuration is a chimera, which must be carefully avoided from admitting, far from making it the foundation of an objection."

But I will answer you Sir, by imitating what I have just quoted from you, that although in eternal things there is neither priority nor posteriority of time; there is however priority and posteriority of nature or of reason as they say. Thus you are changing the subject to try to extricate yourself from the press, but it is in vain. For when one says that future things have passed from the state of possibility to that of futuration, one does not claim to say (and you know it well, what you reject with justice, as false and absurd, but quite uselessly and inappropriately;) namely that a time has passed where these things were only possible, and that another has come where they have become future. Not at all. One only means to say that possible things which are also future, do not have their futuration by themselves and in themselves, and by the sole reason of their possibility, independently of any other thing, of any other Being and of any other establishment; as God has his Being by himself, possible and existing in him being only one and the same thing.

And that since there are possible things that are not future, and others which, though of the same nature, are both possible and future together; there is some cause, other than these things themselves that has put this difference between them. This is what one means: will you deny it? If this is not true, all future things have their futuration from themselves, as God has his real existence from himself. Will you dare to advance this blasphemy? Or else all possible things are also future, in that they are possible; and all Novels will finally become true histories: will you advance this chimera?

However, if what I say is true, it must therefore be said that although there has been no moment in eternity at which possible things that are also future have not had their futuration; it is however necessary to posit a Decree of God, as anterior to this futuration, by a priority of reason and nature. That is to say, properly as efficient cause of the establishment of this futuration. For since possibility can be without futuration: that futuration cannot be without possibility: and finally that possibility and futuration can be found together; it is evident that if one wants to represent

things according to the order of nature, without regard to time; possibility precedes by an instant of nature or reason, futuration; even in those whose futuration is eternal; since no thing can be future, unless it is also conceived as possible beforehand.

Which can also mean that one can meditate on their possibility, without supposing that they are future, or even when one would deny it; but not on the contrary, meditate on their futuration, without supposing, or by denying that they are possible. That is why it is very natural to say in this sense, with regard to the instants of nature or reason of which we have just spoken, that future things had to pass in eternity, from the state of simply possible, to that of future; which could only be done by the Decrees of God. This is what is meant, and what no one could deny. Let us continue.

§.323. "But, it will be said, leaving this passage aside, can it not be said that if an event is future, its futuration must necessarily have some cause? And can this cause be other than eternal, since the effect is eternal? I have already answered this objection. I have said that the cause of the futuration of the event is the event itself, which will happen in time; it not being possible that it happens, without it being true before that time, that it will happen."

And I have already also responded to this surprising thought in §. 317. But we must see here if what is advanced to support it has any solidity. Here it is.

"I confess that it is very difficult to understand that an act which is produced only in time, can be the cause of an eternal futuration. But that only comes from the habit one has contracted since childhood, of conceiving simple relations, or even external denominations, as absolute entities that truly exist, and which begin to exist by the action of a cause that produces them, in the manner, approximately, in which true Beings are produced, each by its cause."

(It is true, and so I maintain all that, let us see what will be said to the contrary.)

"That supposed," says the Author, "what I say would be incomprehensible. But in effect these are only vain and hollow imaginations."

(That is what we must see.)

"Two Geometers, one in Peking and the other in Paris, each draw a line on a paper. Let us imagine that these two lines are each an inch. From then on they are equal. Thus there is a very real and very true relation that these two lines have with each other, for it is true that they are equal. This relation is double. The line of Peking is equal to that of Paris, and that of Paris is equal to that of Peking. Let us suppose that one was drawn a little before the other. When the second is, the first acquires a relation of equality with the second, which it did not have before. Who produces this new relation? It is undoubtedly he who draws the second line."

Very well, I will say, that is the truth. But does this example not seem to have been sought expressly to prove what the Author rejects as a childish habit; which is, to conceive simple relations, or even external denominations, as absolute entities,

which truly exist, and which begin to exist by the action of a cause that produces them, in the manner, approximately, in which true Beings are produced, each by their cause? Is not all this confirmed very perfectly by this example? provided that one does not forget to strongly emphasize the words, approximately; because one does not claim to conceive these things, as resembling in their being of substance, in which they differ completely, which matters nothing here; but only as resembling with regard to this property, necessary to all that is conceivable, God alone excepted, which is to be unable to have any shadow of existence, or of conceptibility, without supposing a real, efficient or establishing cause, which has truly produced, in its way, what each has of real and conceivable.

Now does it not follow from this example, that all that we claim here, is real and well-founded? For we see there, that he who is the cause of the event, that is to say here, that he who draws the second line, causes by his action the relation in question; is it not true that this relation exists only by this action, and after this action? And if there is some other who is the cause that the one in Paris has drawn this second line, it is this one who is the cause both of the event, and of the drawing of the line, and of the relation itself. And if there are still higher causes, it will be the first that will be the cause of all the others, and of the drawing, and of all the relations that might result from it: but of necessity, following the example, there must be one that has preceded, both by priority of time, and by priority of reason or nature, the existence or reality of this relation. Could anyone deny that?

But if that is so, futurition, known from all eternity, even if it were only a simple relation, or even an external denomination, if one wishes, does it have no other cause than the event itself, which is posterior to the existence of this relation known from all eternity? The proposed example sufficiently proves the contrary. The Author adds.

"But how can a man who does not stir from Paris, produce a relation in a subject that is in China?"

It would be for you, I would say, to explain this mystery to us, since it is you who propose it as real. For myself I say, that whether one claims that this relation is produced in the subject that is in China, or that it is only in the mind of those who compare these two lines together, yet it is manifest that it is the drawing of the second line, which necessarily preceded this relation, both as to time and as to the nature of things, which produced this relation immediately: but that if this drawing was caused by an order of the King, for example, who would have commanded the Geometer of Paris to do a work where this line would have been found, by chance or deliberately; It is the King who is the mediate and first cause, of this relation. No one could deny these things. Let us continue.

"The difficulty would be great if this relation were an absolute entity, which was produced by an action which gave it a true existence. But as it is only a simple relation, perhaps even only a simple external denomination, which is not properly

produced, but which results from the position of some other thing, in certain circumstances, the difficulty is nothing."

Although it is only a simple relation, or an external denomination, the difficulty is no less than if it were an absolute entity. For what is it about here? is it about knowing if the things that one compares are equally substantial, so to speak, equally stable, crass and thick; or if they are more delicate or thinner than each other? No. It is about knowing if there is something knowable or conceivable, be it substance, accident, relation, external denomination, be it whatever one wishes, except God alone, which is what it is independently of any other cause than itself.

That is what it is about. Now the Author admits on the one hand, that if one claimed to speak of absolute entities, which truly exist, there is no other than God which is such: and on the other, his own examples prove invincibly, that it is in this regard perfectly the same, even if it were only a question of some relation, or even of a simple external denomination. What remains then to discuss after that? Is it not evading, and trying to divert the view from the true state of the question, to save oneself somewhere, to reason as the Author does? I leave the Reader to judge.

To conclude finally I say, that although the foreseen or known futurition of a free act, is only a simple relation of conformity, which is found between the act produced in its time, and the knowledge that God has of it from all eternity; as this known futurition, or this relation, is as ancient in its existence of true relation, as the knowledge that God has of it; and that according to all the examples alleged, imagined or imaginable, a relation is not born or does not result, except after the antecedent position of some other thing, or of certain circumstances which give it this being of relation; it is necessary that the position from which results this relation here, which we call foreseen futurition, or certainty of the futurition of these free acts, be eternal also.

Therefore finally this position can be nothing else than the formation of the eternal Decrees of God, which alone can suffice here, and which to speak of a priority of nature and reason, are anterior to this foreseen futurition: Nothing else being able to be anterior to it, nor anterior in another sense than this one.

§.324. I had said in §. 310. that I would speak of the objection substituted by Crellius, to that which some Socinians have made against the Foreknowledge of God, at the place where the Author would bring it back to the topic, as he promised in that place of treatise B.

But as he has not done so in the sequel, having no doubt forgotten it, I must say a word about it here before considering the Addition against Spinoza. Instead then of some saying, that if God foresaw the future with certainty, men would not act freely, which is what has already been considered and overthrown above, Crellius on the contrary, overturns this objection and claims, that if men act freely, as he believes and supposes, God does not foresee the future, which depends on our voluntary and free actions.

But who does not see that this objection is completely of the same nature as the first, and that what has destroyed the first must destroy this one? For on the one hand, Crellius himself admits that we act freely; and if he did not admit it one would prove it to him solidly by what precedes, but especially also in the Addition which will follow: And on the other hand, one will also prove to him invincibly, that God foresees in effect all our actions from all eternity, as can be seen in §. 307. & 308. Where then will his hang-up be after that?

It can only consist in a false idea, which he makes for himself of the liberty necessary to act morally, and which will be sufficiently rectified by all that we have said until now. Or else it will be founded on this reason; it is that one does not perfectly understand, the union and compatibility of this liberty, with this certain foresight. But that is a poor reason, as I have already said so many times; since each of the things in question, being taken apart, has sure, demonstrative and evident proofs of its truth and reality; both by nature and right reason, and by the word of God. See our §. 62. Thus this objection is little or nothing at all, after what can be seen in this work.

CHAPTER X. Examination of the Addition, where it is proved against Spinoza, that we are free.

§.326. ALThOUGH this Addition of the Author against Spinoza is very excellent, forgetting himself he nonetheless commits from time to time some faults which deserve to be noted; but the foundation of the piece itself is very excellent; and I find this section so good and so important that I want to present here all its essence and most vigorous parts; so that those who would not have his book, and who will have this one, are not deprived of such a good piece. The Author after having proposed, in the first chapter, the sentiment of Spinoza and of Bayle, shows in the five that follow, the frightful consequences in a very lively, very striking and very convincing manner.

In the second chapter, for example, he proves in an invincible manner, that by following this sentiment, and by denying freedom as this Atheist does, one denies at the same time the distinction of vice and virtue, which is diabolical. In the third, he proves with the same solidity, that the sentiment of Spinoza destroys the use of prudence; which makes the most brutish and the most stupid as well qualified as the most spiritual and the most circumspect. In the fourth, he proves the same, that Spinozism abolishes laws, punishments, rewards, the authority of Magistrates, and all that is most essential to society, which tends to form a cruel and violent chaos and anarchy, similar to that which exists among the tigers, lions and panthers of Libya or Asia. In the fifth he proves with the same force, that to deny freedom is to abolish the use of treaties and conventions; which tends to destroy all security, and all tranquility of human society. And in the sixth finally, he gathers together all that he has just proved, and shows what a horrible crime Spinoza committed in attacking

truths of this nature. That is why I will put here this chapter VI. in its entirety; and even the greatest part of the rest of this Addition. Here then is chapter VI.

§.326. "Before proposing the other proofs, which justify that we are free; it will be good to weigh a little, those that have been proposed in what precedes. We have seen that the sentiment of Spinoza on the necessity (add brute) of events, abolishes in the first place, the distinction of good and evil, and confuses virtue with vice. We have seen in the second place, that it annihilates the use of prudence, and gives rise to the persuasion, that the advantages which one flatters oneself to derive from it are imaginary. We have seen in the third place, that it banishes the use of laws, of punishments and of rewards. Finally we have seen that it reduces to nothing, the most necessary treaties, and of which it is most difficult to do without."

"That supposed as well proven, I make this reasoning. Either what Spinoza has said thereupon is true, or it is false. Whichever of the two one says, one cannot deny that this unhappy man committed a frightful crime, in spreading such a pernicious dogma; and one cannot regard his action with too much horror. This is what must be proved distinctly and in detail."

"If this dogma is false, as one can assure oneself that it is, it was not up to the impious one who put it forward, that he might not have persuaded all humankind of it; and that by persuading them he might not have plunged them into an abyss of evils, of which it is impossible to imagine either the number, or the magnitude."

"These evils are those which I have indicated. All the crimes which there is reason to believe that men would commit, until the consummation of the world, in consequence of such a dangerous imagination. All the misfortunes that most of these crimes would attract, either upon those who would commit them, or upon others who might suffer from them. All the other misfortunes which one has just seen, that the persuasion of freedom prevents, and which would be the inevitable consequences of the contrary error, if it were received."

"If this dogma is true, either Spinoza was sure of it, or he was not. If he was not, he was no less guilty, than if he had known that it was false. For what madness would it not have been to spread such a pernicious dogma, without being well assured of its truth? Is it permitted to expose such a prodigious number of persons to such dangers, and especially to do it without necessity? One cannot therefore exculpate him except by saying, that he was quite sure of what he was saying. But if one says that, I will have two things to reply, one, that that cannot be; the other, that, even if that were, Spinoza would not be innocent. One must willfully blind oneself, to maintain that Spinoza was assured that we have no freedom. What proof did he have of it? He produces only two, one direct, the other ad hominem, as they say. The first is weakness itself, as I hope to show in its place. And as for the second, even if it were without reply, it would prove at most, that we contradict ourselves; by maintaining on the one hand, that nothing happens that God has not absolutely

resolved; and on the other, that men do not cease to be free. One has already seen that these two truths do not conflict with each other."

Reflection.

I admit all that, and especially these last words. But, I will say to the Author, if this is true, why have you then opposed, in the last chapters that we have just examined, the dogma which says, that nothing happens that God has not absolutely resolved, and that his eternal foreknowledge of all things is founded on his Decrees? And instead of ending the preceding § as the Author does, I would add: But when it would seem to us to see some antipathy between these things, from the moment that each one separately, is founded on proofs which are above all exception, drawn both from right reason and from the word of God; if we cannot reconcile them nor connect them well together, that must not make us doubt either one or the other. But recognizing our weakness and the narrow limits of our nature, we must put this agreement in the rank of so many other things, which we know to be certain and incontestable, and which nevertheless remain incomprehensible to us, as to their compatibility or their coexistence. Let us continue.

"It is therefore impossible that Spinoza who did not lack intelligence, believed he was quite sure of what he said on the subject of freedom. But let us imagine that he believed it, even with reason. I maintain that even in this supposition, he did not cease to perform a barbarous action, in putting forward a dogma so unnecessary, and which could produce such pernicious effects."

"I admit that one must never actually throw anyone into error. I admit that one must not lie, nor deceive, nor create illusions for anyone. But I maintain that there are occasions, where one can leave certain people, in errors of which one sees them as preoccupied, and where one has not thrown them; and that there is an extreme barbarity in undeceiving them. This is what happens when these errors do no harm, and the truths opposed to these innocent errors cause frightful ones. Two examples will put these truths in their light. An honest man, is afflicted with an incurable disease, and the Physicians have abandoned him. He has a son who travels, whom he believes to have probity and honor; but he is mistaken. He is a scoundrel who has just committed an infamous action, and died on a scaffold. His friends learn of it. But is it their duty to disabuse this dying father, and to hasten his death by the pain they will cause him, by teaching him this truth, so useless on one side, and so overwhelming on the other?"

"Assassins seek a man of eminent virtue to stab him. They meet him without knowing him, and taking him for another they let him pass. Must they be disabused and told, This is he whom you seek?"

"These two examples, without speaking of others that could be added to them, clearly show that there are occasions, where it would be to show barbarity, and to act in a manner opposed to the most common notions of humanity, to disabuse those who find themselves engaged in certain errors..."

"Is it however possible to imagine an occasion, where the truth of this maxim is more palpable, than that of which we speak? Do the two examples that I have produced approach it? Are the evils that one would do by teaching this tender and dying father, the crimes and the fatal end of his son; or these assassins, that they have in their hands the one they seek to take his life, comparable to those that Spinoza would have caused, if his detestable dogmas had been universally received? It must not therefore be imagined that he can be excused thereby; and what I have said of this unhappy man, I say of his disciples: at least of those among them, who have the audacity to dogmatize and to try to engage others in their errors.. They deserve to be regarded as declared enemies of humankind; the poisoners, the assassins and the other pests of society, doing nothing that approaches the evils that they do, and still less those that it is not up to them that they do not do."

Reflection.

All this is certain and quite well said: and I cannot help saying here, that this is perfectly the idea that I have always had, and that I still have, with the difference of more or less, of these Scholars among us, who, eager for a vain glory, which they have solely in view to draw from their great capacity, have employed their unfortunate cares and their pernicious vigils to wanting to disabuse us of theses, from which no one can derive utility except the wicked, even if they were right in their speculations as to the foundation: which I do not believe yet, no more than several others who are much more capable of judging than I am.

As for example to teach us, that the vowel points of the holy language, or at the very least, that the reading which they fix and determine, is not authentic, and that one can change it by changing these points according to the occasions, without wounding the sovereign respect which is due to the authority of God, who truly speaks to us through this reading. That the Hebrew letters themselves which we have, are not those which the sacred Authors used. That the history of Pope Joan is a fable, and similar things. These vain personages will account to God, in my opinion, for their talents so badly employed, even if they were right in the foundation of things, which I do not believe at all. What necessity pushed them to that? And of what utility was it, that they came to disabuse the world on these matters? It is impossible to imagine any other, than that of giving a marvelous pleasure to the wicked, to the libertines and to the impious, by mortally afflicting good people on one side; and to rejoice the Papists on the other, who have themselves advanced as true, this history of Pope Joan and not us; and who are interested in destroying it and not us. It remains therefore that these Scholars have written without any motive, and without any legitimate purpose and of an upright man in Religion; but simply through pride and ostentation. And that with the same utility for the Public, as that of those people who discover to the assassins, the man they seek and who is massacred by them. But let us see the continuation of our Author.

"One must above all have a great foundation of moderation, not to get carried away when one sees certain people, who on one side combat freedom with all their might, and on the other affect to pass for Pyrrhonians. What a monstrous assembly! But at the same time what excess of wickedness! To put forward a dogma which can cause such pernicious effects, and which would cause them infallibly if it were received; and to put it forward without knowing if it is true or false! Can one imagine anything more horrible? What would one say of an Apothecary, who not knowing if a certain powder which he finds in his shop, and which resembles quite well corrosive sublimate, is not effectively so, would make it enter into all his compositions and would give it to all his patients? And this poisoner Apothecary, what would he do in comparison to those who do what they can, to spread on all sides the venom of an error capable, not of taking the life of fifteen or twenty men, but of throwing all humankind into the most frightful state in the world?"

As all this is excellent and very appropriate today, I do not want those who will have my work, if it ever appears, to be deprived of such good things; no more than the rest of this excellent Addition, which I intend to have follow still, and which the Author has made against the Spinozists, whom he calls so appropriately, the pests of humankind. Here is Chap. VII. of this Addition.

§.327. "The proofs that I have produced in the preceding chapters, were all taken from the most natural consequences of the sentiment of Spinoza, which I had undertaken to refute. Those that I will produce presently, will be taken from this sentiment itself, and from the characters of falsity which it is easy to remark there. Everyone knows that the Cartesians, to extricate themselves from a rather pressing objection that was made to them, to overturn the proofs that they give of the spirituality of our souls; and which was taken from the attentive consideration of animals, which having nothing but material, appeared to have some knowledge; have maintained that these animals are only simple machines, made in such a way that as soon as certain springs release, they do necessarily, and without knowledge, a good part of what we do freely."

"Everyone also knows, in what manner people have risen up everywhere, against this sentiment; to the point even that it has been treated as absurd and ridiculous. It was believed that it was impossible that a machine, could be made with enough precision, to do exactly, all that we see animals do."

"The thing appears in effect quite difficult to understand; that is why the Cartesians to close the mouth of their adversaries, have had recourse to the wisdom and to the power of God. They have asked them if, in their opinion, God is not capable of doing infinitely more than we can conceive; and if our little comprehension, must be regarded as the measure of the lights and of the power of the infinite Spirit? One can judge thereby of the difficulty of the thing."

"However this thought of the Cartesians is only a game, in comparison to that of Spinoza. According to this impious one, it is not only animals that are machines. But

what is particular, they are Machines that think, that reason, that deliberate, and that make very elaborate works, very well understood, and whose parts have a marvelous relation with one another. Such are, for example, the well-imagined systems of Physics, of Geometry, of Astronomy. Such still certain works of Poetry of the most accomplished like The Aeneid. Such finally certain masterpieces of art, for example, of Architecture. All that is done mechanically according to Spinoza, by the laws of a blind and inflexible necessity."

"What comparison can one make of these sorts of machines? Who does not see that those of Descartes are children's toys, in comparison to those of Spinoza? What is, for example, a swallow that makes its nest, or a spider that spins and extends its web; in comparison to a skillful Architect, who builds a magnificent palace, and who embellishes it with all that the other arts can make most accomplished? Consequently if the thought of the first Philosopher appeared bold, what judgment must one make of that of the second?"

"But here is another very remarkable difference. Descartes as has been seen, finding what he had imagined, too difficult to be executed to be believable, has recourse to the wisdom and to the power of God whom he has charged with it. Spinoza on the contrary, as if what he proposes were very easy, wants it to be done with a blind necessity, and without knowledge. According to this impious one, it is not an infinitely wise God who makes all these machines, by taking all the necessary precautions to succeed, in a design so difficult, and so apparently impossible: It is a brute necessity, without light, and without knowledge. The thing is done, the work is produced, and the success corresponds to it, because it must be done that way."

"What can one imagine more incomprehensible than this? And what is it, in particular, that the chance of Epicurus, which has produced the world, without anyone having formed the design of it, and having conducted and directed the execution, can have more incredible? In effect this chance and this necessity are equally blind, and consequently, equally incapable of making works of the nature, and of the order of this one. I am even persuaded that what Epicurus called chance, and what Spinoza calls necessity, is the same thing; and I do not believe that it would be difficult for me to prove it, if the thing were necessary. Thus all that is ordinarily said against Epicurus, falls with the same force upon Spinoza."

"As a man who will see a magnificent palace, perfectly well built, adorned with beautiful furniture, rich paintings, statues delicately worked, accompanied by the most delicious gardens, and the most agreeable promenades, will never think of thinking that all that was done by chance; he will think as little that all that was done by itself, and because it could not be done otherwise. These two imaginations are equally bizarre, and equally incapable of presenting themselves to minds, at all just and enlightened."

§.328. Here now is chapter VIII. on which I will make from time to time some reflections, as on all the rest, when the case will arise. It has for title: That one cannot say, what are the causes that one wants that determine us invincibly.

"Spinoza claims, that we are determined invincibly in our judgments, in our resolutions, and generally in the actions that one believes to be free, by the causes that act upon us. On which it must be remarked before all things, that we do not deny absolutely and without exception, what he says: As has been seen in what precedes. We believe that there are certain causes, which determine us physically and invincibly, for example, in madness; that others do it morally and invincibly together:"

Reflection.

Before going further, let us note well these last words of the Author. So according to you, I will say, the invincible and the moral are not always contrary, nor incompatible together. Why then have you rejected for this single reason, from the number of moral things, our love for good as good, and our hatred for evil as evil, and similar things; which certainly are moral, as I have proved elsewhere?

Moreover, it also seems to me that the Author does not speak well in this place, and that it must be said always and everywhere (except all the cases where the brain is deranged, and where reason is troubled by some physical cause, as in madness etc.) that it is we ourselves who determine ourselves, on the reasons that we believe authorize us sufficiently, or abundantly for that; and not that we are determined by some other thing. At least this is never excluded from our determinations; not even when God acting upon us, determines us to good according to the style of his word. And in the cases even that the Author calls invincible, we act freely, that is to say morally, as well as elsewhere; and one can say there as elsewhere, that it is our soul or our spirit which determines itself there. For we have shown that the freedom in question here, which is simply that which is necessary to act morally, does not lie in being able, omnibus positus, to do a thing or leave it; or to do another which is contrary to it: but indeed to do what we do, by determining ourselves, of our own motion, for the reasons that we have for it; and that we have considered as much as we pleased, and as we have found appropriate; all with choice and with knowledge of the thing, and of our duty.

If one never forgot this, one would often avoid many embarrassments where one believes to be, and which are null in effect. For in whatever case it may be, it is always we ourselves who determine ourselves, as has just been said. And this takes place everywhere, whatever means God employs, to make us determine ourselves in a certain direction; and though our hearts are in his hand and he inclines them like streams of running water, to all that he wants; Prov. 21:1. into which we cannot nor should not enter, since we cannot understand anything of it. It suffices as we feel it very vividly, that it is we ourselves who determine ourselves with choice and knowledge, to make any action which is produced by such Principles be moral, and

to say that it has been produced with the freedom necessary to act morally. When the savior gave life to a blind man, this blind man contributed nothing to it, but the acts of vision that this healed blind man made afterwards, were his own acts, and not those of another. But let us return to the Author; he continues thus.

"That others determine us more weakly, in such a way that one resists them sometimes, sometimes with difficulty, sometimes without any effort. What we deny and that Spinoza maintains, is that this order of causes, on one side determine us always; and on the other, that every time that they do it, they do it invincibly. We maintain on the contrary, that there are an infinity of occasions where our soul determines itself."

And I believe that it must be said that on all occasions, our soul determines itself, and that it is precisely in this, that we differ from Spinoza this frightful monster. Is this not also the first and principal character, that the Author has given himself of our moral or free actions, which is; that they are those that we do, only because we want to do them? Tr. B. p.11. Let us follow the Author.

§.329. "Above all we believe that this happens in indifferent things; for example, when dealing with things in which we take no interest, we prefer to speak rather than be silent, or be silent rather than speak: When being able to walk we sit down, and being able to sit we walk. It is to this sort of actions that I will presently stop, to make the dispute less encumbered, leaving to each of my Readers, the care of applying what I will say to other subjects, which resemble this one, or which approach it."

"I say that in all this, as in all the rest, Spinoza has not explained himself enough. He does not say that there are two orders of them, physical and moral. Is it to the first, is it to the second, is it to the concurrence of one and the other, that we must attribute the power to determine us, in the occasions that I have indicated? Whatever it is of these three thoughts that he had, what he said cannot subsist."

Reflection.

The Author after having said all this, continues in all the rest of this chapter, by going through the three cases that he has just put in question, to try to show, that there is none where our freedom does not make itself seen sometimes by resisting them. But in truth that is to switch the subject in a strange way, and to forget very quickly and completely, wherein lies the freedom in question here. The Author wants to make it consist (and only in certain cases, and even in cases of no importance) in being able by itself, and notwithstanding all the reasons to act, to omit what it undertakes, or to undertake what it omits.

But when he would have shown in some case, that this is so (which is impossible, as has been seen in §.235....239.) if the freedom in question should consist in this power, and that could not be verified everywhere; the enemy has won his case in all cases where this is not found; which, according to the Author himself, are the most

frequent; but above all they are the most important and the principal ones. It is therefore necessary to advance on this subject, something more solid and more uniform, if one wants to produce some fruit.

Now this more solid and better followed, is found in my opinion, in the true characteristics that have been given until now, of moral freedom; and then also in what has been seen in §.234....245.

§.330. The Author's chapter IX, which has for title: That we feel our freedom, and that that must suffice to convince us that we are free: Is very good against Spinoza, but it would be even better, if he had remained firm on the true definition, and the true characteristics of the freedom in question here, such as I have supposed it in all this work. And to not do it twice, I will make it follow here, by substituting, in place of this freedom of indifference which he seems to want to maintain here against Spinoza, the freedom necessary to act morally, which he has so well characterized himself at the beginning. Here then is this chapter thus rectified.

"One of the proofs that should persuade us most strongly, that we act because it pleases us; it is the feeling that we have of it. We experience almost at every moment of our life, that we act ourselves, and by ourselves; and that we are not only agitated, or pushed by a foreign cause. I can twenty times in succession move my hand, and stop it as many times, without any necessity, which comes from elsewhere preventing me. I feel and I perceive vividly, intimately and immediately, that whatever I do, or that I undertake, or that I voluntarily omit, I always do it of my own motion, on the last reasons which appeared to me the best, and on which I willingly determined myself without consulting further. What can I oppose to this feeling which prevents me from persuading myself of what I discover by this way of inner feeling? Is it not that which convinces me of my existence? And if the feeling that I have of my existence suffices, to banish from my mind all doubt on this subject, why would a quite similar feeling not suffice, to convince me that I act myself at my will, and by my own motion, and that I do only what I want to do?"

"It is, says Spinoza, that being led to do what we do, ignoring what leads us to it, and feeling only that we are led to it, we falsely imagine that it is we ourselves who lead ourselves to it. More or less, he says, like a thrown stone, which goes with all its force, to the place to which this impulse leads it, would imagine, if it felt its movement, that it is the cause of it. I will not amuse myself by noting the bizarreness of this example, which is taken from a supposition the most absurd that ever was. What more extraordinary indeed, than to suppose a stone that feels its movement, and that imagines that it is the cause of it, as if a stone were capable of imagination? I admit this example. I say that even in admitting it, there will be very great differences between what would happen to this stone, and what happens to us each day."

"Firstly, this stone would not remember having formed the design to move before executing it, as we remember; being able even sometimes to mark the precise quantity, of time that has passed between the project and the execution."

"Secondly, this fact being posed, one of two things would happen; either that the stone could not want to stop; or that wanting it it could not do it; whereas when we move voluntarily, or when we do any other voluntary action whatsoever, we stop when it pleases us."

"There is therefore in us something more than in this stone; and what there is more can be no other thing, than what is called a spontaneous action, and done of one's own movement. In a word, a power to determine ourselves as we please."

"But here is something more precise. As this stone can be thrown, and move in consequence of its projection, the same thing can happen to us. One can push us ourselves, one can throw us, we can fall, and this fall will be, according to the new Philosophers, a true impulse, of the same nature as that of a stone that is thrown with violence. In falling therefore we move, we go with impetuosity from one place to another, we feel that we go there. However we do not imagine that we are the cause of our movement. We feel, we experience the contrary. We do not doubt that we fall despite ourselves. Trying to stop ourselves we cannot."

(One could add to this example of the Author, which might not be very appropriate, to those who do not know what Philosophy is, neither new nor old; that of a man who is tossed in a blanket; and who, either when he rises in the air at the fantasy of those who toss him; or when he falls back, perceives very well that all that is done despite him, and that his will is not capable of preventing these jolts and movements)

"Thus there is an abyss of difference between what happens to this stone, and what happens to men in these occasions."

§.331. "I say about the same thing of Mr. Bayle's weathercock. Rép. au Provinc. Tom. II. pag. 764. Do you not clearly understand, he says, that a weathercock to which one would always impress at once, the movement towards a certain point of the horizon, and the desire to turn in that direction, would be persuaded that it moved itself to execute the desires that it would form? I suppose, he adds, that this weathercock would not know that there were winds, nor that an exterior cause made change all at once, both its situation and its desires."

"But firstly, this addition spoils everything. The weathercock does not know that there are winds. It therefore does not resemble us; for we know very well that there are various causes, which can push us despite ourselves, and others which only serve as occasions, to determine ourselves: some are physical, and others moral. Thus we are quite sure, that this weathercock such as Mr. Bayle imagines it, would not resemble us at all."

"Secondly, I ask if this weathercock feeling itself pushed towards a certain point of the horizon, and doubting if it is itself the cause of this impulse, as we doubt if we

are the causes of ours, could, to assure itself, take the resolution to change twenty times in succession of direction, as I am witness that I can? If it cannot, the example does not resemble, and does not weaken my proof. If it can, I will say without hesitation, that it is free in the sense of which we speak, that is to say, that it acts by itself. For even if the wind would change in effect twenty times in the sequence, it could not before all these changes, inspire in the weathercock, either the resolution, or the knowledge, of the precise number of changes of which it is going to be the subject."

"It is this which appears convincing to me. A blind necessity, like that of which one speaks to us, does not know the future, nor can it make it known to anyone. But I know it. I know what I will do in a moment, in two, in three etc. There is therefore in me something more than in the stone of Spinoza or in the weathercock of Mr. Bayle. There is in me an internal, active and free principle of my actions."

I would add here, that if Bayle replied, that according to his supposition, one could say even in this case, that one has impressed on the weathercock, the desire to change twenty times in succession of direction, with the suitable movement by proportionate winds: I would respond that that would not suffice for the resemblance that would be required. It would also be necessary that one inspired it with this desire or this wish, in the same manner that our desires are inspired to us. That is to say by reasoning on the pleasure or the pain, the ease or the unease, if one can use this word, that we feel or that we foresee for the future, and which are for us the occasions of the desires that we form, and of the resolutions that we take by reasoning. It would therefore be necessary that it also had its pleasures and its pains, its eases and its uneases just like us. It would be necessary that one also inspired it with reasoning, the doubt on the principle of its actions, the knowledge of the number of times that it is going to turn, and the reason why it is going to do it so many times, and neither more nor less, to show that it is the master of it. And then despite any supposition that one can make, this weathercock will have all that we understand by an intelligent and free creature, capable of happiness and of pain, which acting morally, is responsible for its actions. Let us follow our Author.

"Here is another consideration which appears to me quite pressing. Neither the stone of Spinoza; nor the weathercock of Mr. Bayle, nor in a word, anything which is not active and intelligent, could establish occasional causes of its actions, still less vary them as I can. I make as many of them as it pleases me. For example I can voluntarily subject myself, to repeat all the words that another will pronounce, and repeat them even in another language, in Latin for example, if he pronounces them in French. I can oblige myself to repeat half, a third, a quarter etc. I can oblige myself to repeat each of these words once, twice, three times etc. I can subject myself to do all that a man will advise me, and to do all the contrary. What other cause can there be of this effect than my will? And who can after that doubt that it determines itself?"

"I have said that it was good to consider the prodigious variety, of what one can do in this way. In effect necessity is a principle of uniformity, and freedom on the contrary, a principle of variety. Necessary causes are determined to one action, and to one manner of acting. Determinate ad unum as the Philosophers speak. Thus the Sun can only illuminate, fire can only burn etc. But free Beings can do a thousand different things. Thus the infinite multitude of acts of various orders, and of various species, that our will can produce, is a proof of its freedom."

"Here is still another reflection which does not appear to me to be despised. If the sentiment of Spinoza were true, there would be only one single species of judgments and of volitions. All these acts would be equally necessary. I would be as determined to judge that it will rain tomorrow, as I am to judge that one and one make two; to want to move my hand as to want to be happy. However I feel in myself that there is an extreme difference, between these two sorts of acts. I feel that I cannot prevent myself from making the first, and that I am master of the second. A thousand proofs that I can make of it persuade me of it. Where could this difference come from if these acts were of the same order, and as necessary the ones as the others?"

§.332. That is an excellent Addition, and of which I did not want to deprive my work, since these thoughts were necessary there to make it complete; and that I would no doubt not have succeeded so well, if I had wanted to put them in the same way. And moreover I am quite pleased to leave the honor of it to whom it belongs. However I believe I should still make two remarks on it, besides the rectification that I have inserted in this last chapter, and of which I spoke at the beginning.

The first will be on the last thought that one has just read there. The Author had regarded here-before as acts different *toto Caelo*, that which judges that it will rain tomorrow, and that which judges that one and one make two; that of wanting to move the hand, and of wanting to be happy. However the good cause being here infinitely interested, so to speak: he not remembering all that he has said before, and letting himself be led in this place, by the truth and by nature; he puts the ones and the others in the rank of the acts of a true moral freedom, against the true enemies of all freedom. In which he is quite right.

For in effect, they are equally everywhere, acts of an intelligent nature and active by itself, which conducts itself by reasons and by motives, proposed externally to its reflections, and which proportions the promptitude or the circumspection, the resolved firmness or the weak resolution of its judgments and of its volitions, or of its determinations, as well as its judgments themselves, to the quality of the reasons and of the motives, as reason wants it.

If the reasons or the motives are weak, little certain or little important; its determinations nor its judgments are not prompt, peremptory nor very firm; they are slow, wavering and easy to be changed. But if the reasons are supposed of an infinite evidence, so to speak, or that they are evidently recognized to be sure and unshakeable, its judgments are prompt, bold, fixed, determined and invariable. The

same for the motives of its actions or of its determinations. If these motives are light, inconstant and little important, its determinations to action are also vacillating and very easy to change; but if these motives are of an infinite importance, and of a sovereign and indubitable certainty, either by supposition, or in effect and by an entire and well-recognized evidence; then the determination is also, as it should be according to reason, bold, prompt, assured, constant and invincible.

But in all that one always sees the same reasonable nature, which judges and which acts in a spontaneous manner, suitably to the reasons, to the objects and to the motives, which predominate over all the others in its mind, at the moment that it acts.

The second remark that I believe I should make here, and that I ask my Reader to observe well; but the Author above all, if ever the present work falls under his eyes. It is that the excellent and invincible proof of our freedom, necessary to act morally, which is in this chapter, and even in all this Addition that we have just seen, that is to say the proof of our spontaneity and of our own activity; remains the same without any weakening, as solid and as demonstrative in the mouth of a predeterminist, as in that of the Author himself; and that the doctrine of this predeterminist does not weaken it in any way.

Let one reread and reflect on this excellent proof, and principally on this last chapter, in this life; and I am persuaded that if one has judgment and conscience, one will agree with what I say. Is there not therefore injustice, bad faith, or a great defect of solid reflections, to accuse them of reducing men to puppets, so to speak, and of extinguishing in them absolutely the principle, which is the cause of the morality of all our voluntary actions? Let any wise and unprejudiced man be the judge of it.

There remains still a chapter of the Author, where he responds and even very solidly, in my opinion, to an objection of Spinoza, still on the same subject. But besides the fact that this objection is worthy of the last contempt, as the Author very well says, it is also too philosophical and Metaphysical, in my opinion, to enter into a work more of piety and of Religion than of Philosophy; and which being in the vulgar language, is as much destined for good people who have no education, as for the Scholars by profession.

It is the same for Bayle's objection on the same subject, which the Author also refutes afterwards: or at least, on which he supplies what the late Mr. Jaquelot had already done there. All that is pure Philosophy, and consequently is not of this place. The chapter that we have just seen, even if it were alone, appears to me convincing and even triumphant, against all the unhappy cheats and seducers, who have the figure of reasonable animals; and who dispute however with heat, and even with much intelligence and subtlety, to try to prove that they have no reason.

I believe them on this point; but they will nevertheless never make wise people and who have some respect for God, and for human nature, doubt because of that, that

they have in themselves, both activity, and spontaneity, and freedom necessary to act morally. And consequently notwithstanding the insane Pyrrhonism, by which they would like to make us believe that everything is doubtful and uncertain, and that what we call waking is perhaps only a dream a little different from that which we have during sleep; they have all that is necessary for it to be able to seem to them during all eternity, by a dream as vivid and even more, than that which will make it seem to them that this is written in French, if they come to read it; that they exist in a burning pond of fire and of sulfur, where the worm does not die and where the fire is not extinguished; and that they are gnawed there by eternal remorse, for having abused reason, with the design of destroying a reason which will confound them eternally.

This semblance, dreamlike and imaginary as much as they wish, but which by no means they could deny that it is not possible; must suffice for them to desire that it can seem to them the same, during all eternity, that they are in an inexpressible happiness. It should also suffice, to make them enter into the ways which seem to all the wisest, with the same vivacity, to be the sure and infallible path. God preserve us from all seduction and from all seducers, To God alone the glory. Amen. End of the examination of Treatise B.

NEW COLLECTION of Objections that have still been made against my Treatise, On the Sovereign Perfection of God, which I call here Treatise C, to which I join my Responses.

I. Objections & Responses.

§.333. I will begin with the extract of a friendly and very familiar letter, written from London by a Minister, responding to a Minister from Brandenburg of his close friends, who had asked him to know what was being said in England about my Treatise C. This letter is written with an open heart and without ceremony. Neither the one who wrote it nor the one who received it ever foresaw that it might one day become public; otherwise I do not doubt that the Author would have taken a little more trouble with it, and might have kept some considerations that one does not see there. But to me, it is its naivety that makes it more commendable, because a friend showing himself to his intimate friend in his casual state, tells him with an open heart things as they are, and as he thinks them: and that is what is best here. I know well that the formalities of ordinary civility would have obliged me, according to the Rules, to ask, at least permission, from the one who communicated it to me in original, to make the use of it that I am making. But fearing a refusal, I judged that the interest of the truth and of the glory of God, which I have in view, was worthy of being preferred to all these ways of doing, which often signify nothing, serve nothing, and which would perhaps oppose here a good design. It suffices that neither one nor the other is personally interested in anything here, since they remain unknown, and without name; and that they have no part in this publication. That is why by persuading myself that they have souls as upright as they should have, I hope that they will not disapprove of my conduct, as I ask of their charity and their piety. Here is the Writing!

§.334. "I had read the book of Mr. N. before having received your letter. His design seemed to me too original not to hasten to see how he executed it. I therefore first took a simply stitched Copy, and the same day the first volume was devoured; I have reread it since. The second volume was read from one end to the other, but for the rest, I had to stop and make many pauses."

"In a word, here is the judgment that I wrote down at that time. There are nerves in this book, and a force of reasoning that sustains itself. But one walks continually on thorns, and delicate ears are shocked there, both by the crudity of the matter, and by the rudeness of some expressions."

"Example. How could God have been happy, during all eternity past, if creatures are necessary to his happiness? Go ask him, page 27. Besides, if the hypothesis of the Supralapsarians is that of Scripture, we say that it is very apt to mortify and

overthrow our reason, but that it is hardly apt to enlighten it and to satisfy it. Be that as it may, I am delighted with the lively and strong manner, with which he proposes on page 23 and 24 this idea of the combination of Beings, etc. you understand me well. The notion is not new, but it is well set there, and shines with all its brilliance. That, my dear, is what you will have from me for what you wanted me to speak to you about on this subject..... Our people in London, for you also want me to report to you, what they think of this work, are either heretics or orthodox. Those heretics amuse themselves on the title alone. Here, they say, is a new kind of philosopher's stone: Bayle beaten down by supralapsarianism, quasi vero etc. But these orthodox are generally content with the book, although their hypothesis on the arrangement of the Decrees, is different. It is only believed that Mr. N. appears a little too much in love with his own. After all, one must give things for what they are worth. Say if you will, my hypothesis is the most straightforward, it better satisfies the phenomena; one grants you that. But always what seems to us the most plausible, is not always found to be the most true. In a word, the Supra and Infralapsarianism, the Particularism and the Universalism, are compared to the systems of Ptolemy, Copernicus, Tycho Brahe. Stop, profane, a Zealot will perhaps say. My system is that of Scripture. It is as if an Astronomer said that his is that of the world. But it is a rash assertion. One must say videtur esse, and not est. Or if one prefers to speak dogmatically, say then, that your system adjusts better to the phenomena: or that by it you explain the passages more literally etc."

§.335. I have no reason to be very discontented with this criticism, on the contrary, I praise my God from the depths of my soul, who has so assisted me, that my work closes the mouth of heretics; that it draws from the mouth of the orthodox, who are not yet quite of my sentiment, admissions which let me conclude very legitimately, that my work is solid, and that my system is the one that must be followed.

For as for the heretics, I call on their behalf, having the mouth closed, to be reduced to being able to do nothing else, in a matter as serious as this one, than to banter and joke. The impious and the Libertines do the same about all Religion, and about all the word of God, and cannot do anything else. And that says all that one can desire to the advantage of Religion.

For the orthodox, but Universalists, they grant me and thus admit to me (supposing however this hypothesis to be very false and very dangerous, to speak very moderately) that we cannot have by the word of God, a true and perfect certainty, on one of the most considerable matters of Theology: and in which it is evident that the greatest glory of God is greatly concerned: and that on this Scripture can only produce plausibilities, without any well-demonstrated certainty. They grant me and admit to me, I say, while keeping this false supposition: That my hypothesis is the most straightforward, that it better satisfies the phenomena, and that by it I explain Scripture more literally, than can be done by any other. To admit this to me in this false hypothesis, which admits here only plausibilities, is it not to admit to me however that my hypothesis is the one that must be followed? Will one say without

making oneself worthy of being hissed, that on problematic matters, and where one can only have plausibilities, it would be of equity or wisdom, to follow another hypothesis than the one which better satisfies the phenomena, and which adheres better to the literal sense of the book, where (by the admission of all) one must seek the truth on these points: which certainly contains this truth, and to which one owes a deference and respect without bounds?

But I am far removed, and every true faithful should be also, from these perhaps, and these *videtur esse*, in the case where we are. What! is it therefore not a constant and general Rule of all good explanation, not only of Scripture, but even of any wise Author, that one must always follow the literal sense of an Author, unless one is forced by phenomena or other circumstances, to give it a figurative, diverted and improper sense? But if that is so, and that my hypothesis satisfies better the phenomena, and at the same time the literal sense of Scripture; does that not establish an *est* and not a *videtur esse*? One cannot deny it to me, unless one denies to me the Divinity of Scripture, and its supreme and infallible authority in matters of Religion.

We owe these beautiful precepts of Skepticism, which are today so much in fashion among our new Theologians, to the Philosophical Commentary, and other good books of the same flour. But the true faithful have not thus learned Christ. The true faith founded on the word of God is not wavering. It does not say; It seems to me that there is a God, creator of Heaven and Earth; It seems to me that J. Christ is his only son; that he was conceived of the Holy Spirit; that he was born of the virgin Mary etc. But it says. I believe in God, and consequently, I affirm positively in my heart before God; freely, boldly and with full mouth before men, that there is a God creator of Heaven and of Earth, in whom I trust; that J. Christ is his only Son etc. being fully resolved in understanding on all well-discussed points of faith, as the Apostle wants.

And on what the Author of the letter says, that if the hypothesis of the Supralapsarians is that of Scripture, it must be said, that it is very apt to mortify and to overthrow our reason; but that it is hardly apt to enlighten it and to satisfy it. I respond that he is mistaken, and that although I admit, that it is very apt to mortify and to overthrow our reason, I have shown in my preceding work and in this one, that it is also apt to enlighten and to satisfy on these matters, a sober and wise, upright and impartial reason, which proposes no other goal than the greatest glory of God. For following such a reason, I have responded, assisted by the grace of God, to all that the Devil himself could object on these matters. But if one wants to speak of a corrupted reason, biased against God, ill-enduring, jealous of the rights of God, and blinded by its own interest, which it regards (by declaring itself thereby its enemy) as opposed to those of the glory of God: I admit that our hypothesis cannot satisfy it. But it glories in it; far from taking that for a mark of bad omen. It glories in it, I say, for the reason that the wisdom of man such as he is today, is foolishness

before God; and that the wisdom of God is foolishness before men; That is to say, before a reason thus corrupted and ill-disposed.

II. Objections & Responses.

§.336. Here I will follow with a small Response to an Article from the News of the Republic of Letters of the Month of April 1708. I would have left here unknown the name of the Author, as I do elsewhere, if it had been possible; in order to show that there is nothing personal in my deed. But how to hope to leave unknown the name of an Author, whose periodical works pleasantly occupy the eyes and the mind, of almost all the Scholars of Europe, by responding to an article of such a work? I can therefore hide nothing here without making myself ridiculous. However if it had been possible I would have hidden this name with pleasure, in order to mark to the Author whom I honor, and whose beautiful talents I respect as much as possible, that I have in view absolutely only the interest of truth and of the glory of God, and not at all the design of saying a single word, which can cause pain to anyone personally. But no one should be offended if I defend the truth and the glory of God, according to the motives of my conscience and as I believe I am obliged to. If someone receives annoyance from it, although I keep the measures which are the most just, that it has been possible for me to imagine, to manage them without failing in my duty, and in what I owe to God and to my conscience; I believe that if he is wise and reasonable, he should not wish me ill for it, nor attribute the fault to me; and that he should not even ask more of me if he has piety. But what there is, is that I can say without lying, that the interests of present truths are so precious to me, that nothing could make me resolve to such a great cowardice, as to keep silent voluntarily where they will be wounded, when the whole world would ask me to, supposing that it was in my power notwithstanding these prayers, to defend them publicly. And also I do not want to point out here certain small faults or mistakes, which are found in this article, and which do not interest anyone: nor also certain turns of expression which are found there and which mark quite perceptibly, that I have done nothing agreeable to Mr. Bernard, in producing my work. That would instruct no one and would feel personal. I come to what he puts of his own against the matter itself, and which I do not believe to be solid, without interesting myself for the rest. What does it matter what one thinks or what one says of me, provided that the truth triumphs and that God is glorified? All is good to me at that price, whatever it may be. The faithful Reader will not be angry to see still the following little clarification. Here are his words.

§.337. "It is a character of limited and finite things, to need some opposition to make felt their price and their merit. As for what is infinite, and such is the grace of God, it has no need of opposition to make felt its excellence."

But I say thereupon, that Mr. Bernard relates to external objects, what must only be related to created intelligences. The nature of all created intelligence is such, that it

needs such opposition, to feel in effect the importance and the excellence of all things which present themselves to it, of whatever nature they may be, finite or infinite: or at least it feels this excellence much better by this opposition than without it. He continues.

§.338. "It is a proposition which approaches blasphemy, to say that the grace of God would be less precious, if it had saved more persons."

But the Author should have taken note that in this place the word precious relates only to our thoughts, and that in this sense, infinite things like others, need opposition, given the nature of created intelligences, to make felt their price and their merit (these are the terms of Mr. Bernard) but not to be more excellent, considered in themselves. These are two things very different between them. Thus one can say of infinite things as of others; *Opposita juxta se posita magis elucescunt* [Opposites placed next to each other shine forth more]. I say therefore in this sense, that they would be less precious without this opposition, and without the rarity with which they can be accompanied. But all that signifies nothing else than: that before all created intelligences, the same things are more esteemed being rare or difficult to obtain, than when they are common; of whatever nature these things may be. Will anyone deny me that?

Things, whatever they may be, can have two sorts of excellence or price: One intrinsic, proper, essential and natural: and the other comparative, and relative to the esteem of intelligent creatures. The first is neither diminished by abundance, nor increased by rarity or by opposition; but indeed the other is. A bucket of fresh water has marvelous properties for the conservation of human life; however at what price is it in places where this water abounds on all sides? One would not give a penny for it. But let there come a shortage of fresh water on a vessel, at sea or elsewhere; then one will give ten Ducats and more for it. Is it not therefore more precious then, than it was in the first case? However it is not its proper and intrinsic excellence which is increased, and which consists in being able by itself, to preserve life for men in certain cases, and to preserve them from the most terrible torments, which are to die of thirst. For it is in one place exactly such as it is in the other. But it is its comparative excellence in the esteem of men which is increased, and even with reason. For in this case, it can save the life of a man and preserve him from great torments, which a hundred thousand Ducats in coins cannot do. In the first case, one will prefer to it a penny, because a penny is less easy to acquire than a bucket of fresh water; in the second case, one will prefer it to a hundred thousand Ducats, for a contrary reason. However, it is always the same water, which is in itself, neither more nor less excellent in one place than in the other. But in one place the abundance was the cause, that one made no reflection on its beneficent nature, nor on its excellent use; and in the other, rarity makes felt its importance and necessity, with this essential excellence.

But now, do not all these considerations take place, in relation to infinite things, as in relation to others, in all created intelligences: without that opposing in any way the proper, natural, and transcendent excellence of these infinite things? Everyone sees that that is equal on both sides. And where then are here the blasphemies? One must be a little liberal with them to lend me some in this place. An incontestable axiom among all created intelligences, is that the comparative price of things good and useful in themselves, increases everywhere where they can become rare, and that in proportion to their rarity, whether they are finite or infinite. Scripture itself supposes this truth in several places, for whoever wants to understand it well. See Deut. 4:6.9 etc. Ps. 147:19, 20. Is. 55:6.

There is therefore only before God where esteem, price or merit is never regulated except on the natural and intrinsic excellence of things. The reason is, that with him, abundance is general as much as it pleases him that it be, since he has only to command and things have their being; he has only to say, and they appear. Rarity properly speaking cannot be found with him, if it is not in himself, since he is unique by necessity; and that same helps to elevate him in his own eyes and in the eyes of all intelligences, to infinity and beyond all that one can say. Is it not I the Eternal? and there is no strong, just and Savior God but me, he says himself. Is. 45:21. Hosea 13:4. But elsewhere that a thing be infinite or that it be limited, it suffices that it can be rare and common, to affirm of it all that I have just said. If it is rare, all created intelligences will put it at a higher price, than if it were common and general: and that with justice and with reason.

Now, can one doubt that in this place that one reproaches me for, my thought was not completely such as I have just explained it? It is therefore clear, that although Mr. Bernard wants to profess to be only a historian here, he is however an actor, since he himself accuses me of blasphemy, or thereabouts. But the important thing for me is, that it is without any foundation, of which I now leave the Reader to judge. When a work is combated only in this way, by very skilled persons who suffer it with extreme pain, one can presume without much risk, that such a piece is solid, and proof against all the oppositions of the most contrary. Time will tell us if I am mistaken. But I hope that after the present work, there will remain no more doubt, in the mind of those who will have no other design, than to perceive very clearly the truth to do it honor. I mean no doubt which can make one hesitate, on the choice that one must make between all Christian systems, to be able to triumph more advantageously and surely, against the most violent enemies of Christianity and of all Religion in general; and to conform more exactly to holy Scripture; and finally also to be able to satisfy more wisely right reason. For the others, who do not have this upright intention, without caring about their judgment nor their malign criticism, we will pray God for them; and recommend them to his mercy, that it may please him to humble them before him. For that is all that they lack here, to oblige them to acquiesce in everything. The light there is great enough, but humility is too small in them.

§.339. I will however say one more word here, to make felt vividly the importance and the necessity there is to follow it, if one wants Christianity to subsist with honor in the world, and that it not be confounded by Manichaeism, or by its partisans: It is that one has only to say:

First, in relation to the Socinians. That if Socinianism were the best system of Christians, Manichaeism triumphs over the sovereign goodness of God, or over his sovereign perfection, and over his unity. For there is only the design of showing the example of this transcendent goodness, and unimaginable to all creatures, by which God has given his own Son, his only Son, eternal and beloved, to a shameful and cruel death, to save from hell sinners, who deserve only his anger and his indignation; which can save this sovereign goodness of God and its interests, since the permission of the entrance of sin into the world, if this permission has been voluntary. And if it was not voluntary; it is, either because he could not foresee it, and that for that reason he could not take precautions against it. And then he is not all perfect; far from it, he is ignorant and without light in things which are of very great importance to him. Or it is because having foreseen it, he could not prevent it, not being for that enough the master of the Principle which made it inevitable, given the creatures in the state where he wanted to put them by creating them. And then, he is not all powerful, or there are two Principles, one good and one evil; and Manichaeism is right.

And secondly, in relation to the Arminians, and to all the Infralapsarians, or to all those who do not want to go back higher than sin, and who do not want to admit, that it is by reason that God permitted it, or preordained it according to an infinite wisdom, it must be said: That if the interest of the glory of God and of his illustration, or some other sovereignly wise motive, and worthy of the all-perfect Being, (it does not matter which on that condition) that if such an interest, I say, must not nor can be alleged as a true reason, which induced him to voluntarily permit the entrance of sin into the world, or to preordain it if one will, it will be necessary to say, either that it was impossible for him to prevent it, and that a Principle more powerful than him in this regard, introduced this sin into the world despite him: Then there is God powerless and Manichaeism on the throne. Or that it happened by chance, by an unforeseen accident, and against which he could not protect himself: Then there is ignorance in God, and his sovereign perfection extinguished. Or if they admitted that he permitted or preordained, this entrance of sin voluntarily, without allowing one to say also that he did it for his glory, or for some other even better fruit, and by a sovereignly wise reason which interested him; it will be necessary to say that God created an innumerable number of intelligent creatures, to damn them eternally for his sole good pleasure, without other reason, without any interest of his glory nor other whatever it may be, obliging him to it. And there then his goodness annulled absolutely. See §.110. That is to say finally, that the natural consequences of their system are, either the abolition of the unity and of the omnipotence of God, or that of his sovereign goodness. Let one judge thereby of the

importance of the matter that I have treated, and of the fine place where our antagonists would like to lead us. For the consequences that I have just represented are perceptible, just, necessary and inevitable.

III. Objections & Responses.

§.340. Here I will put certain objections that have been made and which have been communicated to me. It is known that they come from one of the best minds of Europe, and of the most penetrating; that is why they cannot be neglected, without doing wrong to the truth. But no one will take personal part in it, or no one will have reason to take part in it in that way; since one does not discover the Author, who is also too reasonable himself no doubt to find it bad, in case this should come to pass under his eyes, that one uses the difficulties which have still caused some pain, to a mind of his strength and of a penetration so profound and so extraordinary; and that for the good of public edification, for the glory of God, for the perfect clarification of the truth, and for the strengthening of the true Religion, according to the motives of his conscience. Here then are these objections as they follow, at least the most important ones, and those which can contribute to the aforementioned ends.

"The System of the Supralapsarians, although I find it the most unified, and apparently the most conformable to the expressions of Scripture, seems to me however less apt to smooth out these difficulties, in that it is from its own bosom that they draw their birth."

I beg the Author to consider, that to speak thus is to lose sight of that in which lies the difference of the system of the Supralapsarians, from that of all other Christians; since it is to charge this system alone with the difficulties, which fall on true Christianity as such, and even on natural Religion, as will be seen by the sequel. For these difficulties being all drawn from the part that God and his providence, may have had in the entrance of evil both physical and moral, into the world; this system in this regard, does not differ, or is not obliged to differ in any way, from that of the Infralapsarians, or of other Christians deserving this name. This is what I have said and shown, in all my treatise C. and especially in the first chapter of the second Volume. Thus one cannot say that the difficulties and discordances of which the Author speaks, are born from this system more than from all the others among true Christians.

The difficulties or objections of the Author, like those of Bayle, are properly addressed, against true Christianity as such, and against natural Religion; and not against the system of the Supralapsarians simply; since they are addressed to theses which are affirmed in holy Scripture, and consequently also by all Christians.

I do not see too well either, the force of this consequence. The difficulties are born from the proper bosom of Supralapsarianism; therefore it is not apt to remove them. It seems to me that I would rather say; the difficulties are born from this system; therefore it is up to it to resolve them, and not to another. Or else one would

therefore have to suppose from the outset, gratis and without understanding it in its defenses, that these difficulties are naturally insurmountable; which would be unjust. Another system also is not obliged to resolve them, since they are not born with it. It only tries to elude them, or to avoid them: That is all. But the Author having too much penetration, to reason so little consequently, I believe rather, that it happened to him by mistake, what often happens to the most skilled, which is to have badly expressed his thought. Or else finally if it is not that, it is that he has not dared to express this thought exactly as it was. For his thought is, that it is this system itself, as such, which creates the difficulty. Thus in this case, this system is not simply obliged to remove some difficulties which would seem to arise with it; but it is obliged to sustain itself, as itself making the greatest of difficulties and absurdities.

Then that will mean, that true Christianity in this place, as such, and even natural Religion, is the greatest of all absurdities: Which is too shocking to be objected openly, by a man who wants to pass for a true Christian. That is why one has avoided expressing it clearly; after which that makes one fall subsequently into other inconveniences.

Indeed it is so true that the difficulties of the Author, or the alleged absurdities that he combats, are true Christianity in itself, and as such, and even natural Religion; that all his principal objections, as one will see in the sequel, come back uniquely to that which the Great Apostle expresses to us in very few words, as addressing itself to his own doctrine. But you will say to me, of what does he still complain, for who is he who can resist his will? Rom. 6:19. Which addresses itself to true Christianity as such, and to natural Religion, as everyone knows. Now nobody likes to put themselves directly, and openly, in the number of those who have a declared war, with Christianity and with Religion in general, and who combat it without detour, as such. That is what gives trouble to all my Opponents, and which often makes them commit faults, which they would otherwise be incapable of ever committing.

But I beg here in the name of God, all those whom it might still take the fancy in the future, to make objections to me; to themselves retract with great care, meditating on it very attentively, all those which could be reduced, as to their true sense, to that which the Apostle has just expressed to us. Then I am quite sure to have few Opponents among Christians deserving this name, nor even among those who will not be atheists; and that our differences then will be very light, and very easy to terminate on the present matters. For this objection can only come from declared enemies of God, of his word, and of Religion as such, if it is made in this same sense voluntarily, on purpose and reflecting on this identity of sense. But let us continue.

§.341. "For after a great circle of reasoning, these Doctors always come back to attribute indirectly to God, the production of these two evils, the physical and the moral: and it is this that most honest people, have a lot of trouble digesting, whatever turn and whatever softening one brings to it."

Does one not already begin to feel here, the truth of my preceding reflection; and that the honest people of whom the Author speaks, place themselves in this place, by mistake no doubt, in a bad position? They do nothing else by their oppositions, than to charge themselves with the functions of this flesh enemy of God, which St. Paul has reproached very rudely, and with a great indignation. They come to contest with God about his nothingness, the rights and the skill that they grant to a potter over his clay. To that the Apostle responds, and I after him, in a manner, in my opinion satisfying, for those who want to yield to the Revelation, and to right reason at the same time, as the Author professes hereafter to want to do. For it is certain that right reason, will not refuse this right to God any more, and this skill towards his nothingness, than does here the Revelation itself; provided that one consults this reason, when it is of sound sense, and not troubled or heated by dispute.

§.342. "Indeed, how to conceive, that among the creatures of God, which all, according to the report of Moses, were beautiful and good, there are however found two monsters, such as those of which there is question here?"

No one says that at the first creation, were found the two monsters of which the Author speaks. If one said that, it would no longer be to say, that God is indirectly the author of their production; but it would be to say that he is the author of it directly and immediately, like the most holy things, the purest and which are the most agreeable to him; which no one says. Thus no one can, and no one is obliged to give reason for a thing which is not, and which is affirmed by no one.

§.343. "How to conceive that at the eternal source of all good, there are found diverted conduits by which these two evils, sin and misfortune are derived?"

But no Christian says that sin and misfortune, are derived from God directly. Sin in this way, and as sin, derives from the sinner alone, and in no way from God; he alone sins, God does not sin. In this regard and in this sense, the sinner alone is author of sin, and no other. Only they say that this sin of man, did not happen in a manner unforeseen to God, despite him, and that he could not have prevented if he had wanted to; nor even without this necessary direction of his adorable providence, without which nothing can be future, nor exist, nor act. And for the other misfortunes, they are punishments, which came in consequence of sin, and which are just and irreproachable. This justice of punishments is confirmed moreover, by the practice of all men, when they themselves are interested in it; as I have made felt and remarked in my preceding works.

§.344. "For me I find this step so dangerous and so slippery, that I would not dare to think of putting the tip of my foot there without shuddering; also I have always wanted to remain in ignorance in this regard."

Timidity is praiseworthy, especially when one must walk without guide and without support in difficult paths, rough and surrounded by precipices. But to profess to have a guide all wise and all knowing, to know the right path, all powerful to be able to support us in dangerous places, and faithful to not want to deceive us at all; and

to have still then a timidity so great, that one does not dare to put the tip of the foot without shuddering, in these dangerous paths where he takes charge of our conduct; are things, in my opinion, incompatible. And to want even always to remain in ignorance; that is to say here, to guard oneself from ever walking in these paths, by abandoning oneself absolutely to his sure, and all perfect direction, is by one's works, to deny to this guide, the knowledge of the path, or fidelity and good faith.

When the Savior called St. Peter to him to walk on the waters of the sea, Matt. 14:29. although because of the weakness of his faith, he was there only trembling and shuddering, he went there however; because he believed, though weakly, that he who called him was powerful to guarantee him from all evil, although he had to walk on the abysses. But if his timidity had been so great, that it had made him refuse absolutely to go to the Savior who called him, he would have shown thereby that he had no faith nor confidence in him. Instead by going there, though trembling, he at least showed by this action, that he truly had faith, though weak and very wavering: as the Savior reproaches him by saying to him: man of little faith, why have you doubted? If we want therefore to remain in the number of the faithful, we must imitate St. Peter at the very least; and not let ourselves be dominated by a timidity so great, that it makes us remain in the number of the disobedient, of the unfaithful and of the incredulous.

§.345. "However, since a voluntary ignorance, would be almost as blameworthy as an audacious knowledge, I want to try to get out of it; especially with the Author of Treatise C, I can well form the design without fear of getting lost: for we want both, to walk only in the path of right reason and of Revelation, and to stop as soon as it will fail us."

Very well, God also knows that this is my true design, and that it is by abandoning myself entirely and absolutely, to his sure and infallible direction to walk in this route, that I have advanced all that has been seen and that will be seen of me. This is what we must now see.

§.346. "So then; Yes says this Author, God has given efficacy to the production of these two monsters, but it is not by a delectation that he finds in the production of these monsters, it is because these, give occasion to the manifestation of his glory. Let us stop a moment here: The question is not to know, if these monsters, give occasion to the manifestation of the glory of God; for no one doubts it. The question is to know, if God has produced them."

One clearly sees by these words, what I said in §.340. that the Author does not speak here to the Supralapsarians as such, but to all Christians deserving this name; and even to all those who believe that there is only one Principle, all-good all-wise and all-powerful. For those do not speak differently, and are not obliged by their system, to speak differently than the wisest among Christians, of the providence of God, or of his concurrence in the actions of creatures, where sin lies; or in the misfortunes which are the consequence of it. That is to say, that they do not say that God has

produced these monsters, in another way than the others say it. Their difference is not on that, but on the order of the Decrees, and on the point where one must begin to meditate on these Decrees; if it is before or since the fall, that must begin the first Decree that one poses; and if this fall itself enters into the Divine Decrees or not. If therefore I respond to the Author, it is in the name of Christianity as such, and not in the name of the Supralapsarians alone, who do not say more than the others on the matter that the Author cannot digest. This is what I beg my Reader to observe well.

§.347. "Poisoned men, for example, can well give occasion to the glory of a physician, by the cure that he would have procured for them: but it does not follow from that that one can say, that it is of a wise man to poison directly or indirectly men, to afterwards draw from it his glory, by the cure of some and by the death of others."

But the Author should have remembered, that the comparison of men to God in these sorts of matters, is a very slippery and very dangerous step, given the immense disproportion that there is from one to the other; as I have so often remarked in my book. Glory is not due to the Physician; it is due to God, and belongs to him alone, very really and very naturally. The physician must not work directly and uniquely for his glory; God can and must; the Author himself admits it from the beginning of his Writing, in words that I have not copied here to abbreviate; and by which he praises me for having well sustained this thesis. The means of the glory of the Physician, can come to him as for him by accident, by chance, and without his having taken any care. They must even come to him thus, otherwise this alleged glory changes name, and makes him contemptible. The reason is, that as this glory is not due to him by right, if it comes to him from elsewhere that's fine: it is a good which makes him esteemed, as coming purely from his personal merit which he owes to God, and with which he glorifies him and not himself.

But on one side, it is impossible that the means of the glory of God, come to him in this manner, because nothing can happen without his knowledge, independently of his cares, nor despite him; and it is repugnant to the unity of Principle, as well as to his sovereign perfection, and to Scripture, to speak otherwise. And on the other, glory belonging to him and being really and truly due to him, when he acts for his glory he acts for justice and for truth. He does in that a just, holy and praiseworthy action, and which from that very act is already glorious to him: he cannot even propose to himself another end, which is worthy of him. One defies all the earth to suggest another, which one can substitute for that one while doing him honor. No one has yet succeeded in it, as one has seen until now.

That is why we will say boldly, according to the rule that the Author has previously proposed to follow, in §.345. that the means which serve to manifest and to illustrate the glory of God, did not come to him by chance, and independently of the cares of his providence. It is therefore very dangerous and often very captious, to compare God to a man, or a man to God; especially in these matters here.

Nevertheless if we want to do it, the safest is to consult our infallible, faithful and assured guide, I mean, divine Revelation; to see if it does not do it itself, and follow this divine guide boldly and without hesitating. Or at the very least if we can do nothing more, follow it trembling, to be in any case, placed with St. Peter, in the rank of people of little faith. For if we absolutely resisted the direction of this guide, there would be no faith, and consequently no Christianity.

If therefore we take this design, we will find that Scripture, our sovereign guide, compares God in this matter in more than one place, both in the Old and in the New Testament, to a potter, who has on one side, a boundless power over his clay, to make of it by right, what he wants: without committing in that any irregularity, whatever name one can give it; and who on the other, has the skill and the dexterity to handle and to fashion this clay, suitably in all manners, which can contribute something to his satisfaction or to his advantage, whatever it is; and that without wounding himself, without offending himself and without mutilating himself in any way. Finally he also has abundantly all the prudence and all the wisdom required, to employ the vessels that he draws from his nothingness, only to that to which they conform very perfectly. And as he is just and wise, he has the prudence and the uprightness which are necessary, to employ them, considering them such as they are, and what they are in effect, only to uses where they conform so perfectly, that it is impossible for all those who are not his declared enemies, not to admire and adore the justice and the suitability of the employment that he makes of them. And this comparison however decides everything, and resolves entirely the difficulty of the Author of the objections. It has moreover this advantage, that being drawn from divine Revelation; it is very conformable at the same time to right reason, if one wants to consult it without prejudice. We will grant therefore still the justness and the suitability of this comparison, following the good design of the Author marked in §.345. in which case, all will be smoothed.

§.348. "To whom therefore will we attribute the production of these monsters? We will not attribute it to the bad Principle of the Manicheans, for we deny that there is such a bad Principle. On the other side I could not resolve to attribute it to God."

This is where the step is slippery, and where we walk in a place covered with thorns, surrounded and crossed by abysses and precipices. This is consequently where we must employ a wise timidity, but which lets itself however be led by its faithful and all perfect guide; and a boldness submitted to its direction, which does not dare to overstep by a step if it does not hold us by the hand: But which dares all however when it feels supported on its arm on its wisdom and on its fidelity to all proof. The Author would not dare to disapprove of this conduct, after the words of §.245. all the less so that he does not dispute here in the capacity of a Pagan, who has no respect for Revelation; but in the capacity of a Christian, who wants to walk in the path of right reason and of Revelation, and to stop where that will be lacking. These are his words.

If we stick to that, we will even choose our terms in Revelation, which is here the surest guide in a matter so sublime, and so far above what we can penetrate by ourselves. It suffices that we make our thoughts understood; but let us do it with chosen terms, for fear of stumbling, or of losing the respect that we owe to our Creator, before whom we are only nothings.

That being so the Author will easily see, that it is to propose the question in offensive terms and little respectful to say, that it is a question of knowing if God has produced these monsters, sin and all misfortunes, directly or indirectly? Such expressions would seem to come from the mouth of persons irritated and upset against God, and against the adorable conduct of his providence; who murmur and who grumble against it in imitation of the Demons and of the damned, who are too bad models to be followed. That is to say, that these terms would seem to depart from a spirit of contradiction, enemy of the truth and impatient of the rights of God. Spirit similar, perhaps, to that of those who have proposed this question saying, that it is a question of knowing if God is the author of sin in some manner whatsoever? so that whatever softened response one can give, although conforming to Revelation and even to right reason, there is always something to grumble about and something to murmur about; so that if one does not dare to do it against God, one can do it at least, against the defenders of his rights and of the truth: and render thereby their responses suspicious of falsity.

Does it not suffice here to say, for example, that it is a question of knowing, if sin has entered the world in a manner, where the providence of God has had no part, and with regard to him entirely by chance and by accident, in a way unforeseen to him and where he has given no attention nor any order? Does that not come back to about all the same? And however the question being thus proposed, neither reason, nor Revelation will permit responding affirmatively thereupon; since a sparrow does not fall to the earth without the will of God, even according to right reason. Much less therefore the most noble of the creatures of God, will it fall into such an abyss without his providence, and without his having well foreseen and well wanted, together the means of drawing from it his glory, or in general the success of some design worthy of the supreme Divinity. Design which is such by its importance, by its transcendent sublimity, infinite, and incomprehensible to us, that the whole Universe vanishes like a vapor and like a shadow, in its presence. Design still which merited infinitely that this adorable Being, supreme and all-powerful should make of it all his pleasure.

The Author knows even thereupon the expressions of Scripture; I do not need to allege them; I have done it enough in my work. Thus he would not dare to refuse to say that himself, if he wants to remain at his good principle marked in §.345.

From there however it would follow, by posing the state of the question by the terms of the Author, that God has produced the most frightful of all monsters, at least indirectly. Now that is very shocking and very offensive to say, and contrary to the

sovereign respect that one must have for his adorable conduct. Instead of which it would be necessary to conclude only, by following the respectful terms, chosen by persons who honor him intimately and profoundly; that nothing happens by chance before God; nothing without the direction of his adorable providence, from which nothing is subtracted. That nothing happens also of which he must be ashamed or be blamed; nothing that he cannot, and that he does not know how to make serve to an end, which authorizes and which justifies all that is of some use to him; so much is this end great, admirable and worthy that all be consecrated to it. The Author admits himself above in §.346. that the whole turns finally to the manifestation of the glory of God.

Besides, to produce monsters, is to sin against wisdom; it is to produce objects which are good for nothing, except to give horror to others, and shame to the one who has produced them. That is why although it is necessary to admit, that the things in question considered simply in themselves, are very monstrous; and that in this sense, they are truly monsters; one sees however that if one considers them, insofar as parts of the cares and of the direction of the providence of God, one cannot without cruelly offending him, say that in producing them in that way, he has produced monsters. For in this view, it is to have produced things, which, as the Author admits, are very apt to manifest his glory; which should not be called producing monsters.

To produce sin properly, is to sin oneself, and it is to produce things which could only do harm to others, shame and harm to ourselves. Now God has produced nothing such, since he has produced nothing, which does not turn finally to the manifestation and to the illustration of his glory, and of his sovereign perfection; and which does not serve to show this perfection, in a degree so sublime and so transcendent, that men nor Angels could have conceived nothing which approached it, if he had not given the example of it. Therefore properly speaking, he has produced neither monsters nor sins.

§.349. "I admit that the unity of Principle, does not however seem to leave the consequence doubtful; but the absurdities which result from this consequence, are such that I would not dare to draw it: it is very clear and very vivid, but it dazzles."

The consequence of the Author dazzles, because, as I have just said, he proposes the question in offensive and poorly chosen terms. This consequence does not dazzle so much when it is drawn from well-chosen terms, as we have just seen. But to choose harsh terms in this matter is certainly to make war on God, as appears here. That is why, if we are wise and respectful before him, as we rightly should be, we will be careful to avoid such irreverence. And we must do so all the more, since the poor choice of terms alone is captious: that it is capable of making us fall into error, and of making us determine poorly, in the very decision of this cause.

The Author says himself here, that this consequence, which dazzles him drawn from the unity of a Principle, is very clear and very vivid. Now between us the unity of a

Principle is incontestable and indubitable. Besides, *ex vero nil nisi verum sequitur*: From a truth one can deduce only truths. Certain mark that if his consequence dazzles, it is simply for having poorly chosen the terms and expressions. That must make us consequently very wise, and very circumspect in the choice of our words, so as not to dazzle and seduce ourselves.

I had made follow here what has found place above, at the beginning of §.181. and which one can review in that place, so as not to make this work bigger; where I claimed to show, how useless, dangerous and unwise it is, to combat truths of experience of which our eyes are witnesses, so to speak, under the shadow that we cannot quite understand or ally them. Indeed, that only tends to make believe, that since we cannot unravel them, they are by their very nature inextricable; and that no other can do it any more than we can. As if our own capacity or our comprehension, were the measure of the highest degree to which human comprehension can rise. In any case that can only serve to rejoice the enemies of God, and to confirm them in the false and detestable thought, that in blaspheming as they do, they nevertheless say only truths, since no one can overthrow them. But that serves also at the same time, to make us guilty before God, without changing anything in the state of things that we see with our eyes, and of the spirit and the body. Is it not therefore better to study as I have done, to confirm a conclusion that I know to be certain before all discussion, and to try to make it recognized as such by all the earth: at least by all the well-intentioned, notwithstanding the chicanes, the resistances, and the malice of the Impious and of the Libertines? To confound at the same time these Impious and to convince them of falsity, of sophistry and of ignorance? One cannot doubt it. And I am of the thought that God has done me the grace to succeed in this good design, and many others with me; for which I will praise him until the last moment of my life.

§.350. "It is therefore necessary to dissipate these difficulties before going further, this is also what the Author of Treatise C promises to do. And already, he says, God has not given efficacy to the production of these evils, by a delectation that he finds in the production of monsters; but because these give occasion to the manifestation of his glory. Similar to the Patriarch Jacob, who did not nourish his cattle with the ferocious design of slaughtering them; but who nourished them and then slaughtered them, with the legitimate design of feeding himself from them. But he must pardon me if I say, that this explanation does not satisfy me. To produce monsters, is always to produce monsters, in whatever design one produces them. God has engraved in our heart, that the goal, however just it may be, does not justify actions when they are bad. One must not do evil so that good may come of it, says St. Paul."

But I do not admit thus crudely that God has produced monsters, as I have just made felt in §.348. although I admit that the monsters of sin and its consequences, have not entered the world without the disposition of his adorable providence. I do not admit either, that God has done any evil by acting in this way. God preserve me from

it! All the works of God are only wisdom, justice and truth. The continuation of the response that one must make here, and that I had made to this citation of the passage of St. Paul, has found place above in §.189. I beg the Reader to be willing to cast his eyes there, so as not to be obliged to repeat.

§.351. "And besides the comparison of Jacob limps terribly. The very fact that Jacob was obliged to slaughter his cattle to feed himself, proclaimed his imperfection. For from that it does not follow that he did a thing good in itself, but only a necessary action, the weakness of his nature making it inevitable for him. Which cannot be said in any way of God. That shows that he was not sufficient to himself, since he could not preserve himself except by the destruction of his cattle; which cannot be said of God, who not only is sovereignly sufficient to himself, but who is fully sufficient for all his creatures. It is true that the damned and the Demons, are much less before God than the cattle before Jacob: but it is not a question here of more or less, it is a question of all to all. What could be suitable for Jacob, does not seem to be able to be suitable in any way for God."

But I respond to that, that my comparison of Jacob, does not limp at all, if one makes it serve only for the design for which I have employed it, as it is necessary to do to render me justice. That is however what one does not do here. Why does one not reproach me further that my comparison limps, because it is not apt to prove that the Pope is the Antichrist, or that Mohammed was a false prophet? For that does not follow either from the fact that Jacob was obliged to slaughter his cattle. Has my design been more to prove by my comparison, that Jacob in slaughtering his cattle, was doing in that a thing good in itself; or to prove that Jacob being all perfect and sufficient to himself, although he slaughtered his cattle, God must therefore be so also: as one supposes here that I have that in view? No. I have supposed in my comparison, that Jacob was doing in that an innocent action, in which he was not wounding any law to which he was subject. But I have employed it uniquely with the design of proving by it, that it is to lie, and to calumniate God himself wickedly and in a diabolical manner, to say, that he has created men expressly, to have the cruel pleasure of making them suffer eternally. If my comparison is not apt for that, it limps I admit; but if it fits perfectly to that as it does in effect, it is necessary to lack equity, or reflection at the very least, to reproach me that it is not apt to prove, what I have never dreamed of proving by it.

Besides, that God is sufficient to himself, to be sovereignly happy and all perfect in himself, he has proved it enough by an eternity that he has remained voluntarily alone, without giving himself the company of his creatures, although he could have done it sooner if such had been his good pleasure: and even millions of centuries sooner if he had wanted to. But to that is not contrary that he has need of creatures, and of all that has happened in the Universe, to manifest and to illustrate voluntarily and freely in time, this essential and natural glory that he possesses, and which has made him infinitely happy since eternity; glory that he deploys in all his works, and in the wise and holy conduct of his adorable providence. The reason for that is, that

he owes these creatures to no one but himself, and that he is not in the case of having to thank anyone, for anything whatsoever. It is true that it was not the same for Jacob, he owed his cattle to God, and he was however obliged to destroy them to subsist himself; and I admit that if I had compared him to God in this view I would have been wrong. But I did not do it, and I would have been very stupid to do it; since it is evident that no creature is sufficient to itself.

To say also as does the Author, that God not only is sufficient to himself, but that he also is sufficient for the creatures, is an expression little exact. It is true that it can have a good sense, which is that in which several Theologians have used it, to say, that God can by himself, without having need of the assistance of anyone else, produce, conserve, and deliver his creatures when it pleases him. But in the sense that the Author takes it here, it would seem, or nearly, that God should be made, so to speak, only to establish the happiness of creatures. God is not made, and must not be made for creatures, but indeed creatures for God. This is what the Author has admitted from the beginning of his Writing, where he praises me for having well sustained this thesis. Thus that is not speaking well, in my opinion, if one gives it the sense that the Author seems to have in view in this place.

Finally the Author admits still a capital point, and which renders my comparison just and invincible, to prove by it what I have claimed to prove by it and by all my other reasonings. It is that the damned and the Demons are much less before God, than the cattle before Jacob. But, says the Author, it is not a question of more or less, it is a question of all to all. Let that not be an obstacle then if nothing else is needed to satisfy him. I will say for this purpose, with the Revelation, which the Author respects, and even with right reason; that the cattle was, and rightly, esteemed something before Jacob, and even something very necessary, very considerable and very important, which he was not capable of providing for himself, but that men are nothing before God. Those of low estate are only vanity, the Nobles are only lies: if one put them all together in a balance, they would be found lighter than vanity itself. Ps. 62:10. Behold the nations are like a drop dripping from a bucket, and are counted as the fine dust of a balance. Is. 40:15. And that is the difference of all to all that the Author asks; or rather from all to nothing. Thus what is suitable for Jacob in my comparison, is also suitable for God in what I have attributed to him, and in the sense that I have had in view. Let us continue.

§.352. "But says the Author of treatise C. the glory of God is preferred to all, and when the whole Universe should perish, it must however be that he is glorified. To that I respond, that if in effect (which it is impossible to conceive) God had created the Universe in a manner so contradictory, that his glory can only be manifested by its destruction, the consequence would be just; but far from it, on the contrary, his wisdom has so accompanied his omnipotence, in the creation of the Universe, that all manifests his glory, by manifesting that he is the author of it. Also he conserves it, and by this conservation, he manifests that it is his work. From which, by the reason of contraries, I draw this consequence; It is that from the very fact that the

extirpation of the monsters of which there is question, is glorious to God, it must result that it is not he who has produced them."

I have not admitted to the Author that God had produced monsters, in the shocking and offensive sense that he has in view; and now I do not admit to him either, that the things that he names monsters, must ever be annulled or annihilated. The Demons and the damned with their sins, will last always, and always the punishments that they merit will be on their head. From all that one could therefore draw, by the principles of the Author, a conclusion all contrary to the one that he proposes to us, as legitimately, at the very least, as he draws his from the premises that he supposes, and which are not.

Besides if one saw a potter or a faience-maker, man of spirit and of judgment, using a certain vessel of earth, in which having put certain drugs, to compose from them an important medicine; that having plastered it, and that after having put these drugs in digestion, a considerable time, or near a great fire to calcine these drugs, according to what the preparation of this medicine would demand: If he comes after that to break this vessel, and to put it in pieces to draw from it these drugs: Does this action prove very well that it is not he who had made this vessel? No. Therefore conclude *ex paribus paria* [from similar things similar things], in case you want to give the name of destruction, to the just judgments that God exercises against sinners.

§.353. "But says the Author of treatise C. God could not have extirpated the monsters if they had not existed; it has therefore been necessary for them to have existed, that he has himself given efficacy to their production, or to have recourse to the bad Principle of the Manicheans. But not at all, it is necessary to say neither the one nor the other of these things: it is better to recognize that the fabrication of a system which resolves this difficulty, exceeds the reach of our reason."

But it is not a question here of fabricating a system, by the force of our own reason, on the matter which gives so much trouble to the Author of the objections; it is only a question of receiving with humility, of admitting with submission (or even trembling if we cannot do more, with St. Peter going to J. Christ,) the one which is presented to us very clearly, all made by the hand of God himself in his Revelation. It is a question next of defending it with vigor, with sincerity and with fidelity; and at the same time also with moderation, equity and charity. And that, note well, to be only placed in the number of people of little faith. For if one came to reject it completely, and if one refused absolutely to admit it, either by timidity, or by such other principle as one would wish; one would degrade oneself from the number of the faithful. And everyone knows, what terrible judgment is announced to the timid and to the incredulous, Rev. 21:8. from which may God preserve us all.

But finally God does not admit here any neutrality, nor would the enemies of Christianity suffer it either, in a man calling himself Christian, without confounding him at the same time; by proving to him that he is Christian only in name. After that

leaving him there, they will turn head directly against holy Scripture, which is the unique and true foundation of Christianity, and will cover it with insults and blasphemies, to which such a Christian will not have a word to say. He rejects it himself in these places. Thus such a Christian, will deliver Christianity itself bound hand and foot, as they say, to its enemies for them to do and to say with impunity, all that will seem good to them. Are these not terrible and frightful consequences of such a neutrality?

Revelation tells us: That God has made all things for himself, and even the wicked for the day of calamity: That of him, by him, and for him are all things: That it is he who produces with efficacy in us, both the willing and the doing according to his good pleasure. Is there an evil in the City that the Eternal has not done? says Amos speaking of physical evils: That a sparrow does not fall to the ground without the will of God. To say that nothing is subtracted from the conduct of his adorable providence. For if that is true of the fall of a sparrow, how much more is it of events as important, as is the fall of intelligent creatures into sin? Therefore I believe all that; and even I believe it (with the Author in §.349.) indispensably linked by right reason, to the belief in the unity of a Principle, which is found in every true Christian, and which can be rejected only by an atheist. I have also still seen nothing until now, which does not dissipate before these lights, and which does not draw after it absurdities and difficulties more insurmountable, and of harder digestion than all those which are born from this holy doctrine.

The Author of the objections has admitted himself in §.340. that this doctrine is the most unified, and apparently the most conformable to the expressions of Scripture. I ask therefore thereupon; if to conduct oneself wisely, and to be a good Christian, it is necessary to follow the doctrine which is the least uniform with itself, and which apparently is the most remote from the expressions of Scripture? To that, by analogy, the Author responds here that no; but that it is necessary to follow neither the one nor the other of these two ways on this matter; because neither can resolve the difficulties which remain for him, and which must oblige us to remain neutral. That means, that these difficulties must have more force on our mind, than the clearest expressions of the word of God. However that is a counsel that I believe that it is not necessary to follow, at least certainly I will take good care not to do so by means of the grace of God: and God preserve me from it! To digest that, is to digest difficulties incomparably greater than those that are opposed to us. It is, as the Savior says on another subject, to strain the gnat and swallow the camel.

The Author of the objections admits himself above in §.346. that what he calls monsters, gives occasion to the manifestation of the glory of God; and he would not dare to say, being even led there by God all wise and alone interested here, speaking clearly in his holy word, that these things have happened according to his providence, and (as the late Mr. Jaquelot also spoke, when he envisaged things of sound sense) in a manner conformable to his designs! Such a great timidity does not agree very well with such an admission, nor with the resolution that the Author of

the objections testified having taken in §.345. of wanting to walk only in the path of Revelation and of right reason.

When a potter works his clay, no one finds fault with the figure that he gives to his vessels, provided that he himself declares that he finds his advantage in it. That closes the mouth of all the critics of his work, and makes them admit that he therefore has reason to make them thus. And here the potter says himself, of certain vessels that the Author of the objections calls monsters, that he has made them for his glory, and that he draws his glory from them; and our Author himself admits that the utility, or the glory that this potter draws from these vessels is manifest; therefore conclude, where is his wrong or his fault? For me, although I see myself here surrounded by abysses and precipices on all sides, as St. Peter saw himself also, when the Lord called him to himself to walk on the waters of the sea, timidity nor weakness will not prevent me, if it pleases God, from going where I see that the Lord calls me; and even if it would be only trembling, I will go there however. Let us continue.

§.354. "I do not however want to dissimulate that there could be found people, who, by way of compensation, would believe to make the frightful ugliness of these monsters disappear, by drowning it so to speak, in the infinite beauty of the glory of God, which results from it: and thus be able in globo, to attribute these two things to God. But these people seek to dazzle themselves rather than to enlighten themselves, for it is impossible to confound things, not only as distinct, but even as contradictory as these are."

What one has just seen can make understand, that these people are those who have just told us on behalf of God: That he has made all things for himself, even the wicked for the day of calamity etc. and all those also who have enough courage to believe it, which all together do not appear to me to be of the number of those, who seek to dazzle themselves rather than to enlighten themselves. And I am astonished that the Author of the Objections, finds so contradictory and so incompatible, things which are reunited to produce the glorification of the name of God.

These in particular, show his infinite Majesty and the nothingness of all things before him. His absolute independence, and the indispensable dependence in which are all things of him, either to be, or to act. His incomprehensible power and wisdom in the creation, not only of the Universe in bulk, but very particularly, in the creation of intelligent Beings; who, as we feel in ourselves, act in all things, with choice, knowledge and deliberation; and whom he leads nevertheless to their ends infallibly, by incomprehensible and sovereignly admirable ways. His uprightness and his purity, in the holy and perfect Discipline, which he prescribes to these intelligent Beings, and which he gives them for Rule of their choices and of their deliberations. His incorruptibility, which does not hold as innocent those who despising these holy laws, soil themselves by trampling them underfoot, in the abominations of crimes and of sins; and who to show the perfect hatred that he has for these iniquities, these

soilings and these disorders, and the jealousy that he has for the glory of his Majesty offended and despised; punishes these wicked ones with eternal punishments, and rejects even at the very least from his communion forever, their children dying young, even if they would not suffer punishments nor acute pains, like the voluntary rebels. His transcendent and unimaginable goodness to all creatures; and his mercy, which made him give his Son to death, to save unworthy sinners who merited only hell etc.

There is not a single one of all these articles, to which I could still join many others, which is unworthy of the all-perfect Being, or rather, which does not even show some necessary trait, which must be found indispensably, in the one who must be esteemed sovereignly perfect. These things constitute or comprise however, what the Author of the objections names, by a small mistake or impropriety of language, the system of the supralapsarians; although it is that of all true Christians, and even of every man who believes in a God, unique Principle of all things. And nevertheless he finds it sovereignly contradictory to itself, and unworthy of being followed and embraced by right reason, because of the monstrousness and the frightful ugliness, which it binds and envelops together with beautiful and admirable things. If each article separately is worthy of the supreme and all-perfect Being, and if each is even necessary to such a Being, to be able to be said sovereignly perfect, how does their assembly contain these frightful ugliness, these monstrousness and these contradictions, of which the Author of the objections speaks?

§.355. "Besides, says the Author of treatise C. God wanting to manifest his mercy and his severity, and not being able to find another means than this one, he has been obliged to take it: the nature of the thing being such, that it could not be otherwise: at which one must not be astonished. Although one agrees on the omnipotence of God, there are nevertheless certain things, which he cannot do; as for example, that a thing is and is not at the same time. This argument is pressing, but it proves the contrary of what one wants to prove by it. It is true that God does not do things which imply contradiction, because he does nothing unworthy of him, nor which repugns to his nature which is simple and uniform, but it is by this same reason that I conclude, that he has not produced the monsters of which there is question; for the one repugns to his holiness, and the other to his sovereign goodness."

The Author of the objections does here as would do a man, who knowing a certain faience-maker to be a man of spirit and of judgment, could not believe that he had made, or voluntarily permitted that there had been made at his place, certain twisted vessels, deformed to make one afraid, and in a word, of which the figure would be very disagreeable to see; although this faience-maker assures him himself that he has made them, or voluntarily permitted that they were made at his place, for certain excellent and necessary uses, from which he draws honor and great profit: to which this incredulous man recognizes himself that these vessels can very well serve, considering only the use that he can make of them, making abstraction of their origin, and supposing that one must not attribute to them any cause which

could contribute to their production. He founds his incredulity on this point, uniquely on the fact that these vessels are too monstrous and too ugly to see, to have come from the hand or from the voluntary permission of a sensible man, as he knows this potter to be.

But this is to not want to consider that in a great house, as the Apostle says somewhere, there must be vessels for honor, and others for dishonor; and that it is the useful and necessary use of these vessels which decides the judgment, of the wisdom, of the good qualities and of the regular conduct of the potter, and not the figure whatever it may be. It is clear also, that nothing in these vessels must be called monstrous, in relation to the conduct of the potter, except what would make them unsuitable for the use to which he destines them. It is certain moreover, that never the rights, or the interest of the clay or of the vessels themselves, enter into consideration to judge of the wisdom, or of the good conduct of the potter towards them; these alleged rights being completely ridiculous and chimerical, because these things are considered as nothingness before him. But one has regard only to the interest itself of the potter, and to the advantageous or disadvantageous use for him, that he can make of these vessels.

It is the same here, according to the wisdom of the one from whom we hold this comparison, and according to right reason which acquiesces in it itself. It is by considering all these things, that I have already warned that the Author of the objections names outright and without any modification, but very inappropriately, monsters, insofar as they come from the hand of God, or procured by his cares, or permitted according to his infinite wisdom, things which he admits turn to his glory.

After that it must also be said, that the Author of the objections forms for himself certain principles, often in very obscure and unexplained terms, as incontestable, which he draws from his prejudice alone; but I find it safer, more Christian and more appropriate, to draw mine from Scripture. For example, under the shadow that he takes for principle, that God is of a simple and uniform nature; without having explained these terms, he concludes almost that there must not be found in him, nor in his works the least diversity. For me I have learned from our sovereign Rule, That the wisdom of God is diverse in all sorts. Eph. 3:10. That is to say no doubt, that it deploys and makes itself known, with an extreme diversity in different subjects. And from there I conclude, that one can say the same still, of another of his perfections without offending him. It is his goodness, which is free, and which must be so, with regard to the particular objects towards which it is exercised.

There are in the works of God, a thousand objects where his wisdom deploys itself with much more brilliance and extent, than in certain others; it is the same with his goodness. But however, as he must show in his conduct, degrees of a wisdom and of a goodness truly infinite, as well as of any other perfection; it is necessary also that his adorable providence, directs things in such a way, that there are found objects proper to manifest, and to illustrate this infinite degree of the supreme perfection,

for each of his attributes. From there has come the necessity of permitting sin, without which, the last degree of perfection of several of his attributes, could not have appeared; like that of his wisdom, of his hatred against iniquity and sin, of his goodness etc. And that however is not contrary to his simple and uniform nature well explained, as the Author of the objections supposes here.

This simplicity of the divine nature carries nothing else, except that he is not composed of pieces put together, so to speak, like bodies, or even like man, who is composed of body and soul. And also that he is not contrary to himself nor to his sovereign perfection; but that all his works and his designs, are always reunited finally, to make shine in him a glory and a perfection so sublime, that one could add nothing to it, not even from thought. Now his simplicity and his uniformity thus understood, one will not find that the system that I defend, supposes that he has produced monsters; that is to say, things which repugn to his nature, and which could only serve for his opprobrium. I mean of which the production is incompatible with his holiness, or with his sovereign goodness; taking these things, as is just, in their true sense, and according to their true definition.

On the contrary he has done nothing nor permitted nothing, to the event of which he could have opposed himself, without obscuring himself his own glory, without reducing himself to a small scale and to mediocrity in all things. That is to say without denying himself; and without depriving himself of the pleasure of exercising, all the virtues, each to the supreme degree. For how would the permission of sin be contrary to his sovereign goodness, since this supreme goodness would have been absolutely eclipsed, and could never have been neither known nor manifested, nor even imagined, if sin had not happened?

I have also shown in my treatise C. in the first Volume, that his holiness in this matter, can and must signify properly, not only the care that God has never to do anything, or to project nothing, which is unworthy of the all-perfect Being; but even nothing which does not tend manifestly to illustrate, in the total of his conduct, the highest possible degree in all sorts of perfections. That however could not have been done if sin had not entered the world. I have shown also that our system stumbles in none of these points. That is why I am astonished that the Author of the objections supposes here all the contrary; not only without destroying my reasons, but even without saying a word about them. It would not be inappropriate to reread again in this place, the parallel that I have put above in §.194.

§.356. "But, it will be said, although that repugns to these two particular attributes, the glory which comes from it to the total of his attributes must prevail. This escape is useless. For once again, God being a simple and uniform Being, none of his attributes is directly nor indirectly opposed to the other, and thus the manifestation of each of his attributes in particular, and of all in general, demands nothing which repugns to any of them."

The Author of the objections can see by my responses, that I am not of the number of those who will admit to him, that there is something in the works of God, which repugns to his holiness nor to his sovereign goodness; and thus he could not suppose it without doing me wrong. Moreover this consequence that the Author draws from an axiom, in his opinion incontestable, founded on the nature of God which is simple and uniform, because of the sense not determined, nor explained, nor admitted that he gives to these last words, could be contested to him in part, as appears by the parallel that I have just cited. One sees in this parallel that one could say, that the veracity of God is indirectly opposed to his omnipotence, to express the things that we have pointed out there, and which are incontestable. It will be the same with what we have said of sovereign goodness.

§.357. "Finally let the Author of treatise C. permit me to ask him, if he finds that the system of the Supralapsarians, makes explicable to him the agreement that there is between the goodness and the severity of God; he who is a sovereignly simple and unified Being, where there is nothing which has even the least appearance of contradiction, nor of opposition?"

Without doubt, I will say, that it makes this agreement explicable enough for me to be satisfied with it. From the moment that it teaches me the great goal of God, which is, to do all things for the manifestation and for the illustration of his glory, and to have the pleasure of exercising all the virtues to the supreme degree; and that I understand at the same time, that the inflexible severity of his justice on one side, and his transcendent goodness on the other, conspire together for that, and that they come to embrace and reunite, to contribute each marvelously on its side, to illustrate and to manifest the sovereign perfection of God; His supreme and adorable Majesty, very pure, very holy and very enemy of sin, of all iniquity and of all impurity: His holiness and his sovereign goodness.

They are therefore subordinated to the same end, and also contribute to it in concert each vying with one another. They do not therefore contradict each other in any way but they mutually help each other to produce the same effect. Thus there is the agreement that the Author of the objections proposes to me to make, and which is not too difficult to imagine according to our system. Mark that these two virtues are good friends; and that far from being incompatible, they are very capable of being united together in the all-perfect Being, according to our system.

§.358. "That of the Infralapsarians gives rise to no difficulty. For God shows himself merciful or severe there, according as the diversity of objects requires it."

I note everywhere that the Author of the objections, gives a completely new sense to the titles of Supralapsarian and Infralapsarian. For an Infralapsarian, according to him, is a man who does not want the providence of God, to have had any part, whatever it may be, in the entrance of sin into the world, nor in the evils which have followed from it. A man who knows no other cause for it, and who wants to know no other than an I don't know what, nothingness, chance, or the event itself. And a

Supralapsarian, according to him, is a man who makes enter in this place, the providence of God as in any other event, and who assures that it has only happened in a manner conformable to his designs; so that, although he has not committed himself any sin nor any irregularity whatsoever; and although it is man alone who has committed voluntarily sin, by the abuse that he has made of his spontaneity, and in a word of all his talents, against his known, just and legitimate duty; nothing however has happened in that except dependently on the providence of God and on his counsels. And as no creature can in any way, neither be nor act without his general concurrence, the sinner even in sinning could not act without this concurrence.

But in this sense all true Protestants, and even all Christians deserving this name, and finally every man who is not an atheist, is a Supralapsarian. There are only those who have become Pelagians, or people even worse, who speak otherwise. Also the truth is so strong here, so strongly established by the word of God, and even dictated so really by nature itself, that even the Pelagianizers forget themselves often on this point, and become Supralapsarians in this sense. The late Mr. Jaquelot is a great example of it, who in speaking of sound sense says: That God has so directed all things, that nothing happens except in a manner conformable to his designs: wherein lies supralapsarianism, according to the Author of the objections. And in this sense Mr. Du Moulin, Mr. Daillé, Mr. Claude and all our Universalists, are supralapsarians. Thus if I respond here, it is only in the capacity of a Christian not completely degenerated, and not simply in the capacity of a Supralapsarian taken in the ordinary sense. It is to those in general, that these objections speak here, and not to the true Supralapsarians simply. On this basis and in the name of all, let us respond therefore.

The Author of the objections says, that the system of the Infralapsarians understood in his way, gives rise to no difficulty. For, he says, God shows himself merciful or severe there, according as the diversity of objects requires it. But firstly to be exact, to speak thus is to be mistaken. For it is not the diversity of objects; which is the cause that God shows mercy to some and not to others. The objects of mercy are not different from those of justice. The Author has therefore, no doubt, only wanted to say; that provided that in the manner of his Infralapsarians, one leaves aside the principles of the fall of man, and provided that one begins one's meditations on all these matters, only since the fall of man, one finds no difficulty in one's path.

But in truth if that was his sense, as I cannot doubt, these words seem to me to say clearly, that provided that one passes to these Infralapsarians, the greatest of all difficulties, one finds after that in their system, no difficulty. Let us see that.

These Infralapsarians therefore, according to the Author of the objections, are people who, if one asks them if it is necessary to believe, that sin has entered the world by chance, or by the malice of a bad Principle collateral to the good Principle, which is God; bad Principle of which God is not the master: or finally if sin has

happened in a manner dependent on the adorable providence of God, who has well wanted to permit it to make uses of it which are glorious to him? will respond by timidity, that it is necessary to remain neutral on all that, or (to better say) that it is necessary to believe neither the one nor the other of these things, nor even to clarify oneself on it; that it is necessary, deliberately, to remain ignorant on all that.

But that being thus; is it not evident that the Author of the objections must count for nothing that to be an Infralapsarian in this sense, it is necessary to begin by renouncing all confidence in God and in his holy word, by a cowardly timidity which does not dare to approach a place, that he sees surrounded by abysses and precipices, although he is manifestly invited there by God himself, who extends his hand to guarantee him from all evil? That it is necessary to begin by a preference that one gives to one's prejudices, to the prejudice of the most vivid clarity of a word, that one professes to believe to be the word of God, and that one cannot say, is not intelligible in these places, except by offending conscience and truth; although these prejudices are founded only on our particular taste, but which is supported neither by right reason nor by Revelation.

Such a system, says the Author, gives rise to no difficulty! And where can one therefore find difficulties greater, than those which oblige us to digest them, to degrade ourselves from the number of the faithful? Which oblige us to put ourselves in the number of the timid and of the incredulous, and outside of the state of being able to say two reasonable words for the defense of Christianity, against its most dangerous enemies? For is it not to degrade oneself from the number of believers and of the faithful, to admit that one has a timidity so great in dangerous places, that it can in no way be overcome nor reassured; not even by God in person, so to speak, who wants to take charge of leading us by the hand, and who addresses to us for that his word reiterated a hundred times, vivid, clear and distinct?

Besides what will one have to say by following this route, to an enemy of Christianity who will maintain to us; that Scripture is a bad book which deserves no respect, that it is full of blasphemies in a hundred places that I have often cited, over which one is obliged to jump oneself by closing one's eyes, so as not to see them, so much they make us horror? One will only have to lower life and to confess oneself vanquished, and Christianity will be withered and rejected with justice. Will that be indeed to sustain the honor of a word, which says itself to be holy, pure and irreproachable? An assured testimony which gives wisdom to the simple. Ps. 19:8. A pure word which is like silver refined, and purified in the furnace seven times. Ps. 12:7. A word apt to convince, to correct, to instruct. 2 Tim. 3:16. How can all that subsist, if it causes that one closes our mouth without having a word to reply, when one covers it with opprobrium, and when one accuses it of being all interspersed and filled with the most horrible blasphemies? And what will one have to say either to those who by imitating us, as the Socinians and so many others do in that, will reject absolutely from Religion, what will not be to their taste, however clearly it is proposed and reiterated in holy Scripture? Not a single word which is reasonable. And after that

one will claim that such a system is subject to no difficulty! One will pardon me if I say that one has not thought about it enough, and that apparently one will come back to it by thinking more maturely. For it is certain that the difficulties which remain on our side, do not approach those; and even that they are null, or nearly, with regard to those who follow without hesitating, Revelation and right reason.

One sees by the Author himself, what I have already said in §.181. That provided that he is permitted to begin to meditate on these matters, only since the fall of man, he sees no difficulty in the use that God makes on him, of his severity or of his mercy. Mark that according to the Author himself, these objects there considered simply such as they are in themselves, when God makes use of them, are perfectly suitable and apt to make justly and legitimately of them, the use to which he employs them; and even to illustrate his virtues and manifest his glory, by making these uses of them. They have therefore in themselves, according to the Author of the objections, and considered in themselves, all the aptitude and the suitability that one could imagine, to be employed to these uses.

But I ask now, this suitability so proper of these objects, when one considers them only in themselves, such as they are at present without going back higher; is it changed by reflections that one makes, on things which are extrinsic and foreign to them, and which do not enter into their constitution? Reason itself will not say it. What is outside of an intelligent Being, and which does not enter into its constitution, also changes nothing in its essential and inherent qualities, nor consequently in the aptitude or suitability which is in it, which makes it proper to be employed to certain uses; that is to say, worthy and capable of being treated with wisdom and justice in a certain way, when this aptitude is founded, as it is here, on these present, inherent and personal qualities.

Therefore, I will say, that this suitability so proper, that the Author of the objections sees with everyone in these objects, has been produced by an I don't know what, by chance, by a bad Principle of which God is not the master, or finally by the cares of the adorable providence of God; nothing of all that influences here this real and intrinsic aptitude that we all avow, and that we see to be founded on the inherent and personal qualities of these objects. The real suitability of the objects to the uses that God makes of them, is certain and admitted, notwithstanding these foreign considerations which cannot alter it.

Yes indeed, the Author of the objections will say, for if this aptitude and true suitability of the objects, has been procured by the cares of providence, it is entirely changed, destroyed and annihilated; and God can no longer use it for these same uses, except by an irregularity or an enormous injustice, of which the Author cannot even suffer the sight. That is to say, that a faience-maker, if he is a man of spirit and reasonable, and if he finds in his path twisted vessels, very monstrous and frightful to see; but which are however marvelously proper, to be employed to certain important uses, which could be of great profit to him, or bring him great advantages;

can indeed use them for these uses, very wisely and legitimately for his good; but that if he fabricates some for himself, or else if he voluntarily lets be fabricated at his home some similar, and as monstrous to use for these so useful uses; or if he employs some similar to the production of which he has had the least part; he is unjust, unreasonable and out of his mind. In a word, he cannot do it without falling into some defect, or into some irregularity; into which a wise man and without defect could not fall. I leave to the Reader to judge, if in that the Author of the objections is right. For me I do not believe it at all; and I believe that it suffices absolutely, that the aptitude is very suitable and very real, considered in the thing itself, whoever it may be who has produced it or procured it, to make the corresponding use, legitimate, full of wisdom and irreproachable in all respects. The comparison that I have just employed proves it enough.

But whence comes it that the conduct of the aforementioned potter, remains incontestably irreproachable, according to the saying of everyone, in the employment that I have given him; and that the conduct of God which is absolutely in the same case according to Scripture, and according to right and impartial reason, is so subject to being criticized, and that it is of so hard digestion to so many people? That can come absolutely only from particular interest, and from the insane self-love which blinds us, and which inspires in us a pride which cannot bear to hear say that it has no more right before God, than clay, or vessels before the potter; and which cannot humble itself enough to digest this truth there, without grumbling and without kicking. Proud flesh seeks a thousand detours and a thousand pretexts to evade, and to escape from such an abasement, which is unbearable to it.

We are not stones nor mud, it says; we are intelligent and reasonable creatures; thus we cannot be treated like brutes or like firebrands, by a just and wise Being, however powerful and independent he may be. That is how it tries to struggle, to extricate itself and to subtract itself from the supreme power, and from the infinite supereminence, of this sovereign Being whose rights and cause I defend. But these are feeble efforts, which do not have much virtue when one envisages them closely. For it is not a question of knowing what these Beings are at present, or what they are not; nor if being intelligent and reasonable Beings, they can be treated like brutes or like mud, by a just and wise Spirit. No one affirms either the one or the other of these things. No one says that they are still at present only nothingness or mud, nor that they can at present itself be treated in effect like clay. On the contrary we say, according to the force of our comparison; that our potter always makes a use of his vessels, very suitable to their present figure, and that he never employs them except for the things which are perfectly suited to them, and for which they have a perfect aptitude and suitability. Which means here, that God only treats intelligent and reasonable Beings, according to an exact justice and a perfect reason, as requires the nature of Beings thus disposed.

It is therefore a question of knowing here, not what these Beings have become by creation or otherwise; but if their origin is not before God, as vile as clay before the

potter, since it is nothingness itself; and if God ever fails to treat these Beings all such as they are, suitably to what one sees in them. But that he does not fail in it, this is what is admitted by the Author himself and by everyone. All admit that by considering these Beings only in themselves, and such as they are, making abstraction of the cause and of the Principle of their origin; God treats them wisely, justly and suitably to what they merit, or to what one sees in them. Thus this cloud also vanishes like a shadow and like a smoke, when one presents it to right reason. These traits only whiten on our invincible and proof against everything bulwark, which is the triumphant comparison that God has put in our hand, to defend his rights, his justice and his good cause.

One sees here where the base wounds this vile and imprudent flesh; the pride which is in it a tumor of the most sensitive, of the most managed and of the most delicate, is here pierced to the quick, by a lancet which spares, and which manages nothing; and that is what puts it in the fields. But whatever one seeks, if one still keeps some equity and sound reason, one will find absolutely nothing, which can weaken this great truth, which is of such hard digestion to several, if one understands it as is necessary; which is, That creatures whatever they may be, have no more right before God, to speak rigorously and with exactitude, than clay or vessels have before the potter. This is a capital and important truth in Theology, and a very necessary lesson: the one who has well learned it, has best profited, and has posed a foundation of which he will never repent. For whoever humbles himself will be elevated; God resists the proud but he gives grace to the humble.

Be that as it may it is clear and palpable here, that the difficulty of the Author of the objections is very precisely, not that of right reason, as he believes it; but that of proud flesh and enemy of the rights of God, which St. Paul has objected to himself, and which he reproaches with execration. Rom. 9:19, 20, 21. Why does he still complain, for who is he who can resist his will? But rather O man! who are you who contests against God? Will the thing formed say to the one who has formed it, why have you made me thus? Does not the potter of earth have the power to make from the same mass of earth, a vessel for honor and another for dishonor? There very precisely is the objection that is made to us here, and the response that I oppose to it. Let the Author of the objections judge who of us is better placed.

He will claim that there is something in God (It does not matter what it is, nor on which side he understands it; let him call it as he will, a too great perfection, or a too small one) He will claim, I say, that there is something in God, which prevents him from being able to make from his nothingness, without wounding or offending himself, what a potter of earth has the power and the skill to make without wounding himself, from his clay for his utility and for his satisfaction, or to do himself honor; and the Apostle as well as right and impartial reason, will claim the contrary. There is the dispute.

From it follows, that the capital objection which reigns here is poorly founded, manifestly contrary to Revelation, and consequently to Christianity, as such. That to be wise and Christian one must renounce it, and reject it as a suggestion of the enemies of God: And that notwithstanding the abysses that we see here, we must walk there having God himself as guide. That there is neither prejudice, nor natural inclination nor particular taste which should make us timid enough, nor trembling enough not to dare to thread this route; or stubborn enough to obstinate ourselves in not wanting to do anything about it, if we do not want to exclude ourselves from the number of believers and of the faithful. These are neither proud, nor refractory, nor timid, nor presumptuous, nor incredulous so as not to follow God when he calls them, or so as not to believe him when he speaks. They go to him in this case courageously, and believe with confidence, without wavering and without tergiversating. Or at the very least they do all that trembling; but they do it however.

§.359. "But in the system of the Supralapsarians it is not that. God shows himself merciful and severe there, towards objects completely similar, or which have no other difference than that which his will finds appropriate to give them. Can our weak reason explain that?"

Continuation of the Commentary, or of the paraphrase of the banal reasoning of imprudent flesh, and enemy of the rights of God, which St. Paul has objected to himself in Rom. 9:19. But let us respond. No, I will say to the Author scandalized by the conduct of God, our weak reason would never have been able to explain it, or would not have dared to undertake it; but God has done it for it, by the triumphant comparison of which I have just used. It is only necessary to be humble enough to receive it from his hand, and to admit its justness and its right application. But God alone can humble man enough, to oblige him to submit here without murmuring, although all there is just and irreproachable. Men cannot do it at all: that is why also I take care not to undertake it.

§.360. "What therefore will the mercy and the severity of God, not be manifested? - Yes without doubt they will be, and even on the occasion of the monsters of which there is question. Also I have not denied that they were; alas! they are only too much so. I only wanted to say, that it was inconceivable that they were come out, directly or indirectly, from the adorable hands of God."

Although one does not deny that these things are very monstrous, when considering them in themselves, I have however already warned that with regard to God, these things are not monsters, and that it is to offend him to speak in this way. One can see the reasons for this precaution in what I have put in §.355. and elsewhere. And at present I respond to the Author of the objections, that what he has wanted to say must not be said; as one has just seen by Revelation. One has only to reread the application that we have made, of our divine and triumphant comparison to this scruple, in §.358. to recognize without trouble and with facility, that it is not right

reason which stumbles here so terribly; but that it is necessarily, a sick reason, obscured and prejudiced by some unjust, dangerous, bad and ill-founded prejudice.

§.361. "I stop here all at once, because the path is bordered and crossed by thorns and precipices; also I have only skimmed the difficulties without daring to go to the depths of them. The Majesty of God appears in his conduct with so much brilliance, that sometimes not only does it dazzle us, but it blinds us. We can therefore do nothing better, after all our reasonings, than to exclaim: O depths of the mercy and of the severity of God! how incomprehensible are his judgments and his ways impossible to find!"

It was time also no doubt, that one should stop in this place, since our Opponents could not go further, without coming to formal blasphemies, by lying in wait; from which the uprightness and the wisdom of the Author! is far removed. But I believe that this same uprightness and wisdom, would have had good reasons to stop still a little sooner. For at bottom, the great and as it were unique objection of our Author, comes back to the one that St. Paul made to himself, on behalf of the flesh enemy of the rights and of the glory of God, and to which I had already responded in my treatise C. by imitating him, all that a sober and wise reason could justly ask to be satisfied. But the Author of the objections had no doubt not sufficiently well noticed it. However he could have if he had paid some attention, to what I have said somewhere in this Treatise; namely, that all the difficulties or objections, that one claims to draw from reason against this doctrine, always fall back into the one that St. Paul made to himself, and which he reproaches with horror and detestation, without even the Objectors perceiving it. Mr. Du Moulin and all the others have been surprised by it, as I have pointed out: and the Author of the objections although pre-warned, is still after them and more than any other; which astonishes me given the strength of his great genius which is known to me.

Finally I will say, that if the exclamation by which these objections end, is proper somewhere, it is not so much in the mouth of those who resist as much as they can, the ways of solution that God has given us in his holy word; and who after having exhausted themselves in vain, for wanting to be wiser than him, feel nevertheless still their weakness after all their vain efforts, and who subsequently in this feeling exclaim thus: as it is in the mouth of those, who by humbling and annihilating themselves first profoundly before God, receive and admit with submission and adoration, the triumphant comparison of which I have so often used, and which God has given us to help us in these matters. It is those to whom it is proper, after all their meditations and their efforts to defend the truth, to exclaim with the Holy Apostle, in the company of whom they find themselves in all respects: O depth! That is why notwithstanding the passably happy success of my feeble efforts, which make me feel, that the better one will know the ways of God, the more one will be struck by astonishment and admiration; and which will serve at least as I hope, to repress a little the audacity of spirits too rash, for which I will praise God forever; I finish these reflections in sentiments of admiration, in the annihilation of the most

profound humility, and in the abasement of the most intimate and the most pure adoration, by this holy exclamation. O depth of the riches of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God! how incomprehensible are his judgments and his ways impossible to find!

§.362. These my Responses, except for a few words that I have added there for more clarification, having been communicated to the Author of the objections, he has found it appropriate to reply to them, claiming that I had not understood him at all. And as these replies merit our reflections, at the very least as much as the first objections, I have found it appropriate to join them here, at least what they have of most important: joining to them still our reflections according to the preceding method. That will contribute perhaps, to making succeed the design that I would have in the present work, which is to touch this matter for the last time. For such who would have had the desire to propose some of the objections that one will find here, seeing them public with the suitable and satisfying responses, will stop there. Here then is this reply in proper terms.

"The reading of the responses of the Author of Treatise C. that he has made to the objections that I had opposed to some places of his book, has made me notice that the lack of clarity in my first draft, has made him understand most things, quite otherwise than I have thought them. For I do not want to believe that the heat of the dispute, is the sole cause of this mistake; although the most upright men, are sometimes not exempt from a similar thing. That is why I believed I should retouch the places of my draft, where I have noticed that the said Author has misunderstood me. Perhaps however one will have escaped me, where understanding myself well, I do not perceive that one can misunderstand me. However, after my explanations, I hope that he will envisage things otherwise than he did at first. And that if there is a point where in effect I am not of his opinion, he will nevertheless not fail to admit that my sentiments are pure, as well as the intention that I have in proposing them."

I do not believe that any of those who will read what precedes, will say that I have heated myself in the dispute. Our dispute has not been of those where one heats oneself easily, which are verbal disputes: the whole has passed in writing, as one has just seen: I have kept my cool as much as possible. I am not, thank God, so easy to heat, especially in responding to a wise and skilled man, whom I honor and whom I esteem so much and more; who has not heated himself, and who has treated me very honestly, as appears here. Thus if in some places I have taken badly the thought of the objections, I protest sincerely that it is without any affectation, as all the Readers of my responses will agree. But it seems to me that one could say, of the manner of retouching which will follow, that that could be called rather, to retract what one has recognized by my responses, cannot subsist; and to add or to substitute new things that one believes more solid, than simply to clarify some obscure places. But let the Reader be the judge of it. The important thing is that I respond solidly to all, after having well understood here the true sense of the Author, since he has been willing to take the trouble to explain himself, as much as it has

pleased him to do it, and as much as he has judged it appropriate. Let us enter into the subject.

§.363. "For finally our difference consists in this. The Supralapsarians say, that God has an indirect part in the production of sin, since it is committed under the direction of his providence; and to soften those whom such a proposition could frighten, they say; that that does not repugn at all to the holiness of God, because his providence has in that only the illustration of his glory for goal. And I say with the common of the faithful, that God has no part, whatever it may be, in the production of sin."

We will see in the sequel, that in that the Author of the objections flatters himself a little too much, or that he is terribly mistaken, since he is as guilty of what he reproaches to others, as those same against whom he disputes.

§.364. "And to satisfy those who ask how providence is exempt, from the production of a thing which is not committed outside of its dependence; I respond to them that this how, is very certainly in the hands of the wisdom of God, although he has not judged it appropriate to make known to us the detail of it. I ask also the Author of Treatise C, to pay attention, that in the continuation of this discourse, I have considered misfortune and sin in themselves, and as stripped of all that could be foreign to them. I mean, that I have considered sin intrinsically, and as separated, for example, from the machinal and local movement of the sinner who commits it. Likewise I have considered misfortune in itself, and as separated from the use that God makes of it in the punishment of the wicked. For I am very far from saying, nor even from thinking, that the machinal movement of men, and the punishment of the wicked does not come from God."

The restraint that the Author of the objections affects here, in the response to those who ask the how that he refuses to explain to them, has a very beautiful appearance; it is very plausible to make believe those who would not examine things very closely. But despite this apparent restraint, it is certain, that the Author does not fail to say enough about this how, to make him guilty of all the defects that he reproaches to others, as will be seen in the sequel.

Concerning the abstraction that he makes at the end, between the machinal movement of the sinner and his sin; and between misfortunes and the punishment that they constitute, I say nothing about it. It is the same abstraction that others make, in distinguishing in sin, the physical from the moral etc. But if the Author ever comes to read chapters IX. X. and XI. of the Addition to Treatise A. that I have examined in chap. V. of those that I have made on this Addition, in the first Volume of the present work; he will soon see himself chased from all the little retreats, that he believed he had found in this abstraction. But for me I do not want at all to imitate a conduct that I blame so much in M.L.P. and for which I have so much horror. It can only serve to kill souls, so to speak, instead of edifying them. I want to remain at the most general terms; it is better to adore on these matters, than to scrutinize things

that will always be incomprehensible to us. Being strong enough elsewhere, I can do without these nitpickings.

Now the Author will re-enter into his first objections; that is why it will not be necessary for me to respond anew, to the articles where there will be nothing changed.

§.365. "To confound the Manicheans it was only necessary to distinguish well in what their blaspheme consists. It does not consist, properly speaking, in saying that evil comes from a bad Principle, for that is only to say what Scripture and reason say unanimously. Their blaspheme consists in making this bad Principle equal or collateral to God, and independent of his providence. Thus to combat this blaspheme, it was not absolutely necessary to show the detail of the first generation of evil, nor to penetrate the profound darkness with which it is covered. It sufficed to show that God has alone, the sovereignty of all things, that whatever it may be can be neither collateral to him nor independent of him. Thus the Manichean proposition appearing from there, and without other discussion, absurd and blasphematory, that was enough."

But as the bad Principle that the Author of the objections admits here as cause of evil, is however according to himself dependent on providence, and that no agent created by God, has been created bad, as the Author says it himself after Moses; that means that this change from good to bad has been dependent on providence. Now is it not natural and inevitable, to think about this change from good to bad? And will there be only Manicheans who will stumble here against the doctrines of Scripture; nor even only Manicheans so wise and so moderate, that they will stop at first, at our word, on the limits that we will have marked for them? Is it not also necessary to convince or instruct, those who by malice or by infirmity, envisaging things more distinctly than our moderation would wish, will make, offensive objections against God or against his providence, by considering that this change from good to bad, which has happened to these sinning agents, has therefore also of necessity been dependent on providence?

For, they will say, God could prevent it and foresee it, or he could not. If he has foreseen it and that he was in power to prevent it without doing it, he is the author of it directly, or at the very least indirectly, to speak very moderately. And if he could not prevent it, he is not all powerful. Or if he has not foreseen it before it happened, he is not all perfect. He cannot even, in favor of this imperfection, avoid being said the indirect author of it. It was up to him, they will say, to know the outcome of the things that he undertook, to respond for the consequences that could happen from them, and to take his measures so well, that these consequences could only be happy from them, or to leave there this undertaking; or else finally, it is up to him to suffer that one says, that either by powerlessness to do better, or voluntarily, he is the indirect and mediate author of it; which is horrible, and destructive either of his

power, or of his holiness and of his justice, or of his sovereign goodness, and in general of his sovereign perfection.

And will it be necessary to permit those who will reason thus, by founding themselves on what the Author of the objections has just admitted, to murmur and to blaspheme with impunity against God, and against his holy word, without daring to open the mouth, for fear of going further than he prescribes to us here? One will therefore be criminal, according to him, although one closes the mouth to this insolence by invincible reasonings, and although one justifies the conduct of God, and his sovereign perfection in all respects; because to do it, one will have gone back (by neglecting the non plus ultra, that the Author believes alone reasonable) beyond this change from good to bad, of these agents become sinners? And that notwithstanding that one has been forced to it by these murmurers, and even by a hundred passages of Scripture, which lead us to it manifestly?

To that the Author of the objections will respond perhaps, by the words of Solomon. Prov. 26:4. Do not answer the fool according to his folly, lest you be made similar to him. But I will reply to him by the following verse. Answer the fool according to his folly, lest he esteem himself to be wise. How to reconcile these two sentences? Easily. We must not respond to the fool according to his folly, that is to say, by imitating his folly, by acquiescing in it, by approving it, nor even by dissimulating it cowardly, or by acting foolishly oneself, by chicanes, subterfuges, or excesses and fits of anger, unworthy of wise people: but we must respond to his folly, wisely, solidly, seriously and moderately, lest he esteem himself, and boast of being wise: even when he blasphemes against God, against the adorable conduct of his providence, or against his holy word. That shows enough, it seems to me, the innocence and even the wisdom, of those whom the Author condemns here, by condemning himself with them without perceiving it. Let us continue.

§.366. "It is true that God could have, if he had judged it appropriate, made us see the detail of this monstrous generation. But as he had very different and much more consoling things to teach us, he was content to tell us, that all the malignity and the venom of the Demon, comes from his own corruption, without telling us anything more. And indeed the delicious sweetnesses of his grace, and the vivifying lights of his Spirit, are much more agreeable objects; and their extent is immense enough to occupy us entirely."

The first period of my Treatise C. Page 55 of the Collection of Objections and of Responses, that I have published, and the whole present work, are a good proof, that I am not of the number of those to whom one gives here lessons, or to whom one makes reproaches. Let us pass on.

§.367. "But the Supralapsarians want a system which satisfies their curiosity, and where this curiosity can at its pleasure take flight. And that is why they rise above the first fall of men, and even of the first corruption of the Demons: to from there, as from the summit of a high mountain, be able to contemplate the designs of God,

in the formation of his creatures; the order of his adorable Decrees, and the routes of his incomprehensible providence; without thinking that God does not call us to so much curiosity, and that keeping his Decrees to himself, he has given us his law for study and for share."

In truth the Author of the objections does not seem to me here, to have much good grace, to declaim and to moralize in this way against the Supralapsarians; we have just seen the reasons for it. For if he wants to render justice to himself, he will admit that he says in effect as much as they do, although perhaps in fewer words. He admits a Principle of evil dependent on providence; from that same he goes back higher than the first corruption of the Demons. The one on whom a Being depends in every sense, for having drawn its existence from him, is anterior to this dependent Being: and much more still, anterior to its actions whatever they may be. May the Author therefore apply to himself all his beautiful lessons so pathetic, so edifying and so devout; for they suit him as much as us. He would not dare to say that this corruption itself of the Demons etc. happened independently of providence, by chance, without the knowledge of God, or despite him; nor we either. That says all, and renders in effect and at bottom, absolutely equal on these matters, all those who come to that. After that there is only bad faith, or a surprising defect of judgment, or at the very least of reflection, which can induce some to exaggerate, and to condemn as blasphemies, the differences which can still be found, between those who have this common thesis.

But moreover, it is that when the Author would say what he and we reject equally, he would not escape the consequence that he reproaches to us with so much eloquence and gravity; as one has just seen in §.365. Let him therefore profit from his corrections, before addressing them to others; for that is pure justice.

To say also that God keeping his Decrees to himself, he has given us only his law for study and for share; it is to not want to be believed, and to speak against ocular proofs. However I will spare myself the trouble of putting here twenty passages before his eyes, which would put in order for him all these Decrees of God, and would convince him by the sight itself, that this all-wise Being has not thus hidden his wisdom from us, and kept all his Decrees to himself, without discovering anything of them to us. It would be to offend the lights of good Christian Readers, who have the holy Bible under their eyes every day. I prefer to prove it to him by a single passage, to have finished sooner. These are the words of St. Paul. Acts 20:27. For I have not held back, from announcing to you all the counsel of God. What use is it therefore to give lessons, founded on maxims that one advances as incontestable, and of which the contrary is before our eyes? Let us continue.

§.368. "At least on their return, should they not bring back to us a dogma which Scripture, which they say they have taken as a guide during their course, has not taught them at all, and which is only the phantom of their eyes dazzled by the brightness of the eternal light, which they had the temerity to regard too fixedly.

Similar to those who after having looked too fixedly at the sun, conserve before their eyes images which appear to them black, and all different from what it is, and from which however they cannot free themselves. Likewise the Supralapsarians, after having regarded too fixedly the incorruptible author of every perfect gift, have before their eyes an image all different from what he is in effect, and where he appears to them the indirect and mediate author, of physical evil and moral evil: which is only an effect of their dazzlement and of their turning of head in a place so elevated. For after having made many turns and returns, they always come back to making God the indirect and mediate Author of these two evils, the physical and the moral; which is so absurd that it is only necessary to propose it to make the absurdity of it felt. Also most honest people, of whatever Religion they may be, cannot digest it, whatever turn and whatever softening one brings to it."

There is a homily which makes me say, that if it were only necessary here to use rhetoric, to declaim and to moralize, the Author of the objections would carry away the piece, against all those who could present themselves before him. But certainly this is not where the knot lies, nor what can decide between us. It would suffice to reason: but to reason justly and solidly. The Author reproaches us with dazzlements and with turnings of head, and his own turns so much in his turn, that he does not see, that following his own hypothesis, he does himself all that he reproaches to others, although the thing is certain and indubitable. He admits a bad Principle, but dependent on the providence of God. That says all that of which he has just accused us, and his dazzlement prevents him from seeing it. But I refer to our §.365. To affirm what he says is nothing else, than after having made many turns and returns, to come back to making God himself, the indirect and mediate author of these two evils, the physical and the moral: which is that same that the Author reproaches to us.

The one who has produced the direct and immediate cause of a certain effect, direct cause that he could destroy at all instants; and who consequently in all its actions, is dependently immediately of this author of its being, as having in him life, movement and Being (for the Principle of evil that the Author has in view, is without doubt the Demon) this first, I say, has he not produced this effect indirectly and mediately? Will the Author still claim to escape here by saying, that notwithstanding these principles that he admits, he does not dare, or he does not want to draw this conclusion? That would certainly be a very vain and very insincere escape, and of which everyone would laugh: and especially the Manicheans to whom the Author claims to make head. For to admit such principles, or to explain the conclusion that it is not necessary to draw, as drawing itself; is it not the same thing? What I say there is incontestable, whatever the Author can understand by the Principle of evil dependent on providence.

After that judge to what can serve the Author of the objections, his alleged restraint with regard to the consequences. By that one can judge that he cannot reproach us, neither temerity nor dazzlement which does not belong to him as to us. And that

finally to be wise and good Christian, it would be necessary simply to humble ourselves, and to defend the rights of God after saint Paul and in imitation of him. And that unless we are given better examples, we are hardly in a state to profit from the censures nor from the corrections of the Author. His example confirms us in the thought, that it is impossible to be Christian, and to avoid at the same time, reproaches as vain and as ill-founded, as are those which are addressed to us here; and which can only come from people to whom the head turns, for having mounted too high, if these people call themselves Christians.

§.369. "Who is it therefore who will have given efficacy to this production? We do not say that it is the bad Principle of the Manicheans, for we deny, that there is a bad Principle; which is such as that which the Manicheans have imagined. Who then? I admit that our weak reason would seem at first to be able to flatter itself, that there is here all the less place for mistake, that the belief in the unity of a Principle does not even appear to give place to choice. Thus turning rashly the eyes on this first Principle, it believes that it cannot suspect any but him. And if it does not dare, because of his adorable holiness, to accuse him of having produced by himself things so horrible, it is at least all ready to say, that they have been produced under his direction. Deplorable blindness of a reason almost blinded, but however proud and bold, which using badly the little light which remains to it from the debris of its ancient splendor, regards as an evident consequence, drawn by a regular argument, a proposition of which its inner feeling reproaches it with the absurdity! Similar to the light of lightning, it appears to it very clear and very brilliant this consequence, but in effect it dazzles it, and gives it at least place to fear to reason falsely, in the time even that it would imagine to reason, the most consequently, which ought to oblige it to keep itself religiously on its guards, the vivid sentiment of the absurdity would finish determining it to reject it, as a deceptive and illusory consequence, such as it is in effect."

This is here, I admit, a true clarification of a place that I had not understood in that sense. In the first objections, as one can see in §.349. the Author had first admitted very clearly, as it seemed to me, that the consequence drawn from the unity of a single Principle, which attributes indirectly to God the production of the monsters of which he spoke, was very clear and very vivid; which I took for, very true; but now by a very adroit and very pathetic homily, he teaches us that he does not claim to attribute this conclusion, except to the stunned behavior and to the turning of head of the Supralapsarians. But in exchange also he puts himself here party with them, by another place, and takes his part in their dazzlement and in their temerity, if it is one, as I have shown in §.365. Which of the two is better?

For by assuring that there is one, or several bad Principles, which produce evil; but Principles however which are entirely dependent on God and on his providence, he has in that same drawn the rash consequence, if one believes him, against which he declaims here with so much zeal, so much devotion and so much eloquence. Does that not prove well that our system is solid and irreproachable, since the most skilled

wanting to combat it with heat, establish it by combating it? Besides the monstrousness which frighten him, do not regard at all the conduct of God, which remains holy and irreproachable: but only the bad Principles dependent on him, which the Author admits. One can still see what I have said on that, in §.348, 349. and 355. and which is capable, in my opinion, of making vanish these monsters which rear up so much before him, before any person who has nothing else in view, than to see the truth and to glorify God according to his word; at least if one considers them insofar as their production could be attributed to God.

§.370. "But, you will say, the glory of God must be preferred to all, and when the whole Universe should perish, it must however that he be glorified. To that I respond, that if in effect God had created the Universe in a manner so contradictory, that it could not be glorified except by its destruction, the consequence would be just. But far from it, on the contrary, his wisdom has so accompanied his power in the creation of the Universe, that all there manifests his glory by manifesting that he is the author of it; also he conserves it, and by this conservation he shows that he loves it, and consequently that it is his work. From which, by the reason of contraries, I draw this consequence; It is that from the very fact that God abhors and detests the monsters of which there is question, it must follow necessarily that he has had no part in their production."

This article is almost the same word for word, as the one to which I have responded in §.352. It is nevertheless a little changed and fixed up; the Author has removed something from it, supplemented something else etc. to try to escape from the force of my responses: but in vain. For I respond presently to this article thus reformed, what follows.

Firstly, the Author concludes that God loves a thing from the fact that he conserves it; however God conserves the, or the bad Principles that he admits as dependent on his providence: for they will exist always and he could annihilate them. See what consequence, and compare it with what Scripture and right reason tell us: that God holds in abomination the man of blood and the sinner. And by the reason of contraries the Author of the objections concludes also, that from the very fact that God abhors and detests these monsters, it must follow necessarily that he has had no part in their production. And however he makes them dependent on his providence: which signifies at the very least, that their existence itself is dependent on his providence; so that they could not have been produced unless he well wanted it etc. See so as not to repeat, what we have said in §.365. and 367.

Besides all that I ask: Is it a thing more contrary to the idea of the all-perfect Being, to contribute indirectly to the production of evil for which he has a perfect hatred insofar as such, than to conserve in being these objects of his perfect hatred, since they exist, although he could annihilate them if such were his good pleasure? Let one bring to it a serious and applied attention, and I am sure that no one will say it, without doing violence to the truth. However the latter is real and incontestable by

experience, among all those who are not true atheists. Therefore the first is not impossible either, and can also be admitted, if it is important for the glory of this supreme and all-perfect Being, that this hatred appears really and in effect, that it shines forth and that it is celebrated.

I admit therefore that these two contraries, prove equally well the things that the Author of the objections deduces from them, that is to say, not at all. For as it does not follow that God loves the Demons from the fact that he conserves them; it does not follow either from the fact that he abhors and detests them; either them, or such Principle of evil existing before our eyes that one will want to suppose, that he has had no part in their production. This is a labyrinth from which the Author of the objections will never extricate himself, by the path that he takes; and from which neither he nor any other will ever extricate himself either, by any other way than by the one that I have indicated in my Treatise C. in §.63. and also in the present work in §.188. and 189. In this last place there are several examples, in imitation of which one could imagine still several others, which would explain very well this great difficulty; but the great number is not necessary, it suffices to have explained it well. Let us continue.

§.371. "But, says the Author of Treatise C. these monsters existing, there is a Principle of their existence. Now this Principle can only be dependent or independent of God. We will not say that it is independent, for that would be to give the victory to, or to authorize the blasphemy of the Manicheans; it remains therefore that it is dependent. That is true, and also it is not thereupon that I dispute, on the contrary, it is there one of the things for which I have praised the Author of treatise C. at the beginning of my Writing, for having proved the truth. That to which I find fault, it is the consequence that he draws from it next. The Principle of the evils of which there is question is dependent on God; therefore God himself, he says, has given efficacy to their production. It is this consequence that I find false and absurd, although it has the appearance of being well drawn."

The exact conclusion that the malevolent exaggerate here, that they draw in as offensive terms as they can, and which is however admitted at the very least by St. Paul, and next also by all true Christians; and even which will be (except for the offensive terms) by all persons who will not want, deliberately, to renounce good sense or good faith; this conclusion, I say, is: Therefore God himself has given indirectly and mediately, efficacy to their production. And this conclusion does not even merit being called a consequence; it is only the explanation of the principle that the Author of the objections admits, which is; that the Principle of evil, both physical and moral, is dependent on God. Namely, either by creation, or by voluntary permission, by conservation, by direction, and omni mode; and that he has decreed beforehand to permit that it existed for his glory, or in general for reasons worthy of being followed by the supreme and sovereignly perfect Being.

For it is only of that that the Author of the objections praises me at the beginning of his Writing; namely, of what I have said and well sustained, that God has done all for his glory. It is true that I have not reported the words that he says from the beginning to my advantage, because I did not foresee that that should enter into a reasoning, and that is not what I seek; nor thing also of which the Public has need to be informed. But he wants to pay us here with a play on words, and claims to escape from enemies, as good Logicians, as subtle and as vigorous, as are the Manicheans, or as was Bayle their Advocate, proposition, on condition that it is expressed by the same words that he has chosen; which however, although the same really and in fact, it pleases him to detest and to reject, if one expresses it by other terms than those same of which he has made choice. Is it therefore words with which one embarrasses oneself in the deduction of the matters, or is it thoughts? For me I believe that that cannot be well received by anyone. It will not be by subtleties so thin and so volatile, that one will defend solidly the cause of God.

§.372. "Thus let us stop here to examine if the Author of treatise C. could not, and if he should not have prevented himself from drawing this consequence. And already did he not see that in drawing it, he is the dupe of the deceptive and dazzling arguments of Mr. Bayle: and that of two dangerous consequences of which he has left the choice, and which it was necessary to avoid equally, he has given into one; perhaps because people of a singular piety, had formerly given into a similar trap."

Oh! no I assure you Sir! I would willingly say to the Author of the objections, I can well affirm that it is not this poor principle which has determined me, which is only apt to lead geese, and not people who have common sense and a sincere piety, if one has regard only to it. The liberty that I have taken to contradict Great men, and men of great piety as much as there have been among men of letters, justifies me enough from such a great silliness. But that comes uniquely from the fact that I do not have the talent of being able to pay myself with words, and that I need things to stop me; and from the fact that I would believe to do wrong to the cause of God, which is good, just and holy, I am sure of it, if I defended it by as vain subterfuges, as are abstract words that one has deprived of their sense and of their intelligence. I would be afraid in doing that, of entering into a path where never a simple soul, Christian, of good faith and of good sense at the same time, would have wanted to follow me; and where much less consequently, it would have entered by itself. However the sure routes in Religion, must have this character, of not being inaccessible to the persons that I have just described.

§.373. "This Mr. Bayle pleased himself sometimes in reducing his Readers, to the choice between two consequences equally false; but which he had the skill to make appear inevitable. He says in one place: God has not prevented the introduction of evil into the world, except because he could not, or because he did not want to, if he could not he lacks power, and if he did not want to he lacks goodness. Whichever of these two consequences one chooses, it will be a blasphemy of which one will have made choice."

I know that, the Author of the objections does not ignore it; and I have extricated myself from it with the help of God, to whom be all the glory, to the contentment and to the satisfaction of good people.

§.374. "And likewise here; The principle of evil is dependent or independent of God; if it is independent, God is not the sole and unique Sovereign of all things; if it is dependent, God is therefore himself the mediate and indirect author of evil. Choose between these two consequences the one that you will want to, and give to the one that you will have chosen, such turn as will please you; it will always be an absurd proposition of which you will have made choice. When the consequence of an argument is false and absurd, the absurdity and the falsity alone are sufficient to make it rejected, and to regard the argument to which it belongs, as a sophism, however apparent and however dazzling it may be. It is true that ordinarily it is good to make seen, in what the argument varies from the Rules. But even if I would not have enough skill for that, with regard to the one of which there is question now; it seems to me much less shameful to recognize my weakness, than to receive the error that one would want to inculcate in me. But thanks to God, we are not reduced to that; between these two extreme and absurd consequences, there is a middle to take; which is however not that of neutrality nor of uncertainty, as one supposes in what has been responded to me; but which is to assure, that there are in the adorable wisdom of God, means which exempt him totally, from having part in the evils which are however not committed outside of his dependence. And indeed I ask the Supralapsarians, who believe that one cannot escape the Manicheans without taking the alternative, if after having meditated on all the routes of providence, and on the means which are in its omnipotence to arrive at its ends, they believe to have enough well gone to the depths of them and gone through them, to be able to say, that it has none for this effect? It is true that if God had judged it appropriate to discover to us these means, we would be more learned than we are; and that we would be thereby capable of fabricating a system which would have no difficulty; but since he has not judged it appropriate, it is for us to submit ourselves without murmuring, and to adore his providence, which is incomprehensible to us, only because it must be such to us."

This is finally touching the goal; and this is assuredly all that it is possible to advance of most plausible and of most apparent, to oppose oneself to the method that I have followed, with the design of overthrowing Manichaeism. And if I were ever capable of doubting, if in that I have taken the right path or not, it is this piece which could inspire this doubt in me. But when I meditate on the whole seriously and in the fear of God, and that I see that it is not only a question here of satisfying reason, (which I would neglect easily enough if Scripture obliged me to it, by rejecting the proposed alternative as does the Author of the objections) but that it is a question at the same time, of satisfying a hundred passages of Scripture, which accept without detour and without ceremony this alternative, and which make the choice that I have made;

that removes from me all fear of having failed in this place, and obliges me in conscience to defend my choice, both by reason and by Scripture.

Firstly therefore by reason. I see from the outset that the expedient that the Author of the objections has imagined, although it strikes at first under the idea of a great restraint, and of a humility apparently very wise, because of the terms that the Author chooses here excellently well; it merits however a completely contrary name, when one envisages it closely. For it is at bottom only a disobedience and a resistance to God and to his holy word, founded uniquely on our particular taste, without other support. That by taking care of all, it does not heal from any evil and serves absolutely for nothing. And finally that this denouement being admitted, and received as good, just and reasonable, it proves too much, and consequently it proves nothing.

The Author claims also that this expedient is not the neutrality that I have reproached him with. No, but it is the defense and the apology for it. In his first Writing, as one can see above in §.344, 348. and 353 he has clearly established this neutrality, which I have shown to be contrary both to Christianity, and to the state of the true faithful before God: And here he defends this neutrality and gives us the apology for it. Is that not always letting subsist this same neutrality? If this neutrality is not good, as the Author seems to admit it by trying to defend himself from it here, is its apology worth any better? For at bottom, the neutrality that I have reproached him with only regards the two members of the proposed alternative, which he rejects both, here as there: Therefore this neutrality subsists. There for the first.

After that I say, that if one reflects maturely on the whole, and that one acts in good faith, as I have done above in §.243. and 346. and without employing subtleties of which the common of the faithful is as incapable, as it is incapable of flying in the clouds; one will recognize that the consequence that the Author rejects, is so little different from the principle that he admits, that to separate these two things, it would be necessary to employ the same means, as to separate the conclusion from the principle in the argument that follows.

Such a one, Cain for example, has killed a man, purely by hatred and by vengeance, without being clothed with any authority; Therefore Cain is homicidal and murderer. Or again this one. Moses for example, is so charitable and so pacific, that he never gets angry for having been offended in his own interests; but he pardons the injuries that one does to him without any difficulty, and with an incredible facility; Therefore Moses is meek, as our Savior orders to be.

I ask if there are means that one can suppose to be in the wisdom of God, which could keep these things separated and independent the one from the other? Or that if there is a law which orders to make die irremissibly, murderers and homicides, the wisdom of God could make nevertheless, that this Cain would escape from it, without offending this law? Or if there were a promise which assigns some praise or some reward, to the meek who would obey the precept of J. Christ, the wisdom of

God could make nevertheless that this Moses would be deprived of it, without wounding this promise? No without doubt. For if that were, this wisdom would consist in knowing how to find means, which would make that a thing was and was not at the same time. Means of being able to lie and to contradict itself, which the wisdom of God cannot do, neither according to Scripture nor according to right reason.

Nevertheless if one gives me good reasons, which prove that one can affirm legitimately, that God could make it so, that this conclusion, Cain is homicidal, would be false, absurd and badly drawn, although it is true that Cain has killed a man etc. I will admit also that the restraint of the Author of the objections and his moderation, is wise and very appropriate. But if one absolutely cannot the latter, I admit that it is impossible for me to see that one can the former. And as I presume strongly that most will be in that of my sentiment, according to how I see spirits disposed elsewhere, this expedient would be useless and without effect.

Finally I say, that if this expedient were admitted, admitted and received as good, solid and reasonable, there is no contradiction so silly nor so palpable, nor reverie so ill-founded that one could not sustain by this way, as solidly as one sustains here by its means, the thesis that one has in view. And thus this principle proving too much, it proves nothing. Let us see that.

The thesis that this expedient inculcates in us and that it wants us to admit by humility before God, is that between the two extreme and absurd consequences, according to the Author, which make the proposed alternative, which is drawn from the real existence of evil which is before our eyes, and which has of necessity a Principle which is dependent on God, or independent; and which concludes from the one, that God would be in a certain sense, the mediate and indirect author of evil; and from the other that he would not be all powerful, and that he is not the sole and unique Sovereign of all things, there is a middle to take.

This middle is to assure, that although he is the sole and unique Principle of all things, and that nothing subsists except by him, and that dependently on him and on his will, as well the Principle of evil as any other thing; there are nevertheless in the adorable wisdom of God, means which exempt him totally, from having part in the evils which are however not committed outside of his dependence: so that notwithstanding that, it remains very false to say in whatever sense it may be, that he is the author of the production of this evil, neither directly nor indirectly, nor mediately nor immediately.

There is the thesis that it is necessary, to admit, according to the Author of the objections, and which (which it is necessary to note very well, and to note with great care) is proved neither by Scripture, nor by reason, nor by the senses or experience in any way. And to oblige us to admit it, one asks us for all reason, if after having meditated on all the routes of providence, and on all the means which are in its

omnipotence to arrive at its ends, we believe to have enough well gone to the depths of them and gone through them, to be able to say that it has none for this effect?

If the two things of which the union is incomprehensible to us, and that we believe incompatible, were proved each separately, by invincible and incontestable proofs, drawn above all from the word of God, or at least from right reason and from visible and incontestable experience, or even from all that together, in a manner so vivid and so strong that these proofs were thereby above all exception; I admit that the reason for acquiescing to it that we have just seen, would be just and reasonable, and very well applied. All true Christians use it in such a case, I use it myself in this work in §.62. and I sustain it everywhere.

But to propose to us theses manifestly contradictory, or incompatible together according to right reason, of which one of the two is sustained only by our own and particular taste; and by our prejudice, without absolutely any other reason; to sustain next the compatibility and the indissoluble union as real; by this sole principle, that we do not know all the routes of providence, and all the means which are in its omnipotence to arrive at its ends; it is to open a large gate to advance, and to sustain all that one will want to imagine. There is no abyss so profound in disputes, nor labyrinth so intricate, from which the one who is wrong could not extricate himself at this price.

It seems to me therefore that Christianity would be in a poor state, if it could only extricate itself from the claws of Manichaeism by this way. Those who say without any proof which has the least solidity as do the Papists, for example, that the body of Christ is in a hundred thousand separate and distinct places at once, as big and as large as it was on the tree of the cross; and even that it is found thus in a crumb of bread, which is not bigger than a mite; and that it is however only a single and same body, similar to ours in all things except sin: have only to respond like the Author of the objections, to those who will object to the contradictions or the incompatibilities which are found in this pretension. For these people will assure them that there are in the adorable wisdom of God, routes and means which are unknown to us to execute these things, without there being any lie. They will also ask us, with confidence, if after having meditated on all the routes of providence etc. we believe to have enough gone to the depths of them and gone through them, to be able to say that it has none for this effect. Will their proof not be thereby, rendered as solid as that of the Author? One cannot doubt it. Thus there is a general way to sustain all that one will want to, however little founded and however contradictory it may be. This is what shows the defect that I have said is found in this new expedient. It is that it can serve for nothing, because it serves for everything, to sustain the lie as to defend the truth.

To see now to which side Scripture leans that will find better its place below.

§.375. "But, says the Author of Treatise C. if these monsters had not been produced, the hatred and the horror that God has for them, would not have been manifested.

But it is by precipitating them into the frightful abysses where he has relegated them, and by overwhelming them under the weight of the chains which hold their rage in check, that he has manifested them this hatred and this horror; and not, as the said Author supposes it, by giving efficacy to their production. For everyone will agree, that to give in whatever way it may be, efficacy to the production of a thing, proves nothing less than having it in horror."

But the Author of the objections should perceive that, according to me, God does not give more efficacy to this production, than according to him: nor even in another manner than according to him. All the difference is that I am uniform, and ingenuous enough to admit in words what I admit in effect. Instead of which he, by contradicting himself, says the yes and the no on the same subject, and in the same regard. But that is not apt to do honor to Christianity, presenting itself before Manichaeism to make head to it.

At bottom, is the exception of the Author very solid? I have said, it is true, that if these monsters had not been produced, the hatred and the horror that God has for them, could not have been manifested. To that the Author replies, that it is by precipitating them into the abysses etc. that God has manifested this hatred. Very well. But could God have well manifested this hatred by precipitating them thus, if they had not been produced? This is to which the Author will respond what he will find appropriate, for that is the question. But, he adds, it is not, as the Author of treatise C. supposes, by giving efficacy to their production that he manifests this hatred.

The Author does me wrong by saying that, for it is what I have never done, and I challenge all the earth to convince me of it. I have only supposed, that to permit this production, or to give it efficacy, if one wants to, in the wisest manner that one will be able to imagine, was a necessary preliminary, to be able next to manifest this just hatred, in the manner that the Author of the objections says himself, that God does it, which is what no one can deny.

Finally, says the Author, everyone will agree, that to give in whatever way it may be, efficacy to the production of a thing, does not prove at all having it in horror. I agree with it, and also I have never said it. But that could well prove, if in effect it becomes in the sequel the object of a just hatred; and others the object of a love of complacency, that it was necessary that these things existed: and consequently that it was necessary that someone gave efficacy to their production, to be able to be loved or hated, according as they would persevere in good, or as they would abandon themselves to evil: which is all that I have supposed.

And to respond to the horror, which one glimpses enough that the Author wants to object to me by these words, I would very much like to ask him, if from the fact that a man searches with eagerness the means, to have a gangrened limb cut for himself, one can conclude legitimately from it, that he loves very much the amputation of his

limbs? For me I do not believe it, nor without doubt many others either. Let him apply this to our subject, and the phantom which dazzles him will vanish.

§.376. After that the Author of the objections makes follow perfectly, the same things which were already in his first Writing, and which one has seen above in §.355, and 356. But I have responded very punctually to all that in that place there. It pleases him however to have had little or no regard for it, and I believe that he could with justice. If nevertheless he has had some regard for it, one remarks it only by some inflection of words, or new phrases that I am going to consider, and which give no new force to his cause, nor weaken mine at all. For example, he says here.

"It is true indeed, that God does not do things which imply contradiction; but it is not that for these things, his omnipotence is in some sort limited, as supposes the response that has been made to me, it is because he does not want to deploy it to produce things unworthy of him, and which repugn to his nature."

Very well. But is it not doing me wrong to advance, that I have had another thought than the one that is expressed here? Is there a sincere man in the world who by reading my works, or my response to the first Writing, could doubt that my thought in this regard, is not that same one that one sees expressed by these last words of the Author? I do not believe it in truth? He does me wrong, therefore, once again, and to the truth also, to lend me other thoughts. And for the terms of which I have used, one has nothing to reproach me with, since they are those of Scripture, which says without ceremony, That God cannot lie, that he cannot deny himself Tit. 1:2. 2 Tim. 2:13. Heb. 6:18.

But, says the Author of the objections, as he had already said before. "It is by this same reason that I conclude, that he has not given efficacy to the production of the monsters of which there is question, since the one repugns to his holiness, and the other to his sovereign goodness."

I have already shown to the Author, that there is nothing true in this accusation; or that if there were something which would seem to repugn to the one or to the other of these virtues, it would be only in the same manner that he himself has just explained the terms of Scripture, which say, that God cannot lie; which limit in some manner his power, by his veracity. That says all.

§.377. I jump, besides, over several articles, which do not seem to me to merit occupying the Public, and which would seem to feel personal, with which the Public has nothing to do with being embarrassed. I put therefore only what I believe instructive, and can serve for the clarification of the matter: which seems to me more Christian. Here is how he continues a little further.

"But at present, says the Author of Treatise C, what good are so many Objections against a system that God has himself revealed? St. Paul had made to himself all these objections, and he has rejected them with indignation. This Author says there two things of which I do not agree: That God has himself revealed this System, at

least in all that it contains: And that the objections that I make here, are the same that St. Paul has rejected. Already with regard to the objections, they have nothing similar, either in the things themselves, or in the manner of expressing them. It is only necessary to read the ones and the others to agree on it. Those of which St. Paul speaks contain only murmurs against providence, to which mine are all the less opposed, that they are as many arguments which prove that there is no occasion to murmur. Thus I could not take the bait on this point there."

We will see further the force of the terms of Scripture, but in the meantime one can say, that if it were indeed true that the Author of the objections had imagined and fabricated a system, where in effect there was no occasion to murmur; it would follow invincibly from there itself, that it is not that of St. Paul, who recognized perfectly that his gave much occasion for it. And on that this new system will be rejected with justice, by all wise and Christian people, who will make more of the Spirit which led St. Paul, than of all the speculations and of all the arrangements of the Author, and of his capacity although very exquisite and very rare. But it is not good here to want to be wiser than one's Master, one gains nothing from it except to be rejected with horror: It is necessary to be wise to sobriety; that is to say, wise rather by docility, which submits without resistance to the lessons of a Doctor whom one recognizes to be infallible and Divine; than by new productions, drawn from the force of our own genius.

§.378. "With regard to the system, if I had the intention of engaging myself in the discussion of the matter, I could show manifestly, that it is nothing less than revealed. But not wanting to undertake it, I have been content to show, that it contains an absurd thing. Which is indeed a sufficient proof, that God has not revealed it."

It is easier for the Author of the objections to say what he says there, than to execute that of which he boasts. For me I will never believe anyone on his word, with regard to this point there, however skilled he may be, and whatever penetration he may have. I am even very persuaded that the Author will never do it, and that he could not do it, nor him nor another, and I challenge all the earth to it. I would hope a thousand times rather on his part, the solution of the Problem of Longitudes or of the quadrature of the Circle, if he wanted to undertake it, than the solution of this one, which is impossible to him purely and simply, I am sure of it. Finally I believe to have given, and to be able to give proofs of this system by Scripture, that neither he nor anyone will ever overthrow.

As for the alleged absurdity, that the Author of the objections believes so horrible and so frightful, that it alone is capable of overthrowing this system, it is certainly a poor proof. It would be necessary to know very little the heart of corrupted man, his short-sighted spirit, and the antipathy of his alleged wisdom with that of God, to put Religion or one of its principal dogmas, in compromise on this foundation there. The cross of Christ which is the foundation of Christianity, was a scandal to the Jews and

folly to the Greeks; that is to say, absurdity itself to the best instructed, to the most polished, to the most skilled and to the wisest among men; and even with reason, if one wants to consult purely human wisdom, which is folly before God. The Mysteries of the Incarnation, of the most holy and adorable Trinity, of Original sin etc. as well as the cross of Christ, are still today the butt of this presumptuous reason; about which true Christians hardly worry, or rather, they do not worry about it at all. Thus this alleged proof of the falsity of our system, which is that of the Author himself, although he maltreats it so much (proof which is drawn, only from a premature repugnance of the flesh, and without other foundation than its fantasy) helps rather to give me a good opinion of it, seeing it founded on Scripture, than to make me doubt it the least.

§.379. "However I will be pleased to go through lightly the principal passages, where the Author of Treatise C, claims that he has done it, to see what there is of it. I begin with the comparison of the potter. The potter says St. Paul, can he not from the same mass, make vessels for honor and others for dishonor? What does that do for the Supralapsarians? Nothing at all, For everyone agrees, that as the potter can make pots of diverse species, and even of diverse excellence, without the most abject being able to complain of the fact that he has made them less than the others: Likewise, God can make, and even he actually makes, creatures of diverse species, and even men of diverse excellence in a thousand respects, without the most abject, in whatever respect it may be, being able to complain of the fact that they are not as much as the others. For it is necessary to be marvelously biased and infatuated by Supralapsarianism, to be able to imagine, that a vessel for dishonor, is in effect a bad vessel."

It is here finally, that it is therefore necessary to see to whom Scripture will be favorable. But for this purpose let us act roundly, and in the way that all honest people do, when they try sincerely and in good faith, to discover what is the true sense of an Author certainly wise and of good judgment. This is done, as everyone knows, by not simply taking a detached piece here, another there, and by examining after what could be the sense of such a piece, if it were thus dismembered and sequestered from what accompanies it. But it is by examining what precedes and what follows, and by considering what rank each such piece holds on the scene, and for what design it has been placed there: and finally what virtue and what emphasis it gives to the whole body.

Thus we will not examine here this comparison of the potter, alone and in abstracto, by running rapidly over it as over fire, for fear of being burned by it, as does the Author of the objections: wanting only, as he says, to go through lightly the principal passages that we allege. No certainly, if we examine this comparison, it is necessary to do it exactly as is just, by joining to it all its appurtenances and dependencies, as they say. It is here properly that it is necessary not to use wrapped up expressions, and that it is necessary to speak with an open mouth and without feigning anything; since it is only a question of discovering the true sense of an Author, whom we all

profess to believe infallible in this place, as being inspired by God immediately and supernaturally. We must not be afraid of stumbling, by seeking only the true sense of such an Author, or by following him punctually and exactly.

For this purpose, it is therefore necessary to examine with this comparison, the occasion which has produced it, and what follows it and which has relation to it. There is no man of good sense who could say that I am wrong in that. Now if we acted thus, we would find that it is necessary to begin here at verse 11 of chap. IX. to the Romans: There where it is said: Before the children were born, and that they had done neither good nor evil, so that the fixed purpose according to the election of God would remain, not by works, but by the one who calls, it was said to him, the greater will serve the lesser, as it is written, I have loved Jacob, and I have hated Esau.

It is this piece and what follows, which is on the same tone until verse 18 inclusively, which shows clear as day, that God, even from before creation, has decreed and resolved in his eternal and adorable Counsel, to what use he would employ each of the men that he had design to create; either to illustrate and glorify in him and by him, his infinite mercy, that is to say, his transcendent goodness, or his justice, his hatred and his irreproachable severity against sin. Now this is very precisely, what is ordinarily understood by supralapsarianism.

Now this doctrine making at first arise in our mind this thought; not that God has created and made man wicked, to which the Author attaches himself inappropriately, since no one supposes it, and Scripture says the contrary; but indeed, that God has therefore presided positively over the fall of man; that this fall is submitted to his Decrees; that it depends on them, the same as the raising which happens to several; and in a word, that sin and all the evil which has entered the world, has thus the air only of a means in his adorable hand, or at the very least, of a condition, without which he could not arrive at ends that he has proposed to himself since eternity, and which were indispensable to exempt himself from great defects and irregularities which would destroy in him the sovereign perfection: it is that which is particularly and precisely, the thing that the Author names Supralapsarianism in a sense which is particular to him.

For this Supralapsarianism here, is a very natural and necessary consequence of the first, as our mind notices at first. And reciprocally this one necessarily induces the first, as one can see above in §.145. and 178. There where Mr. La Placette, proves it himself against himself, as I have made felt there. And although the Particularist Infralapsarians, and even the Universalists admit this second Supralapsarianism, as I have convinced Mr. Du Moulin and all the others, without them wanting to admit the first, they are however necessarily obliged to it by their own doctrine; one can see it in the two § that I have just cited. But nevertheless without contradiction, the first cannot be admitted without establishing the second.

Now it is this second, or this derived supralapsarianism, which our mind notices at first to be inseparable from the first; which shines like the sun, so to speak, in the preceding words of the Apostle, which produces insensibly and as inevitably in the mind of men, little friends of the glory of God, the objection or the murmur that the Apostle objects to himself in verse 19 with so much wisdom; since it was so necessary that he did it, to teach us on behalf of God, what we must think of an objection so offensive against his adorable Majesty, and which arises however so easily in the mind of almost all men, on the occasion of this second Supralapsarianism that the Author combats: and which also on the other hand, can only arise in the mind of anyone from that alone. Here it is. Now you will say to me, why does he still complain; for who is he who can resist his will?

There perfectly is the dominant objection of our Author, which arises immediately and as infallibly, from the Supralapsarianism that he rejects with indignation and horror, and which makes nearly the unique subject of all his Writing. But here is how he proposes it in few words, as we have seen above in §.341. and 368.

"For after a great circle of reasoning, Supralapsarianism always comes back to attributing indirectly to God, the production of these evils, the physical and the moral; and it is this that honest people have a lot of trouble digesting, whatever softening one brings to it."

There are his words, and he will recognize himself by that, I am sure, in the society of the murmurers whose audacity St. Paul represses. The first speak more or less thus: If all things depend so much on providence, and on the power of God that nothing happens without his will; so that all events, and that of sin itself, are only like means or like necessary conditions in his hand, to arrive at ends that he has proposed to himself beforehand; why does he punish it therefore? For who is it who can resist his providence and his power?

And the Author of the objections speaks as if he said: If one says that all things without any exception, depend on the providence and on the power of God, in a sense that one can induce from it, that evil itself both moral and physical, cannot happen without him giving efficacy to its production, at least indirectly; it is this that I cannot digest, whatever softening one brings to it. Is that very different from the first? Is it not on both sides to resist, and not to be able to suffer the Supralapsarianism that I have named derived, or the Second? Which is however admitted and professed by all those who merit the name of Christians, when they treat the matter with cool sense and under another idea: as I have convinced Mr. Du Moulin, Mr. La Placette, and even the late Mr. Jaquelot, and all the others, for whom I speak here. These resistances are therefore not the same in manner, I grant it easily; but they are the same in the thing itself, which is alone important.

Now how does St. Paul instruct us to extricate ourselves from this objection? Does he teach us to reject the Principle which founds it, and which gives rise to it? No. But by letting this Principle subsist, he represses the audacity of these objections,

by using then the comparison of the potter. But rather, O man! who are you, you who contest against God? Will the thing formed say to the one who has formed it, why have you made me thus? Pay attention to these last words, they object by grumbling, like our Author, the Supralapsarianism that he rejects; and here is the means of defending it, of sustaining it and of straightening those who murmur in this way. Does not the potter of earth have the power to make from the same mass, a vessel for honor, and another for dishonor? And what if God, wanting to show his ire, and to make known his power, has tolerated in great patience the vessels of ire prepared for perdition; and to make known the riches of his glory, in the vessels of mercy, which he has prepared for glory etc. Now is there anything more natural in the world than this deduction, and will I be accused of twisting or of doing violence to anything in all that? In truth I do not believe it. At least it is quite sure, that one cannot do it with justice.

From there however it is manifest, by the use that the Apostle makes of this comparison of the potter, that by these words: vessels for dishonor, he does not understand, as our Author would like it, simply vessels which have received less excellence than others; but indeed vessels which have been destined to shameful and miserable uses, but necessary or advantageous to the one who employs them, from before they were formed, and when they were still only shapeless clay; which otherwise he names in the following verse: vessels of anger prepared for perdition. Which does not suppose, as God has taught us in his holy word, that God has made them wicked; but indeed, that they would become it unfailingly, in a manner, as for them, very criminal and inexcusable, dependently on the providence of God; manner finally which, as for the work of God, is holy, pure and irreproachable, as also it must be; but which removes nothing from the atrocity of the crime of those who have offended and despised him.

But the Author, how does he extricate himself from the proposed objection, which is the Supralapsarianism understood in his way, and which I have named derived, or second? Does he do it like the Apostle? No. St. Paul lets it subsist, but he rejects it with indignation; and claims to prove at the same time consequently, that there is not even occasion in Christian doctrine, for this murmur that St. Paul has objected to himself, as one can see in the preceding §. He is therefore more skilled than this Apostle. And I do not want to be it. He has therefore another doctrine than his. And I do not want any other. Let every good Christian judge between us who is right.

Let every wise and docile Reader in the School of God, and desiring uniquely to perceive the true sense and the intention of the Holy Apostle, reflect now on the explanation that our Author gives of the comparison of the potter; and let him judge if it is as sincere, as full, as little forced and as suitable to the text of the Apostle as ours; I am willing to have lost my cause if being such, he judges thus. The Author sequesters it from all that accompanies it, from what precedes it, from what follows it, and finally from the occasion which has given rise to it; then he gives it a warped and diverted sense, which would prevent it from being able to serve reasonably for

the use, to which the Apostle employs it, if it were admitted. After that he concludes, that the Supralapsarianism that he has in view does not appear there, and that it is necessary to be marvelously biased in its favor, and to be well infatuated with it, to be able to imagine that a vessel for dishonor, is in effect a bad vessel. I will leave to the Reader to judge if that is reasoning solidly, and acting as is necessary. Let us follow the Author.

S. 380. "God has made everything for His glory, and even the wicked for the day of calamity. What do the Supralapsarians believe they find therein in their favor? Do they want to suggest that God made man wicked? But this would be to truncate the passage, and give it a meaning opposed to what Scripture says throughout elsewhere; and even to article 9 of our confession of faith. This passage therefore means, that God has so made all things for His glory, that even the calamity with which He punishes the crimes of the wicked redounds to it; or what is the same thing, that the wicked will have calamity as their portion."

It is entirely evident that no one has ever used the present passage to directly prove the Supralapsarianism that the Author combats. All Christians admit that God created man upright, just and holy; and even the Demons. Therefore there is no reason to reproach them with a fault they have not committed. But this passage proves very well the true ordinary Supralapsarianism, the definition of which I have made clear in the preceding section, and of which that which the Author has in view (though well explained however) being a legitimate consequence, but necessary, manifest and sensible; someone could well use this passage to prove indirectly this derived Supralapsarianism, which the Author himself admits without acknowledging it. That is to say; That God from all time, or rather before time, has decreed the number and persons who would serve as examples of His justice and severity: and consequently, that although God created man immediately upright, just and holy; the Principle of evil however, whatever it may be, is dependent on His providence: that it was not born without His knowledge nor without His preordination; nor without His concurrence, which is necessary for all and each of the actions of all and each of the creatures; and that God Himself will draw His glory from it, as He intended in the aforementioned Decrees. From which it follows that we do not abuse this passage.

S. 381. "God hardens whom He will, and He has mercy on whom He will. I begin by asking the Supralapsarians; Should, in their opinion, this passage be taken literally, or with modification? If they say it must be taken literally: I will answer them first, that they thereby make it signify something opposed to what St. James taught; That is that when someone is tempted, he should not say, I am tempted by God; for as God cannot be tempted by evils, neither does He tempt anyone; but when someone is tempted, he is tempted and enticed by his own lust. Secondly, I answer them, that by this literal sense, they make it signify things they do not say; and thus this literal sense is not proper to them. For God appears there as the direct and immediate author of hardening, as He is of grace; which is not their opinion. Thus they will be

forced to come to the modification. But this modification must be such, that God because of the grace of which the same passage speaks, still appears there as a direct and immediate agent. Thus the modification can only fall on the word harden. Now the Supralapsarians cannot deny that to abandon to hardening, is a very natural modification: since it does not contradict that God, directly and by Himself, abandons the reprobate; as immediately and by Himself, He gives grace to the elect. But this modification, as natural as it is, does nothing for them, and does everything for us. For to abandon to hardening, is to punish the wicked for having hardened himself. So that God will in this only be acting as a judge who punishes criminals, and whose justice and severity is evidently very praiseworthy. Which removes all the ambiguity, which seemed at first to teach things even harder than those that the Supralapsarians teach."

One sees by this small sample, "of the natural manner of explaining the passages where the Supralapsarians place their greatest confidence, if they are well founded, when they say that God Himself has revealed their system."

I can tell the Author from the outset, that the Supralapsarianism of which he speaks, concerns me no more than all other Christians deserving this name, who are all Supralapsarians like me in this regard, as I have already often said, and as I reminded the apologist of Mr. Jaquelot, in my Collection, on page 55. And on this matter I only want to speak like the wisest, and with the wisest: also my system of true Supralapsarians does not oblige me to act otherwise. Besides, I have even shown the Author above, that he is in the same case as the others in this regard. For myself, once again, whether in the proof, or in the explanation of this doctrine, which is common to me with all other good Christians; I am willing to follow the most moderate, the most circumspect and the most successful in choosing the gentlest terms, the most appropriate in this sublime and incomprehensible matter, and the most respectful towards God, as I have already said. And as the Author himself is a Supralapsarian in this sense, he undoubtedly has good reasons for it. If therefore the preceding passage is not suitable to enter into his proofs, it is not that he does not have more precise and better ones; we will therefore follow those. He also apparently has good proofs of this truth, drawn from the light of right reason; I will embrace them likewise. What will he have to reproach me with after that?

However, if I wanted to undertake it, I would show him that the passage in question is more suitable for this use than he thinks. For to prove the Supralapsarianism that he rejects while adopting it; it is not necessary to prove that God does immediately and by Himself, the things in question: It suffices to prove for this, that they are done in a manner dependent on His providence; or, which is the same thing, it suffices to prove that He decreed beforehand, to permit voluntarily and wisely that they should be done unfailingly, to draw from them, uses that are glorious to Him. And even, as the Author admits here, one can well attribute boldly to Him, what is only envisaged under the idea of punishment for preceding sins. One would not stumble, even according to him, in attributing this hardening directly to God under this idea.

Moreover, to harden a sinner, can also mean to abandon him to the Demon, who hardens and seduces him more and more, directly and immediately; which will not prevent this hardening from being attributed to God; just as it is attributed to Him by the Apostle, according to the Author, when He simply abandons this sinner to his own hardening; because it is always in all these ways, a just punishment that He inflicts for preceding sins. Finally this will not oppose St. James either, as I have shown above in §.20.4. Thus the Author can see that this passage would not be as useless to us as he claims.

But as I said, I do not necessarily need it; we will use those that the wisest and most moderate find the most precise and suitable, and which are invincible proofs of this certain truth. Finally, one sees from all this, that this small sample of the way of explaining the passages, which the Author of the objections was pleased to run through lightly, (not however those in which we place our greatest confidence for our proofs, as he says; but only one of those, truncated, and sequestered from all that accompanies it: and also after some others, but chosen to his advantage;) does not show very solidly that I was ill-founded in saying, that God Himself has revealed to us, our system.

IV. Objections & Responses.

§ 382. Finally I will finish this section, with some objections that were made to me in a letter, by a very honest man whom I honor and esteem, a good Pastor, good Theologian and good Christian; but who had been nourished and raised in the system of the Infralapsarian Particularists, and to tell the truth, in a very great prejudice and aversion against Supralapsarianism. This honest man, after having read and reread my Treatise C. and the Collection of objections and Responses that followed it, was very vividly struck by it; and has well recognized, as he told me himself, that one had not sufficiently fathomed this matter, to make a completely solid judgment. However he thought he still saw some difficulties: not such indeed, as he positively indicated to me in a first letter, that they were capable of embarrassing me; but that he still wished to see clarified; esteeming them stronger and more pressing than any of those that had yet been made to me by Scripture. It is therefore to these difficulties, which he sent me some time later in a second letter, and which I will report word for word, that I intend to respond to finish this section; so that nothing remains that could cause the slightest pain to the well-intentioned, as much as possible for me. Here are his words.

"Sir, I fear that I have rashly undertaken to communicate to you some difficulties, which I have felt in reading your excellent Treatise on the sovereign perfection of God. You have so solidly answered the objections that have been made to you on this matter, that I have more than once repented of having had the thought of making new ones to you, and even more of having spoken to you about it. But I promised it, I must keep my word. Here then Sir, is the difficulty that embarrasses

me the most in this system of the Supralapsarians; I will propose it in very few words, so as not to tire your patience."

I will make every effort to respond as I should to so much politeness, which I do not think I deserve too much; and I will do it with all the consideration that one must have for such great uprightness and sincerity. Let us see the objection.

§.383. "The sinful man is the first and immediate object of the Decree of election and predestination: Therefore this Decree cannot be prior to his fall. I find the proofs of my antecedent in Holy Scripture. Ephesians 1: 3, 4, 5. Blessed be God who is the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Christ, according as he had chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be Holy and blameless before him in love, having predestined us to adoption through Jesus Christ. St. Paul who was ignorant of these different arrangements of God's Decrees, which exist only in the false subtlety and chimerical ideas of the School, knows no other than the one he proposes here. God has chosen us in Jesus Christ, says St. Paul: Therefore we were far from him, and confused like the others in the mass of perdition, to use St. Augustine's term. He chose us before the foundation of the world, that is to say from all eternity: Therefore it is not man creatable or created who is the object of the Decree of election, and consequently of God's predestination; but uniquely and primarily sinful and corrupt man. God has chosen us in Jesus Christ, that we might be holy and blameless before him in love: Therefore we were impure and blameworthy. He has predestined us to adopt us to himself: Therefore we were children of wrath like the others; and consequently it is under this dreadful character, that we have been the first, direct and immediate object of predestination."

To respond to all this I will say first, that it seems to me that if the Author had reflected attentively, while reading my treatise C, on §. 150, 155, 177, and 178, he would have found there a true solution to this difficulty. But since this solution is not clear enough, let us try to make it so palpable, that the difficulty completely vanishes.

Here then is the reasoning. The sinful man is the first, direct and immediate object of the Decree of election and reprobation; Therefore this Decree cannot be prior to his fall. But let us complete this Enthymeme, and we will better see its strength and consequences. Here it is. The sinful man is the first, direct and immediate object of the Decree of election and reprobation. But no thing can be the object of a Divine thought, or Decree, unless it really exists; Therefore this Decree of the election of man, cannot be prior to his fall.

If this argument is good, which is not the question to be examined at present, does it not clearly prove that the Decree of election and reprobation, was only formed in effect since the creation, and even since the fall of man? One cannot doubt it. But is that the meaning and intention of the Author of the objection? Not at all. The sequel shows clearly enough that he holds these Decrees to be much prior to sin; and even

he admits that they are formed from eternity: Therefore he has explained himself badly; and if this latter admission is well founded, as it is indeed, the argument is faulty.

But after having considered the force of his terms, let us now consider the true meaning of the thing in itself, such as he must have had in view so as not to contradict himself. According to the Author instructed by the Apostle, this Decree of election and reprobation is therefore eternal, and formed from before the foundation of the world; and it has as its object the sinful man, according to him, and even we have just seen that he positively concludes, from the fact that God has chosen us in Christ from before the foundation of the world, that it is not creatable man who is the object of election, but the sinful man.

But, I will say here, were we therefore sinners in effect, or other than creatable from before the foundation of the world? No: Therefore it is only creatable man that God has chosen in Jesus Christ, and not the sinful man. Can one deny this consequence? Or else, were we perhaps already existing and even sinners from then? Certainly not; since we were nothing, and we did not yet exist. The meaning of the argument must therefore necessarily be, that we were sinners in God's foreknowledge; foreknowledge, which, as I have invincibly proven above, is itself based on the Decrees of God, which are certain and unfailing.

Moreover, one will not deny, that existence as a sinner, either real, or decreed: or the decreed permission, is also necessary antecedently to be the object of election or reprobation; as existence purely and simply, real or decreed antecedently, is necessary for the same subject. But will the Author, or someone else say, that we could be chosen for salvation etc. without our existence being antecedently future? I do not think so.

On the contrary, that is precisely and necessarily, the very thought that the Author had confusedly in mind with regard to sin, in forming his Enthymeme; but which he did not clearly perceive, and even less expressed; and even he could not have done so without noticing by that alone, the truth and absolute necessity of our system. For the truth that he glimpsed then confusedly, and which being clarified without affectation, gives us our case, is that man could not be chosen for salvation in Jesus Christ nor rejected from salvation, without the event of his sin being antecedently decreed as future. But to say that is to be a Supralapsarian. And yet it is impossible to avoid saying it, if one wants to speak intelligibly and not contradict oneself.

The Author nor any other Christian will ever say, that our existence, either speaking absolutely, or as sinners, could have happened without any prior Decree of God. I mean, that one will not affirm that we have our being, or that we exist independently of God's Decrees; either as men simply, or as sinners. For as for the event of sin, which everyone admits to have been foreseen from all eternity, at least a prior permissive Decree was necessary, in the sense that I have explained them: otherwise

it would have happened against the absolute will of God, and in spite of Him; which no one will say.

This can therefore show the Author, contrary to what he claimed, that despite the eternity of the Divine Decrees, it is absolutely necessary to speak of some Decree, prior to that of election to salvation and positive reprobation; since one is needed to make us future men, and one, at least permissive, to make us future sinners; and that according to himself, we are considered in the Decree of election etc. as sinful men; that is to say necessarily as future sinful men, and sinners in the Decrees only: since in the reality of then, we were nothing at all, having no real existence.

The Author is therefore not right to regard as entirely chimerical, the plurality of Decrees, and a certain order between them; but order of nature and reason, and not order of time. Thus to speak accurately in the conclusion of his Enthymeme, he should have said at least: Therefore the Decree of election and reprobation, cannot be prior to the Decree to create man and permit sin. And from that I will conclude: Therefore this Decree of election and reprobation, even when it is formed, sees sin as having happened, though it has not. God therefore was not surprised by the event of sin, and it did not serve Him to take new measures. He foressaw it, He permitted it voluntarily, not blindly nor without knowing why, which would be unworthy of infinite wisdom, but He did it for good reasons, and proposing to Himself an end worthy of the supreme and all-perfect Being. Not either through powerlessness to be able to prevent it; but being very well able to prevent it if such had been His good pleasure. Not finally, in ignorance of what would be the effects and consequences of this fall; for to Him from all time are known all His works. And one of His works was in decreeing to permit this fall and foreseeing it, that He chose in consequence, even from before the foundation of the world, a certain well-known number of these future sinners, to save them from this misfortune through His Son Jesus Christ; and that He also resolved from then to abandon the others to His justice.

Here then are God's designs, formed from before sin, and to be executed following sin, and by means of sin, foreseeing it and willingly allowing it to happen, though He could prevent it. And there is nothing in all this, I assure myself, that the Author could, or would want to deny; Therefore he is a Supralapsarian. For it is in all this together that Supralapsarianism consists; that one ascends above sin to speak of God's Decrees; that one considers sin as a necessary condition, to achieve the wise, just and holy ends, that God has proposed for Himself from all eternity; that even before men have done either good or evil, God has destined some to glorify in them His transcendent goodness or His mercy, and others to glorify in them His justice and His hatred against iniquity and disorders.

But the Author will always tell me; they were nevertheless considered as sinners: and I will always answer, but they were not yet, since they did not even exist at all, and could not be considered as such for the future, without a preceding Decree, at least permissive. And thus your words cannot consequently mean anything else,

except; that they were considered as being bound to become sinners according to the Decrees; which is what no one denies, and which constitutes Supralapsarianism very precisely.

I believe therefore finally, that if one makes mature and wise reflections on all this, one will clearly see that it is sufficient to be a Supralapsarian, to admit that the Decrees of election and reprobation, were formed before sin was committed; which no orthodox person disavows nor could do so. Thus this dispute is greatly abbreviated. For to say that God considering the human race as fallen into sin, He decreed to withdraw some and leave the others there; that can absolutely mean nothing else, except; that God considering the human race, as being bound to fall into sin according to His Decrees (Whether permissive Decrees, or others, it is sufficient to speak thus, that they are Decrees that He formed before sin was committed, and without which sin could not happen; and that He formed them finally, not forced nor compelled by whoever it may be, nor by whatever it may be, but of His full will and according to an adorable wisdom).

Considering, I say, the human race from before the foundation of the world, as being bound to fall into sin according to His Decrees; He resolved from then to withdraw some and leave the others to perish there. However, one cannot deny any of these reflections, for God cannot lie, and He cannot regard a thing as already done and really happened, if it is not in fact. Besides, I have proven in this work, in §.51, 55, 86, 302, and 303, that permissive Decrees, and Decrees founded on what men will freely do, do not exclude preceding absolute Decrees: but on the contrary, they presuppose them. How after that to avoid Supralapsarianism?

I assure myself, besides, that what precedes shows clearly enough that the distinction of Divine Decrees, and a certain order between them, is not a pure chimera, as it is called. One can also see on that, what I have said in the present work, in §. 129, 130, 136, 137, and 138, where I have solidly proven, in responding to M. La Placette, that this distinction of Divine Decrees, and the suitable order in which they must be arranged, are not mere scholastic subtleties, nor chimerical ideas; but that they are ways of thinking, which are necessary and inevitable for us, and to which God Himself gives rise in His holy word. Let us follow our Author.

§.384. "I draw my second proof, from the very one that you have established with such extent, in the whole course of your Treatise. You have borrowed it from St. Paul in Romans 9, and have claimed that the Holy Apostle established thereby in an invincible manner, your system. I suppose the explanation that you have given to the comparison of the potter etc. The importance is to know, if you have employed it in the views of St. Paul. Judge by the sense that I am going to give it in two words. For little attention that one gives to chapters 9 and 10 to the Romans, it appears clearly that the general aim of the Apostle, is to prove the sovereign freedom of God, in the calling of the Gentiles and the rejection of the Jews; it is to this point of view that all the reasonings of St. Paul lead: and in particular the comparison of the potter,

destined to show that God is the Master of His graces; that He distributes them to some rather than to others, to the Gentiles rather than to the Jews; that He has mercy on whom He pleases, and hardens whom He wants; that it is neither of him who Wills nor of him who Runs, but of God who shows mercy. But this sovereign freedom of God, represented by the comparison of the potter, always supposes both the Jews and the Gentiles guilty of sin, and first and immediate objects of predestination; and not precisely as creatable, and envisaged in the hands of God, as a mass from which God chooses a portion, to make vessels of honor; and destines the other to make vessels of dishonor.

"To be convinced of this, one has only to examine the very terms of the comparison. It is not any sort of mass, that St. Paul puts in the hands of God as sovereign potter: it is a mass of mud or clay, which makes one feel its baseness. It is this mass from which had been drawn Isaac and Ishmael, Jacob and Esau, as well as Pharaoh whom God had raised up for this very purpose, to demonstrate in him His power in his destruction. It is therefore here about a corrupt mass, which St. Augustine calls in other terms, mass of perdition. It is therefore not an innocent mass and as creatable, which makes the object of the Decree of predestination; it is an impure and sinful mass.

"Let us finish proving this by the objections of St. Paul. He says in verse 21, that the potter has the power to make from the same lump of clay, vessels for honor and others for dishonor; and what is it, he adds in verse 22, if God in wanting to show His wrath, and to make known His power, has tolerated with great patience the vessels of wrath, prepared for destruction; v. 23, and in order to make known the riches of His glory, in the vessels of mercy which He has prepared for glory. Do not the qualities of vessels for dishonor or vessels of wrath, have their source in the sin of those whom God rejects, and who are the object of reprobation; since there is only sin that kindles the wrath of God? The vessels of mercy, necessarily and primarily suppose their misery, for the miserable are the direct object of mercy. The vessels of wrath are prepared by themselves, that is to say, by their sin, for destruction. It is on them as sinners, that falls the Decree of reprobation. But it is God who has prepared for glory, the vessels of mercy; they are the first object of predestination to glory, as miserable, and drawn by the mercy of God, from a corrupt mass."

But following the reflections that I have just made in the preceding §, a single verse of the Holy Apostle is sufficient to overturn all this display of great reasoning. It is verse 11, where the Apostle wants, that one pay very particular attention, to the fact that it is, before the children were born, and had done neither good nor evil, that it was said, the elder shall serve the younger etc. Is this not saying in other terms, that these children were not considered as sinners, when these Decrees were formed? Indeed can election and reprobation be eternal, and have been made from before the creation of the world; and have as objects subjects considered as really sinners, who did not even exist? It is therefore impossible of all impossibility, that when one

says; that when these Decrees were made they were considered as sinners, that can mean anything other than, that they were considered as being bound unfailingly to become sinners, according to the Decrees of God.

But let us show nevertheless, by responding categorically to all the reflections of the Author, that everything is uniform in our system, and that nothing in it contradicts itself. He wants us to pay attention mainly, to the general aim of the Apostle in chapters 9 and 10 of this Epistle, which is to prove the sovereign freedom of God, in the calling of the Gentiles and the rejection of the Jews. I consent to it. But will the Apostle do anything contrary to this design, if he goes higher than sin? On the contrary, is it not directly following this aim to point out, that not only, does God have the power to grant grace to those whom it pleases Him among men, existing and already really sinners, and to reject those whom He wants; but that even when they were still considered only as creatable, He effectively destined some to the glory of His mercy, and others to the glory of His justice; and that He had the right and power to do so? Does this not prove invincibly, that all the more reason therefore is He in right and in power, to do with His good what He wants towards sinners already sinners who deserve only death? One cannot doubt it. Our system is therefore very suitable to the aim of the Apostle in this place.

But says the Author next for a second reason; This sovereign freedom of God represented by the comparison of the potter, always supposes the Jews and the Gentiles guilty of sin, and not precisely as creatable, and envisaged in the hands of God, as a mass from which God chooses a portion, to make vessels of honor, and destines the other to make vessels of dishonor. (That is however what seems to me to be very clear in the words and in the design of the Apostle, and very certain indeed: but let us see the proofs.)

To be convinced of this, says the Author, one has only to examine the very terms of the comparison. It is not any sort of mass, that St. Paul puts in the hands of God as sovereign potter; it is a mass of mud or earth, which makes one feel its baseness. It is from this mass that had been drawn Isaac and Ishmael, Jacob and Esau, as well as Pharaoh, whom God had raised up for this very purpose, to demonstrate in him, His power in his destruction. It is therefore here about a corrupt mass which St. Augustine, calls in other terms, mass of perdition. It is therefore not an innocent mass and as creatable, which makes the object of the Decree of predestination: it is an impure and corrupt mass.

This is then, according to the Author, what should be capable of making one doubt, that St. Paul intended to establish our system. But in truth it seems to me that it is without much reason that he makes this judgment. For following the thought that he proposes, what difference will there be then between the clay and the vessels of dishonor? Absolutely none. If the mass itself as such, is a corrupt, impure and sinful mass, as the Author qualifies it; in that very thing is it not the mass of vessels of dishonor? And in this manner, these words; does he not have the power to make

from the same mass, vessels for honor and others for dishonor? will mean, does he not have the power to make with vessels of dishonor, vessels for honor and others for dishonor? Why speak in this case of making vessels of dishonor? If the mass itself constitutes these vessels, there is no longer need to make them, they are already all made, and it is this mass itself.

It would be necessary to say in this case, as I have remarked in my Treatise C. in §. 151, the potter of clay who has many dishonorable vessels, is he not in power to use some of them for dishonorable uses, and others for honorable uses by changing their shape? But this is what the Apostle does not do. After all, what resemblance would this action have with that of the potter? For the potter of clay does not use dishonorable vessels to make dishonorable vessels, and others that are honorable or for honor; but it is formless clay without shape, that he uses to make both the ones and the others.

It is therefore clear and manifest here, that the lump of clay of which the Apostle speaks, is considered in his comparison, only as a formless mass, which is in itself neither well nor badly shaped, in relation to the uses for which it is destined; but which expects from the potter all the shapes, the form and the suitability that must render it proper and well suited, to the honorable or dishonorable uses, to which it must serve.

Finally in this comparison, according to us, the lump of clay, or mud, if one wants, must represent nothingness; but to support the emblem of this nothingness, can it be too vile, too low and too despicable? Certainly not. Therefore nothing contradicts itself here any more than elsewhere. Whereas the mass of sinful men, is not a formless mass without shape; it is truly a mass or a collection of vessels, very suitable to be used for shameful and miserable uses; in a word they are criminal and subject to avenging justice. Does that have a just relation with the formless clay, which is suitable for nothing if it is left as it is? But for nothingness before God, it is perfectly well represented by the earth before the potter, suitable for everything by means of the hand and skill of the potter; but suitable for nothing without that, and in the natural state in which it finds itself. All that is clear and incontestable.

Let us say again to finish, that one cannot help seeing, that the aim of the Apostle was that of a Supralapsarian, by the objections he makes on behalf of the flesh. What do these words of v. 19 mean, for example: Now you will tell me, why does he still complain; for who is he who can resist his will? Is that disputing against an Infralapsarian? One must voluntarily close one's eyes to the light, and do violence to one's conscience to dare advance it. If one says that God rejects men only after they have become sinners through their fault, does anyone have occasion to come and say; Why does God still complain, for who is he who can resist his will? Certainly not. Therefore it is to a Supralapsarian that these words are addressed and not to an Infralapsarian.

And on that also does the Apostle defend himself from the Supralapsarianism, which these words reproach to his doctrine? Not at all: we have just seen the contrary. And also if he defended himself as an Infralapsarian, as the Author would like, he would defend himself badly, since one attacks him as a Supralapsarian. Or rather, he would make two mistakes. One would be to make a false objection which would have no relation with his doctrine: and the other would be, to apply a false response to it. All that is clear and manifest. After such vivid proofs, I hope finally that there will be nothing more to say.

For the rest of the Author's reflections, I have satisfied them in my Treatise C, in §. 150 and 155. That is why I finish here by blessing and praising my God, from the most intimate and deepest part of my soul, for the help and grace that it has pleased Him to grant me, in the defense of His cause. And to Him Father, Son, and Holy Spirit one and the same God, be honor, glory, triumph, Empire and magnificence, for ever and ever. Amen. Amen.

Remarks on Mr. Osterwald's Treatise, Entitled 'The Sources of Corruption', First edition of 1700

§.385. ONE cannot sufficiently deplore the misfortune of the century in which we live, wherein a very great number of the most able among the Protestants, Reformed and others, through inconceivable blindness or laxity, abandon orthodoxy to throw themselves anew into the grossest errors. But what is most deplorable still, is to see the prodigious number of those who are either dazzled by these errors, or who applaud them through criminal complacency, or who remain silent when it would be time to speak, to warn the poor sheep of the Lord Jesus of the extreme danger that surrounds them.

The Catechism on which I intend to make some Remarks hereafter, is furnished with the most beautiful and advantageous approval that has ever been put at the head of a book of Religion: even if it were the Gospel itself, one could hardly add anything to it. However, this is incomprehensible given the faults against orthodoxy found therein. One will judge by what follows. May God soon come to the aid of His Church! But let us enter into the matter.

First, one finds it strange that the Author takes so little care to reason in a manner conforming to the analogy of faith, but of the true faith, which is without dispute that professed in the Reformed Churches of which he is a Pastor: that he takes so little care to inculcate and defend the fundamental doctrines of the true Christian Reformed Religion: that he makes so little use of them, and that he states the great truths too weakly. This, in the times in which we live, immediately renders a man suspect of Socinianism to the most pious and well-intentioned; because this heresy is spreading extraordinarily at present, and especially in these countries.

Several who are known to be among the number of those infected by it take as a maxim not to combat the truth directly, for they would not be permitted to, and they are too indifferent to doctrines and too cowardly indeed to expose themselves to the least suffering for their belief, which in truth is not worth the trouble; but their principle is that they properly believe no doctrine necessary for salvation, provided that Morality remains pure.

Their true disposition is an absolute indifference to all dogmas, and a total abnegation of what are called the mysteries of Religion, although they nevertheless prefer their Socinian perfidy to any other system. They content themselves, when obliged to speak in public, with insisting on Morality uniquely, without speaking of doctrines any more than is possible for them; and if they are nevertheless obliged to do so sometimes, they know how to speak of it in such a way that one can say of them; that they have said nothing false, but that they have not said the truth: because they say of this truth only the thinnest and most superficial parts. So that even though what they say is true, it is nevertheless such that a Socinian can admit it without harming his abominable heresy. This is the naive character of these people, which is known to all good people who are of the good mark in this country.

That is why, as soon as one sees here a Minister who swerves in the least from dogmas, he is immediately regarded as a man highly suspect of Socinianism, with whom one must be on guard everywhere, instead of listening to him with confidence and tranquility. Thus a man who wants to edify today must avoid this manner of acting like the plague.

Another of their tricks of suppleness is to advance from time to time the true orthodox and fundamental doctrines, to throw dust in the eyes of the ignorant; but they do it as rarely as they can. This is so that they always have some way to escape from both sides. But in return, they take very great care not to make any use of them for piety; and not to base upon them, as they should, the great, true, and almost unique motives of the love of God, for a sinful man, already subject by the law to damnation. And yet we know that the love of God is the only motive for works that God deigns to call good works.

But far from having this in view, if the people of whom we speak advance any of these great salutary dogmas, despite themselves and by necessity, because of circumstances that oblige them to; they do it in a dry and abstract manner: passing rapidly over it as if walking on fire, then leaving it there without making any use of it, they return immediately to their dear Morality of Seneca or Cato, which constitutes their entire Theology and Religion. They treat this Morality entirely independently of fundamental doctrines, as if one of these things had no relation to or influence on the other; although the second, which is Morality, has today no other source than the first, which is faith in fundamental dogmas, if it wants to produce works that can be pleasing to God; for it is precisely in this respect that it is impossible to please God without faith, Heb. 11:6, because it is impossible for a sinner

without such faith, and who is not feigned in this regard, to truly love God; and that any work which is not a fruit of the love of God is not a good work before Him.

Now these traitors to Christianity and to the salvation of men act thus in order to make believe by this trickery that what we call the mysteries and fundamental dogmas of Christianity are things quite indifferent and of very little use for piety; and consequently that one must not reject with so much horror those who believe nothing of them; provided they keep the principal, or rather the whole, according to them, which are works and Morality.

§.386. Now whether the Author finds himself in a country where there is no talk at all of Socinians, against whom consequently it is not necessary to take so many precautions; or for other reasons that I cannot understand; it is certain that he has entirely taken this character in his works; although he is not a Socinian, since he is pure on the doctrine of the most holy and most adorable Trinity, and on that of the satisfaction of Jesus Christ. But he handles these doctrines in such an abstract manner, and so little related to Morality, that this causes extreme pain to the well-intentioned.

This very suspect character has been the cause that his Treatise on the sources of corruption, instead of producing the fruits it should and could have, through its excellence which is otherwise great, has been rejected with contempt by the most enlightened and best Christians. And although a great number of good people initially applauded it, it was because they read it too lightly. For several of these same persons who were charmed by it have admitted, after being enlightened about what follows, that there are in this book very great faults against the purity of Evangelical doctrine, which perhaps escaped the Author through inadvertence.

And as one wants to believe that he has an upright soul, and intention completely good; and that he had no other aim than to be useful to the Reformed Church, as I have been assured, I hope that he will recognize himself what I am saying, when he is warned of it.

As for me, I can take God as witness upon my soul, that I have no other design here than the glory of God and the good of His Church; that I honor and respect M. Osterwald as much as he could desire, because of his fine talents; that I pray God to bless his good designs; and finally that if my aim is to offend him or to do him harm, I pray God to punish me. After this protestation I will therefore say my thoughts freely, praying God with all my heart, that the Author receives them, in case they reach him, in a manner as well-intentioned for the glory of God, as I believe I advance them here.

§.387. First, concerning the Treatise on the sources of corruption, one finds it strange that to fully satisfy this title, not a word was said, even in passing, about the sin of our first father. This would not have harmed in any way all the other sources that are indicated, since this one is the source of sources; and this would have removed this appearance of negligence for important doctrines, which is never a

good omen, and which terribly shocks good people for the reasons I have said; at least in this country, because of the great number of suspects.

§.388. The period that begins on page 29 is entirely contrary to the analogy of faith, and to the truly Evangelical doctrine that is among the Reformed. This doctrine tells us:

I. That without the true and living faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, which embraces this divine Savior with extreme ardor, as the only meritorious cause, very capable and alone capable of obtaining for us from God the remission of our sins and salvation, no one can be saved.

II. That with such faith, damnation is impossible.

III. That such faith is a true source of good works when the occasions to produce them are encountered, since it is today the mother of good works, as the sun is of light.

IV. And reciprocally, that there are no truly good works in a sinful man without this faith.

However, if one maturely reflects on what such faith does and can do for the production of good works, one will see that it consists only in that this faith necessarily produces in a heart thus disposed, a pure, sincere, and true love of God, and a boundless gratitude for the inexpressible gift He has made us of His Son, and of salvation in Him. That it is this that makes us carefully seek opportunities to glorify Him through our thoughts, our words, and our works.

For it is such a love of God that also produces the sincere love of holiness, and of the uprightness prescribed by the law of God; and a great desire to be edifying to our neighbors, and to contribute to their salvation; in a word, a true desire to respond worthily to our holy calling, and to our duty, as is becoming to poor unfortunates whom God through His pure mercy has taken back into grace, to treat them as His children; being persuaded that God will look favorably upon our sincerity and our efforts to please Him; and this for the love of Jesus Christ, whom He has constituted for us as pledge and Advocate; although these efforts are accompanied by many weaknesses and imperfections.

That is, if I am not mistaken, all that faith does and can do for the production of good works. If this is so, all that is done by other principles than these is sin. For Scripture says that what is done without faith is sin, and St. Augustine says somewhere that good works do not precede justification, but follow it.

I have consulted all the Catechisms of the Reformed Churches, and in the Syntagma confessionum fidei Ecclesiarum Reformatarum, all our confessions of faith. All this says unanimously what I have just said, as I could cite if I did not fear length. See article 22 of the confession of faith of the Churches of France. Chapter XII of that of Switzerland, which has for its title *De lege Dei*. Finally, see them all on this matter, and you will find a perfect concordance and uniformity in this regard.

From this it follows that according to our Religion, that is to say, according to the Gospel from which it is drawn, all works that are done by principles other than those I have indicated, are vain, or superstitious, or enormous. However, the Author is not content with these motives, he wants still others, which entail a necessity much greater, in his opinion, than that which results from what has just been said. But it is clear that there can be no other necessity than that which we have just marked, if it is not that of the law in all its rigor, towards those who have no part in the Redemption: When it says: Do these things and you will live, and cursed is everyone who does not remain in all the things that are written in the book of the law to do them.

It seems therefore that the Author wants thereby to tear from us the salvation acquired by our Savior, and put us back under the curse of the law; and that he wants to reduce us to the necessity of being damned, or of acquiring salvation by our works. Which would be surprising and which he undoubtedly does not have in mind.

§.389. For my part, I hold that the principal source of corruption that is among Christians, is not ignorance of the general and fundamental doctrines of Christianity; but that it is absolutely the negligence in which one is, to observe the important duty that St. Paul prescribes to us when he says: Examine yourselves whether you are in the faith; test yourselves; do you not recognize yourselves, namely that Jesus Christ is in you, unless you are in some way reprobate.

That is taking things at their source. If all those who believe they have faith, or who profess it, examined themselves often to know if it is really true that they believe that God has loved them from all eternity, and that He has exposed His own Son to the cruel and shameful death of the cross to redeem them from hell; if they believe that this hell and its eternal torments are inevitable for all those who have no part in this Savior, and who do not embrace Him with ardor, humility, gratitude, and love; if they embrace this death as their only hope, their great Treasure, and their All: to the point of despising in comparison, and neglecting all that they are capable of possessing and hoping for of goods in the world; and to the point of loving the three persons of the adorable Trinity above all things, and to be full of a lively gratitude for this inexpressible benefit, which produces a holy solicitude to please Him in all things, as much as possible. For it is all this together that is called having faith, and having Jesus Christ dwelling in oneself.

If, I say, each one examined himself often on this basis, and that one made of the study of attaining such a faith, one's unique, or at least, one's most serious and most important occupation; without even ever thinking of another necessity of good works, than that which can proceed from this source: The corruption of which one complains with such justice, would soon disappear.

But instead of inculcating this, one makes it look like a dangerous doctrine; which seems to me the most distressing thing, and the most scandalous for good people, of which I have ever seen an example in any book made by a Reformed.

The summary of the law is the love of God above all things, as everyone knows: which means that the only Principle of obedience to the law, which is approved by God and which is pleasing to Him, is love. However, the law alone, since we are sinners, condemning us all to the abyss without mercy, is not capable of inspiring in us the love of God: on the contrary, it produces in the sinner anger and spite, as St. Paul says. It is therefore no longer capable, being considered alone and in itself, of making us produce the works that God asks of us, which must proceed from love.

There is absolutely only the doctrine of faith, such as we have represented it, which can rekindle the love of God in the heart of a sinner; which means that there is now only the doctrine of faith which can make us do a truly good work before God.

From this it follows that the alleged necessity of good works, which one wants to base on other principles, is only a poisoned source that one wants to ally with the only salutary source; which is only apt to corrupt good works, or rather to nullify them, by metamorphosing them into works of heresy and superstition, instead of the good they could be. This is the pure truth and the doctrine of true Reformed. And I hope from the piety and uprightness so highly extolled in the Author, that he will recognize it if he is reminded of it; and that he will consequently recognize the importance and necessity of the remarks made here on his works; since he seeks only the salvation of men and the edification of the Reformed Church.

§.390. The § that begins at the bottom of page 36 at number V. is only apt to inspire a mercenary, self-righteous spirit and one of servitude to be again in fear. For one makes consolation and the hope of salvation depend on the degrees of perfection of our inherent justice, which being neither specified, determined, nor fixed, neither here nor in the Gospel (unless one wants an absolute perfection without defect), are consequently never seen, in a hope and a confidence in God that is worthy of one of His children. This puts the conscience back into slavery under the law, always in anxiety and doubt whether one is on the path of salvation, or whether one is not on the point of being precipitated into the abyss, which can cause a discouragement capable of making one lose all good intention to advance. And there is what the mercenaries gain, and those who, despite the Gospel and the prerogatives of a child, which the Savior has acquired for us, want at all costs to still be the slaves of the law, to establish by it their own righteousness, and to base upon it their consolation and their hope.

Instead, one should say that the perfection of a Christian and a child of God here below consists only in the perfect confidence with which he embraces the complete salvation that is in Jesus Christ, renouncing all other hope; and in the sincere and true resolution to glorify Him for it without trouble and without anxiety, by his conduct throughout his life, the best that will be possible for him; and for this purpose to study seriously and carefully to make progress in piety, in the love of God and neighbor, and in the renunciation of the world, through love for holiness, and

for the beauty and justice of our duties; and through gratitude towards God for His inexpressible gift.

§.391. At the bottom of page 53, the Author begins to make the parallel between the conduct that one maintains with regard to the profession of truth, and confidence in God on one side; and then to the practice of good works on the other. He condemns as a kind of perfidy and apostasy from Christianity, that one should be entirely more rigid on the first three points, than on the last. But if one would consider well that it is said; That eternal life is to know the only true God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent: That whoever does not believe in Jesus Christ is already condemned: That whoever has the Son has life, but whoever does not have the Son does not have life: That the Savior has never rejected, nor failed to console and deliver, those who have had all their recourse to Him, whatever their affliction or the anguish of their heart might be: That it is said that we must be justified by faith without works; but never that one can be justified by works without faith: this would show, it seems to me, that according to the Gospel, faith in Jesus Christ, which entails when it is true and not feigned, the confession of truth and confidence in God, is of a true necessity of means for salvation, and also of an unfailing success to obtain it.

If one considered on the other hand, that never any man in the world has attained nor will attain, perfection in works; and that this is an article of faith of the Reformed, as appears in all their confessions of faith and in all their catechisms, and in that of the Author himself on page 99 of the first edition. If one considered that according to the Gospel, a long practice of good works, is not a necessity of means for salvation, but only a necessity of precept; as is proven by the salvation of the converted brigand, by the justification of the publican of St. Luke XVIII, and by the reception into grace of the three thousand souls, who were converted on the day of the first Christian Pentecost.

If one considered then, that according to the word of God, it is impossible to observe the first three points in question, without having lively, justifying and saving faith, and that no one can have this faith without having works, as much as is sufficient to prove that one is in the perfection that we have marked in the preceding §, and to be able to say that one obeys the law of God, as much as a well-born child can do, docile and respectful before his good father, but who is still weak and infirm by his age or otherwise.

If, I say, one thought of all this, one would not make it a crime for persons who are absolutely doing what they should, in maintaining that one cannot be saved, without the knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ, without a high profession of the saving truth founded in Jesus Christ alone, and without a confidence in God through Jesus Christ, which is at least great enough to (in regarding His Beloved as very capable and alone capable, of fully saving all those who approach God through Him) have recourse to His mercy. But a recourse full of ardor, of profound humiliation, and of

extreme desire to glorify Him afterwards. Desire which produces with time, a confidence of rest and tranquility in the assurance of the grace of God, which can only be the source of true piety, according to the doctrine of the Reformed, when it is real itself, and not presumptuous or affected.

One would not make it a crime, I say, to those who do thus what they should, by objecting to them the passage which says, that without Sanctification no one will see God. For according to what we have just proven, and according to the belief of true Reformed, this passage is synonymous and equivalent to those which say, that without true and lively faith in Jesus Christ and in His merits, one cannot be saved: inasmuch as such faith is the unique source, but sufficient, of the sanctification of which it speaks there.

Thus it is therefore necessary to explain oneself, so as not to put into despair the best-intentioned and the best Christians, by one's Writings: and even several children of God, who are loved by Him and whom He wants to save by the merits of His Son, although they always remain weak and stumble in many things. One should take care, that the path one takes by these manners, only tends to force the impious and the villains to abstain from the most enormous crimes, by a terror of slave, which is the same Principle by which God still makes Himself obeyed today, by the Devils themselves His declared enemies; but that does not make them do, neither them nor others, any good work, since it does not produce the love of God, without which there is no good work. That produces the fear of God, the horror of His judgments, with aversion and hatred for His justice. Thus all that can therefore only serve, to harm the good, to serve nothing to the wicked.

§.392. I have not yet seen anyone among the Reformed, who opposes faith to Morality, nor Morality to faith, if not in the point of justification, as all good Protestants do. But in that point, one is right to do it, since St. Paul himself does it, when he says: If it is by grace it is no longer by works, otherwise grace is no longer grace; and if it is by works it is no longer by grace, otherwise work is no longer work. If no Reformed has ever said anything other than this, whom then does the Author want? p. 56. And if it is this that he reproaches us with, in what rank does he put himself then? That is what is left to him to decide, for fear of saying too much or too little.

§.393. Further on, Page 57, the Author complains, that there are those who believe that it is dangerous to so press Morality: and that there have even been some who have maintained, that it was a character of heresy to do so. For myself I can well protest never to have seen anyone of this sentiment, but many have I seen of that in which I am myself, which is, that those who preach only Morality absolutely; or who, if they preach sometimes the dogmas as despite themselves, and as rarely as they can, take care not to base Morality on these dogmas; that those who say of these dogmas only the most superficial, and almost never anything except that with which heretics can escape, and acquiesce without prejudice to their heresy; that those who

pass rapidly over these dogmas as over fire and thorns, to return immediately to a morality all dry and all Philosophical, which would better suit in the mouth of a wise Pagan, than in that of a true Minister of the Holy Gospel; I believe, I say, that those who are such are ordinarily traitors to the Gospel, and very pernicious heretics.

The sentiment of true orthodox, goes no further than this in this regard; but it also goes to say, that to press the necessity of good works by other reasons, than that of the necessity of the love of God for those who are in His grace; by the reason of an extreme gratitude that we owe Him, for the free gift that He makes us of salvation in His son; by the reason of the beauty and justice of our duties, which are infinitely lovable in themselves, when one loves God and is loved by Him; is pure heresy. And indeed, if one wants to oblige us to do good works, because it is necessary to fulfill the law of God to be saved, one preaches to us the heresy of the self-righteous; one devastates the most saintly and the best Christians, without profiting in anything the most impious and the most lax; one withdraws oneself from grace; one supposes the impossible; and in a word one renounces the Gospel, in not wanting these words of St. Paul to be true: We are no longer under the law, but under grace.

And as for the passages that the Author cites in the margin, and on which he relies, they do not impose any other necessity of sanctification and good works, than that which I myself suppose here, and which I have explained above; or else they say the same thing as these words, cursed is whoever is not permanent in all things etc. taken with all rigor. If the Author supposes that it is the first, these passages are not contrary to us, and he is wrong to oppose them to us, since we admit them in this sense with all our heart, and inculcate them as willingly and with as much zeal and sincerity, as any can do: but if he alleges them in the second sense taken with rigor, (although I am careful not to impute this to him) he renounces the Gospel, damns all men, insofar as in him is, and himself with the others. After that all that he adds up to page 60 and to Number V inclusively, has no force against us, and is good for nothing.

§.394. The Author enters there, Page 84, into the matter by supposing, that God requires holiness and good works, as an absolutely necessary condition for salvation. But I say on that, that if the Author said that this holiness and these good works, are an unfailing antecedent of salvation, he would be right. Yet it would be necessary to explain oneself, to show the possibility of salvation of those who would resemble in all, the converted brigand, and the publican of whom I have already spoken, who were justified without having done good works until then. But to speak as he does without explaining himself further, is assuredly to say a thing which, (although it may have a good sense for those who would explain it well) has a perfectly heretical, mercenary and self-righteous sense, for ninety-nine people out of a hundred.

One can say that today, most Theologians embarrass themselves extremely, and others with them, by this word condition, badly explained, misunderstood, and even more badly applied. But if it pleases the adorable providence of God, to favor the

design that I have, to publish a work made expressly on justification, which is all ready to put under the press; I am persuaded that no faithful Soul will read it, without jumping for joy, so to speak; without blessing God from the most intimate of his heart, and without being grateful to me until the last moment of his life. And I hope also that with the grace of God, one will see so clearly in this place, that there will be only voluntary blind people, who can mistake it or go astray.

§.395. In this place, Page 90, the Author accuses people of saying: That God does not want us to be so holy: that He uses sin to keep us in humility, to make us feel the need we have of His grace, and make us aspire to a better life. I do not know who those are who may have spoken in this way; but I know well that these words, truly, could have been said in certain occasions, and in a sense that would make them completely execrable: but also that they could have been said in other occasions, and in a sense that would make them very true and very innocent. Also I have no doubt, that it is in this sense that they have been said, if anyone has said them.

If one spoke, for example, of the accomplishment of a perfect obedience rendered to the law, like that which was rendered to it by our Savior Jesus Christ, and of the holiness of His life and His conversation here below; whether in regard to the parts, or in regard to the degrees: could one not hold the preceding discourse with truth and with innocence? For to say then, that God does not want that, does not mean that He forbids it, that He disapproves it, or that He would find it bad if it happened; to say that would be to pronounce a blasphemy. But that only means that He does not find it appropriate, to give us a measure of His Spirit great enough, to absolutely overcome the remains of our corruption in all respects; and that for the aforementioned reasons, and for others perhaps still that we do not understand.

Where is the poison in this discourse? Is that not the truth? God indeed orders us to aspire and to tend to this perfection, to lead us to advance in it every day more and more, as to that which is supremely agreeable to Him; and in this sense, He does want it indeed, if by wanting one means to exhort, command and approve: but if by wanting, one means to decree and effectuate powerfully and effectively, it is clear by experience and by His word, that He does not want it; and that very holily, wisely and divinely. Thus all the exaggerations and reasonings that the Author makes on this place, are very inappropriate and untimely. I am sure that he speaks there to no one, and that those against whom he speaks have never pretended to say anything other, than what he says and what he approves himself. This way of acting holds much of the humor of certain people, who like to forge for themselves monsters and chimeras, to have the pleasure of triumphing over them.

§.396. On page 134, the Author says, that good works are not the cause and foundation of salvation, but the sole mercy of God in Jesus Christ. And on the following page he says: That although they are not the cause of salvation, they are nevertheless the condition, and that they are of an absolute necessity for salvation. But to say this without other explanation, has the appearance of a perfect

contradiction. If you tell me, for example, that the perfect fulfillment of the Moral law, is a necessity of means, or an absolute necessity for salvation; and that it is the true condition of salvation, do you leave my soul or my hope in a better state, or in another state for salvation, than if you said positively that I must acquire salvation, by the perfect fulfillment of the moral law, and that I must merit this salvation by my works? I maintain that no. And as the latter is heretical, and absolutely damns and despairs all men, the most saintly and the best people, as much or more than the most villainous and the most wicked; one cannot help saying as much of the former. One must therefore speak differently or renounce the Gospel.

§.397. The remark that the Author makes here, Page 136, is even more surprising than all the rest; since by it he justifies Papism in what it has most shameful and most damnable, and taxes all the Reformed Churches with damnable heresy. He says therefore, that in the style of St. Paul, works, simply, or the works of the law, is something completely different from what he names good works. The author claims that by the first, St. Paul means the works of the ceremonial law only; and by the second, the works of the Moral law. And it is by this remark that he claims to reconcile St. James with St. Paul. He wants that every time St. Paul says; that we are justified by faith without works, he means by that only the works of the ceremonial law, and that he never intended to say that we were not justified by the works of the Moral law. For in this he claims that he is in agreement with St. James, who says it expressly, as the Author believes; saying that all those who have wanted to reconcile otherwise these two Apostles, have only refuted St. James by St. Paul, and excused St. James rather than explaining him.

Here, I admit that I have difficulty believing my eyes in reading this place; for that is certainly losing sight of the capital and fundamental point of the Gospel; stumbling against the stumbling stone which has made the Jewish nation trip Is. 8:14. But stone which is so solid, so firm and so hard, that whoever will fall on it will be completely crushed, and on whoever it will fall it will break him: Matt.21:44. This unhappy nation has therefore been rejected by God, for having wanted to establish its own righteousness, in misconceiving the righteousness of God, and in being scandalized by purely gratuitous grace; and the Author does the same, or nearly so, in this place.

First of all, is it not clear, that all those who have wanted to reconcile St. James with St. Paul otherwise than by this remark, are all Protestants, Lutherans and Reformed absolutely, without excepting a single one of those who have had occasion to treat this matter; since the foundation of this remark is with them all universally, a shameful and damnable heresy? And consequently the Author in this capital place, and the most fundamental of all, is not at all Reformed, but absolutely Papist or Socinian, that is to say outright heretic.

I do not want to refute this shameful and damnable heresy here, because I have done it amply in the Treatise of which I have already spoken, and which I do not despair of being able to make public. I will say only in passing, that I pray every true faithful

who will see this place, to read here in the Epistle to the Romans, beginning at the second chapter v. 17, and continuing until the end of the following chapter: and he will see that the Apostle who treats there of justification, speaks of the law which forbids stealing, committing adultery, being idolatrous etc. Is it the ceremonial law which forbids these things? It is therefore in speaking of the law which forbids these things, that the Apostle says in chap. 3:20, That no flesh will be justified before God by the works of the law, for by the law is given the knowledge of sin etc. And in verse 27, he ends all his discourse with this conclusion: We conclude therefore that man is justified by faith, without the works of the law. And when he says in the following chapter: Rom. 4:2, 3, 4, 5, Certainly if Abraham was justified by works he has something to boast about, but not before God; for what does Scripture say? Abraham believed God and it was imputed to him as righteousness: now to him who works, the payment is not imputed to him for grace, but for thing due; but to him who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the wicked, his faith is allocated to him as righteousness. Does the Apostle not show by these words, that Abraham was not justified before God by his works? However, it would be impertinent to apply this to the works of the ceremonial law, which came only 430 years after Abraham. But the justification of Abraham is the model of ours; see as proof, the last three verses of the same chap. IV to the Romans. I will not say more here for the preceding reasons. But I cannot help saying, that I have been and that I am still as if stunned and frightened, and that I do not possess myself, when I consider that a book which contains such palpable heresies, and such a positive condemnation of a fundamental point of our Reformation, far from having raised all the Reformed Churches against its Author, and having obliged them to stir everywhere, to have this book condemned and rejected, as not being at all of our Religion, and that by a general consent; it has been applauded in several places, and has been reprinted several times. O God! where are we? Return to us Lord, and do not abandon us altogether! It must be for that that we have fallen back into the ignorance of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, or into a state still without comparison more shameful and more criminal; which is a general negligence, and an absolute indifference for all that is called Religion. Now it is not the first; therefore it is the second. May God soon bring a remedy to it.

§.398. Concerning the reflections that the Author makes, Page 138, on the passage of Rom. 6:14, which says, that we are no longer under the law, but under grace, they are such, that one can say of them what the Author says of those of whom it is spoken there. There is something good and true there, but there is also much that is defective. First by the law of which it is spoken there, the Author means the dispensation of the ceremonial law only. And yet it is just and necessary, to understand there also the Moral law, with all its rigor and its inflexibility as a condition of salvation. Otherwise, if one understood this passage only of the legal dispensation, such as the Jews had before the coming of the Savior, would it be true what the Author himself says of it: That it did not propose to the sinner pardon and salvation as does the Gospel? For in this sense, if by these words, as does the Gospel,

he means, as clearly and as frequently as the Gospel does, he is right, even concerning this legal economy. But if he meant that absolutely, as if this economy did not propose at all pardon and salvation to the sinner, that is not true. It proposed it as the Gospel does. There is forgiveness with you that you may be feared. As I live, says the Eternal, I do not want the death of the sinner, but rather that he convert himself and live; and a thousand other places which it is not necessary to report here. Everyone knows that never has man been saved by any other way, and that there have been saved people in all centuries.

But to understand this passage, as one should, of the Moral law insofar as clause and condition of the natural law, which had been treated with our first Parents, and in them with all their Descendants; in which regard God had given it to men to be, according to His divine goodness, a true condition of acquisition of right to salvation: Then it is true with all rigor what the Author says. Which is, that it did not propose to men pardon and salvation as does the Gospel. Far from it, it damns all sinners without resource or exception whatsoever. It curses all those who do not accomplish it entirely and constantly. And it is in this regard principally, that these divine and lovable words, we are no longer under the law but under grace, are the subject of the greatest consolation of the faithful, although deliverance from the ceremonial yoke is also included therein.

The grace of Jesus Christ delivers us from the yoke unbearable for us, of the Moral law insofar as condition of acquisition of right to salvation, in which regard it is inflexible and without mercy. Which does not prevent this grace, from submitting us nevertheless to this divine law, and attaching us to it, insofar as it is the law of a Father appeased, by our Pledge all good and all-powerful. It is the law of a Father who gives us in it the model of perfection, to which our divine Pledge has satisfied for us, to which we must tend and aspire through love, through duty and through gratitude to be pleasing to Him. But it is nevertheless at present the law of a father, who asks of us only an obedience of respectful children; but whom He knows, and whom He supposes to be too weak to satisfy Him in all; and who also promises us to forgive us as a good father forgives his child who serves him: Malachi. 3:17. Ps. 103:13, 14, there being no longer question at present of satisfying His justice, which has received through our Pledge, double for all our sins.

The obedience that we owe Him at present, is no longer the condition of acquisition of right to salvation; but it is a condition of homage renewed through affection, although due: homage which submits us and which humbles us under the supreme domination, of our adorable father; a condition of love and gratitude, for the inestimable and gratuitous gift, which He has made us of this salvation in His son.

It is in this sense that what we are no longer under the law but under grace, is a true motive to holiness and to good works. For then one does works with affection, with joy, with frankness and tranquility, and by a truly filial love worthy of a child of God. Instead of if you leave to works the quality of condition of salvation, or of condition

of acquisition of right to salvation, you may well say that we are no longer under the law, but under grace, in the sense of the Author; the poor consciences on the rack will be deaf to these words, which will profit them nothing; they will not be capable of appeasing their troubles: on the contrary, you will see the wisest and the best-intentioned (even these without comparison more than the others) desolated, afflicted, discouraged and two fingers from despair. For the reason that this clause of salvation, necessarily inspires them with a spirit of servitude which holds them again in fear, and in a perpetual dread and anxiety. Is that the Gospel, which tells us everywhere: For the rest my brothers rejoice in the Lord. Rejoice always in the Lord; yes I tell you rejoice, be always joyful. Phil. 3:1. And 4:4. 1 Thess. 5:16. And how to rejoice when one has death in one's bosom, and when one carries one's damnation marked in ineffaceable characters, in the most important part of one's Religion? This Theology inspires only fear, anxiety and desolation; and the Gospel which is good news, inspires only love and joy, as one understands well enough by these words of the beloved disciple: There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear brings punishment, and whoever fears is not accomplished in love. I. John 4:18. These are therefore contrary and very opposed things. That is why as it is impossible to banish fear from the heart of the most saintly, as long as one will leave to works, the quality of condition of acquisition of right to salvation; it is impossible also to inspire in them in this case, a perfect love for God; nor consequently to make them do works which are completely pleasing to God. For God does not esteem any to be good, unless it has pure love for principle.

The preceding thought responds well enough to the one that begins at the bottom of page 141, where the Author claims that it is only the Jews who have been under the law and not other nations; a sign that he understands no other law in the preceding passage than the ceremonial law. Whereas it is certain, according to God and truth, that every unconverted person is still under the law, and not under grace, in the sense of St. Paul. That is to say, he is still under the curse of the law; he is still under the law as a condition of salvation, and with the same clause under which all men were created in Adam; and by which also they were condemned in him and with him, for not having fulfilled it. And it is an astonishing thing to see a Reformed Pastor, being either so unknowing or so bold, as to speak otherwise; and even more astonishing to see that no one reprimands him for it.

For myself, I declare here, that although I have no other vocation than that which belongs to every true Christian, it is impossible for me to remain silent in occasions so dangerous for the faithful. And that as long as God will leave me the power to handle the pen, and that I will see Protestant Doctors, of whatever good intention they may seem to be motivated by; who will strive to have received among the Faithful, pernicious and damnable dogmas: but accompanied and seasoned with all that could be capable of making them embraced, by people little instructed or little enlightened: or even capable of surprising very enlightened persons; but who are not on their guard, because they believe themselves in no danger; I will make all my

efforts to uncover these heresies, so that they may be rejected. And I believe I have the same vocation for that, as that which every faithful Subject has tacitly from his Prince, to uncover traitors (unrecognized by his principal servants) who would try to subvert his peoples to attract them to the service of his enemy. And the same again as any man faithful to his master, to cry, to the wolves! if he sees coming wolves covered with sheep's skins, to strangle his flocks; if these disguised wolves are unknown to the shepherds, or these shepherds are asleep. For the consequences that might result from it, I commit them to the Providence of God whom I adore.

What the Author has just said, comes back to what he says a little further on, Page 144, that to be freed from the servitude of the law, Gal. chap. V, is nothing other than that Christians are no longer obliged to practice circumcision, nor the other ceremonies of the law. It is true that this is what the Apostle has directly in view in his Epistle to the Galatians; but it is indubitable notwithstanding this, that his principal conclusions in this same Epistle, and which speak of our deliverance from the law, have their force and their intention on all the law in general, both ceremonial and moral. And also it is certain, that the servitude from which Christ has freed us, does not terminate only in the deliverance from the servitude of the ceremonial law; but it consists also, and principally, in that He has discharged us from the yoke of the Moral Law itself, insofar as condition of salvation, in the sense that it was for Adam in his innocence. For in this manner the least transgression of this law is damnable and irremissible. And in this regard, we are born transgressors from the womb, and under Condemnation; how then could it be given to us, as a condition, capable of withdrawing us from this condemnation? It has already pronounced against us.

Thus all those who are outside the communion of Jesus Christ, are still under this clause under which Adam was. They must provide a complete obedience irremissibly to the Law: which is however impossible to do by themselves, since they have already transgressed it; that is to say, they are already condemned as the Savior himself says: John 3:18,36. Now to be delivered from this terrible condition, by the satisfaction of Jesus Christ, embraced by a lively faith, deserves well, it seems to me, the name of liberty with which the Son of God has made us free. And this explanation and application, fits very perfectly with the precaution of the Apostle, of which Mr. Osterwald speaks, when he says you are called to liberty, only do not take this liberty for an occasion to live according to the flesh. Gal. 5:13.

Indeed, this danger is even greater, in explaining liberty par excellence, as I have just done with all the good Reformed, and with our most excellent Theologians, than in restricting it to the sense of the Author. And even this danger will always subsist, as long as one will not have scraped from the word of God, all the doctrine of grace, and of the free pardon of sins. For always as long as that will last, there will be miserable people who will turn this grace into dissolution, and who will abuse this holy and salutary doctrine. But for that is it necessary to abolish it and stifle it entirely, and damn those to whom it could be salutary, to want to save those who

will be lost whatever one does? Or is it necessary to confound the law with the Gospel, make half-Jews instead of true Christians, condemn the spirit of adoption which makes us cry Abba Father, and reduce all men to mercenaries and self-righteous, who would not dare hope in Jesus Christ, if they do not have a good provision of good works to present to Him, to help Him pay our debts: as if He were incapable of doing it Himself alone?

Moreover, God has also given to His children, in favor of their Pledge capable of everything with Him, truly filial affections towards Him; so that they serve Him with joy and with frankness, without terror and without fear, as legitimate and well-born children do, very respectful towards a good father, wise and venerable who loves them, and whom they honor with heart and affection, although their childish weakness makes them subject to stumble often. But that does not worry them at all; or at least not at all to the point of making them fear being disinherited, and treated as slaves, for faults of weakness and surprise; they would believe they offend their good father by such thoughts. And also fathers among men, although they are wicked (to reason as our Savior does) do not use such rigor towards their children; they never disinherit them except for proud, outrageous and untamable rebellions; how would God who is infinitely good be inferior to them in that? His children are sure that the paternal goodness of their Father, is content with their good will, and the sincere efforts they make, to conform to His, as closely as possible for them; and that by means of this He easily forgives their weaknesses, as a good father forgives his child who serves him; as He Himself says.

Remarks on the second Part of the same Treatise.

§399. What the Author says at the bottom of this page 267 is very good; for it is certain that if Morality gives the knowledge of duties, to which properly it must today be destined, towards the faithful: It is uniquely the use that one can and that one must make, of the fundamental dogmas of the Gospel, which is capable of giving the affection, the courage and the resolution to apply oneself to it. Of which one sees a ravishing proof to the sovereign degree, in the excellent Exposition of the English catechism, translated into French and reprinted here already some years ago; this golden book in this regard, has never had its equal. This is why these three things remain of an equal necessity.

I. Morality, to teach us very distinctly what our duty consists in, and the misfortune where we are for not having followed it; and to excite in us the desire to find a remedy for our misery.

II. The dogmas of the Gospel, which present to us this perfect remedy, on the part of God gratuitously and as a pure gift, in the merits, obedience and death of His own eternal and only Son Our Lord Jesus Christ.

III. The use and natural effect of these Evangelical dogmas, which is to win our heart, and to reproduce in it a true love of God, pure and filial; which is afterwards the true

source and the true cause, of the sincere and exact observation of Morality; as much as we can be capable of it in this life.

§400. Here, Page 272, one cannot help being scandalized to the end, by the procedure of the Author, who prefers the definition of the Holy Supper, given by the Socinians to those which have been given until now by all the Orthodox, in all our Catechisms and our Confessions of faith. Here are the very terms of the Catechism of the Socinians of Racow.

"Qu. What are the precepts of the Lord Jesus, which are commonly called ceremonial? Rx. There is only one, namely the Lord's Supper. Qu. What is the Lord's Supper? Rx. It is an institution of the Lord Christ, that His faithful break and eat bread, and drink the cup, for the purpose of announcing His death, which ought to remain until His advent."

One has only to compare this with the terms of the Author, to see that what he says is only a faithful translation of it, or very nearly; he has added nothing to it except the word redemption; but the Socinians also use it in their way. Why then make oneself for pleasure, suspect of heresy by such conduct, when one wants to pass for orthodox? Why want to banish from this definition, our spiritual nourishment and our union with Jesus Christ, under the pretext of obscurity, since this is essential to the sacrament, in which we are given on the part of the Lord, to drink and to eat? Is this not a nourishment that unites itself to our own bodies, that is to say, to our own persons by drinking and eating? And what we are given therein to drink and to eat, bears by mystery, the name of the body and blood of Christ, of His body broken for us, and of His blood shed for the remission of our sins, of which the bread and wine are the symbols. How to better make all this felt to children, whom one instructs as one should, than by making enter into the definition of this sacrament, the symbol of our Spiritual nourishment, and of our union with Jesus Christ? It is impossible not to be here in the utmost surprise; for this obscurity is light itself.

§401. The aim of Morality, says the Author Page 275, is to act on the heart of man and on his passions. By Morality I mean here the law and its explanation. Now the aim of this is not today what has just been said, since the law by itself engenders in a sinner, only anger, according to St. Paul. To act on the heart of man and on his passions, to change this heart, to take away its anger and its pernicious preventions, to make it a good friend of God and affectionate to His service; that is the aim and effect of the Evangelical dogmas uniquely; these dogmas alone are capable of such an effect. But Morality makes known to such a regenerated heart, what it must occupy itself with to be pleasing to God in its actions.

§402. And when it does not establish, he says, page 277, the absolute necessity of the observation of these duties. But this absolute necessity, as St. Peter says on a similar subject, is a yoke that neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear. This is the yoke of the law, considered as a condition of acquisition of right to salvation, such as Adam had in his integrity and before his fall. It is this yoke principally from which

our Divine Redeemer has delivered us, and which has made that the perfect observation of the law, is no longer for us of necessity of means, but only of necessity of precept, according to the distinction used among Theologians. For in truth, there is now no duty of Morality, which is of an absolute necessity for salvation, except a perfect sincerity in the service of God; a desire and a true resolution to observe them all, all the rest of our life, by means of the help of God which one implores on this subject; and this as much as the human weakness which is in us, will be able to permit. The violation of whatever particular duty it may be, when it happens through infirmity, through precipitation, through surprise or through ignorance, and not of deliberate, obstinate and incorrigible malice all together; damns no one among those who are in the covenant of grace. It cannot even prove, that one has not yet been until then in the grace of God, and truly converted; as appears in the examples of Scripture, with regard to all sorts of sins.

§403. M. Osterwald does not want one to say; That under the covenant of the Gospel, it is only a matter of receiving and accepting the salvation which has been acquired for us: and that the Gospel requires works only by motives of gratitude and love. page 280. However this is very precisely the truth, as I have sufficiently shown previously. And in my opinion, if these words are not a real apostasy and a formal renunciation of the Gospel it is very nearly so. And if the Authors of whom he speaks enter into dispute, and refute the reasons which seem to be contrary to it, that is what one could never praise them enough for. Is it possible that a Reformed Pastor has the boldness, to oppose the Gospel and the salvation of men, as directly as one does here! That is incomprehensible. And I would have had my head cut off a thousand times, to assure that one would not find a single one, who was capable of such a wandering, if I had not seen it with my own eyes. I do not expand here as I could, because I hope that God will one day do me the grace, to find the occasion to make public, my Treatise on justification, which will put, with His help, this matter in a clarity so vivid, so consoling and so lovable, that it will rejoice and content all true faithful, who think of their salvation in the right way.

§404. M. Osterwald reproaches certain Authors, that they apply themselves rather to saying touching things, than to thinking and speaking correctly. It is for the Reader to judge here by what precedes, if he himself succeeds well at the latter in rejecting the former. It must be said here that these two things are of an equal necessity. You may reason correctly, if you do not move, the sinner does not listen to you, or he mocks your correctness and makes no profit from it. But if once you have moved him, softened or frightened him (it does not matter how) he is much more capable than of hearing reason. The number is only too great today, of these Catos and these apathetic Stoics, soft, nonchalant and indifferent on all things, who only moralize with gravity, and with a great correctness of reasoning: and who with all that produce nothing, or less than nothing, for the advancement of the flocks in true piety; a country unknown to themselves, or nearly so.

§405. A little lower down in speaking of the same. They expose devotion to the mockeries and contempt of Libertines. But what is there that is not exposed to the contempt and mockeries of Libertines, if it is not libertinage and impiety? To please them it will be necessary therefore to be silent about all that will be good, touching and pathetic for good people, in the sacred dogmas of the Gospel? Libertines mock all the reasonings which tend to convert them, when they are not of the utmost correctness and solidity; they divert themselves with the most convincing and the strongest, that it may be possible to produce in this design; and they mock and play finally, with all that one can advance that is most nervous and most invincible, although accompanied by the most overwhelming and most pathetic movements, which would be capable of moving rocks, so to speak, and they hiss those who employ them. What remains therefore that is not exposed to their profane laughter? This is why one can say that the motive that the Author advances here, to make one abstain from the most useful and most effective seasoning, which can accompany preaching, and which is more capable than any other of making it produce good fruits: this motive, I say, is ridiculous and vain as much as possible. For the best things serving as toys to Libertines like the most despicable, and these like the best; they should not even be thought of. One must do one's true duty, in relation to the true faithful, and to those whom ignorance, surprise or seduction still retain in sin, to touch them, move them, instruct them, and edify them; without worrying about what the profane and the Libertines will say, or will think of it.

The Holy Spirit acts thus everywhere, and often gives as refrain to His discourses, the most exposed to the mockeries of the profane, these words. That those who have ears to hear, let them hear. Leaving the others for what they are.

§406. The Author says that his thought is, That Christians should stop principally, at the books which prove the truth of Religion, and which establish in a solid manner, the fundamental articles of the Christian faith. Page 299. And I hold that it is only those who doubt it, or who destine themselves to teach the peoples, who should read those books, and that the number of the former among the Reformed peoples, is very small. The truth of a Religion being naturally imprinted in the heart of all men, and the proper light, inherent and inseparable from that which is the true one, I mean the true Reformed Christian Religion, being so vivid and so striking by itself, that it persuades with justice and legitimately, any person who envisages it fixedly and closely: without her being obliged to go to inform herself of what the impious, the profane and the villains have to bite at it. Thus the simple faithful who do not doubt the solidity, and the salutary excellence of our holy Religion, in reading these sorts of books, would only see there very often bad reasons to doubt it, without understanding perhaps, the good reasons that one has not to doubt it at all.

§407. The desire to see our versions of Scripture perfected, is of hardly good augury in the Author, Page 302. It is only apt to finish making him suspect. For if there are defects in our versions, as that may be; it is only Socinians and Arminians their first cousins today, who believe them very important.

Remarks on Mr. Osterwald's Catechism.

First edition of 1702.

§. 408. ALTHOUGH it appears sufficiently from pages 37, 38, 50, 51, and 69 of this Catechism, where the characteristic and Principal points of our doctrine are treated, in opposition to the Socinians, that the Author is not a Socinian, but orthodox; and that his design consequently in all this work, seems for this reason to have been good; that it seems especially so in the admirable manner in which he proposes to receive children to communion: There are nevertheless many things which cause extreme pain to well-marked and well-knowing Reformed people. And all this is reduced almost to the fact that he does not at all support true piety on the dogmas of the Gospel, as does admirably the excellent exposition of the English catechism, of which I have already spoken: it is also that he expresses these sacred dogmas too weakly throughout, except in the places cited above; and that sometimes he rejects, either through oversight or otherwise, our explanations and our definitions of the Mysteries, to substitute for them the proper terms and definitions of the Socinians, which are, ordinarily, defective and captious. Consequently in another edition, this Catechism could be rendered much more perfect, better and more edifying than it is, at least according to the opinion of good Reformed people, and good connoisseurs, who have nothing else in view but the glory of God, and the edification of His Church. Here then are some Remarks, which one prays the Author to be willing to take in good part, as coming from people who wish him all prosperity, and who have an interest in the glory of God and the salvation of men.

§.409. The summary of the preaching of the Apostles, which he represents on page 11, says nothing that is not true, except these words: The true God had not been well known until then, which cannot be granted thus nakedly. But although this summary says almost nothing but what is true, it does not say enough. For there is no Socinian who would not admit all that is contained therein, according to the terms that the Author has found good to employ there. Yes, but the Author will say, it will be in another sense than I understand them, and than all the orthodox understand them. That may be, I will say, and why then not employ terms to which they cannot subscribe, and which distinguish us so clearly and so perfectly, from heretics as fraudulent and as pernicious as those are, that there is no one who can be mistaken about it?

This skill to characterize oneself so well by one's expressions, and to distinguish oneself throughout, as much as possible, from heretics as dangerous as those, is it not important enough today, where the danger is so great, to make a considerable part of the care of a good Catechist? Indeed this would be a delicate and important part of the instruction, which would be necessary to all catechumens today.

If for example, the Author had expressed this summary of Apostolic doctrine, by the words that I am going to put or by equivalent ones, he would not have associated the Socinians in the precise statement of his Religion. I would say therefore, that the

summary of the preaching of the Apostles was to teach in general: That there is only one Divinity, which is the author and creator of all things, and whose unique Essence subsists in three distinct persons, who are named the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit: That these three are only one God according to them, to the service of which one must be consecrated by baptism: That although this true God had made Himself known to men, clearly and salvifically until then, without discontinuing since the beginning of the world, but not to a great number, to speak comparatively; He had made Himself known still much more clearly, more universally and more perfectly through His Son, eternal and the only one begotten of Him: That this Jesus who had been crucified by the Jews, having offered to God in His death, a propitiatory sacrifice properly so called, for the Redemption of His Church, had risen from the dead on the third day, according to what He had previously predicted Himself: That He is the only Savior of the world by the price of His blood: That in Him and by Him alone one can be saved, and not otherwise: That He is the judge of all men, as He will show on the last day; and that all those who will believe in Him will be eternally blessed, but that none of those who will have ignored, misconceived or rejected Him until death, will be delivered from the condemnation, under which they are born in coming into the world.

§.410. In the enumeration, Page 15, of the misfortunes from which Religion delivers us, why omit there the subjection to death and to the rejection of God forever, into which we have fallen by the sin of our first father; since it is only our Redeemer, who delivers us from this infinite misfortune by His satisfaction? Is that not the principal thing? Why omit it then? Is it perhaps in order not to advance anything to which a Socinian could not acquiesce? I do not believe it; but even if that were the true aim, one could not better succeed in it.

§.411. To this question: Page 20. Who was Jesus Christ? One answers: He was the Son of God and the Messiah, whom God had promised to send to the world. The Socinians will say just as much again. Why then not say, or approximately, to avoid their Society: He was the eternal son and the proper son of God, the only begotten of Him, of the same nature and of the same essence as Him, the Messiah whom God had promised to send to the world for the Redemption of His Church?

§.312. Q. Page 26. Should one believe what the Prophets and the Apostles have written? A. Yes; They were good people and persons worthy of trust; one could not impute any crime to them; there is nothing in their books which gives grounds to suspect them of lying; and one sees reigning throughout good faith and piety.

But is this not a very defective Response? Also it is taken almost word for word, from the catechism of Racow, or of the Socinians. They speak quite the same in questions 4, 5, 6, and 7. Why say nothing of the Divine and supernatural inspiration, by which these books were written? And of the Divinity which appears clearly in the doctrine, and in the way of writing of those who wrote them? All this is very surprising and very little edifying. For as good people and of good faith can be mistaken, if there is

nothing more here, one will correct them without ceremony, when one believes oneself more enlightened than they, and when one judges that they have been mistaken. As one would correct Calvin, Cocceius, or another Doctor man of good, of whom one can say with truth, all that is said here of the Prophets and the Apostles.

§413. Q. What do you say of the doctrines of Holy Scripture? A. They agree with the natural lights, and with the sentiments natural to all men. Such are these doctrines, that there is a God, that there are punishments for the wicked, and rewards for good people.

What poverty! What a meager and miserable praise! That would better suit the Offices of Cicero, the works of Seneca or of some other Sage among the pagans, than the word of God and divinely and supernaturally inspired books.

All that is still perfectly Socinian. Nothing of the Divine and supernatural inspiration of this divine doctrine. Nothing of its supreme and boundless authority in matters of Religion, to which one must yield and acquiesce: when this divine word would announce things, which reason cannot attain, and which would oppose themselves to our sentiments. Nothing of its truly divine Morality surpassing all others. Nothing of its marvelous suitability to our needs, notwithstanding its incomprehensible sublimity in the mysteries. Nothing of its prophecies manifestly fulfilled. Nothing of the admirable discovery which it provides us, of the origin of our misery and our corruption, although Subjects and creatures of a holy, just and wise Majesty. Nothing finally of its Divinity which is all palpable by these characters. It is therefore certain that this shameful and relaxed Response, still leaves us here, inappropriately, in the communion of the Socinians; although one should avoid it, since this itself makes a controversy between them and us.

§.414. Q. Page 38. Why do we give to God the title of Father? A. Because He is the Creator and the Master of all things, as St. Paul teaches. 1 Cor. 8:6. We have only one God who is the Father, from whom are all things. And particularly we call Him Father, because He is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ and of Christians.

Could a Socinian ever explain himself more successfully to cover his perfidy, by which he believes that Jesus Christ does not have God for Father in another title than we do, and to explain his belief on this question? Why does the Author abandon us so often, to express himself in a manner which can serve these vile and dangerous heretics and us? All our Catechisms in this place, speak well in another manner.

Calvin responds to this question, in the one which is commonly explained in our Assemblies: That it is in regard to Jesus Christ who is the eternal word begotten of Him before the ages: then being manifested in the world has been approved and declared to be His Son; but insofar as God is father of Jesus Christ, from that it follows that He is also ours.

That of Heidelberg does not directly ask itself this question: but to the one which comes closest to it, which is the 26th, it responds: That the eternal Father of our

Lord Jesus Christ, is also my Father and my God for the love of His son Jesus Christ. Which marks well enough that He is not Father of Him and of us in the same title.

That of Mr. Drelincourt responds to the same question in these words. It is because He has begotten Jesus Christ of His own substance, so that the Father and the son are only one. John 10. He continues thus: Q. Does some consolation come to us from the fact that God is the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ? A. Yes very great: For from that it follows that He is also ours. He has predestined us to be made conformable to the image of His son, so that He may be the firstborn among many brothers. Rom. 5.

Finally I do not want to cite all the particular catechisms which have been made among the Reformed, which distinguish themselves here from the Socinians in such a sensible manner, that no child could mistake it: I cite only the most famous. But none of this accommodates our Author; that is why also one sees nothing here which can excuse him; and if he or someone else could give me some reason, to remove this scandal from me, he would do me a pleasure and to many others.

§.415. Q. Page 39. What is it to believe in God? A. It is first to believe that there is a God; and secondly, to serve Him, adore Him, and expect our happiness from Him alone. It is in these two things that faith and Religion consist. As the Apostle says to the Hebrews. 11:6. It is necessary that he who comes to God believe that God is, and that He is a rewarder to those who seek Him.

Does this Response still distinguish and separate us, neither from the Jews, nor from the Turks, nor from the Socinians? One sees well that no. Why then, since it is about faith, and that there is no more saving faith today, which does not have a direct relation to Jesus Christ the only savior of the world; why exclude Him here, and not say a little word about Him?

But let us join together by anticipation, all that is said of faith in the present catechism, so that one does not say that we weaken it by separating it, since one place can give light to the other.

Q. Page 82. But what is this faith which justifies us? A. It is the true faith which necessarily produces good works, and which operates through charity.

Does this Response better characterize justifying faith than before? Will this not still be the faith of the Jews and of the Socinians? Why reject and despise all the definitions of faith which have been given among us? Is there none which has the happiness of pleasing the Author? One will admit to me that this is not a good example. For there is no heretic among all those who call themselves Christians, without counting the Jews, who could not accommodate himself to that which is given here; and he gives none elsewhere, if it is not on page 33, where he says, that faith is a belief and a firm persuasion, of the truths which God has revealed to us in His word. And does this place us better than before? Are we not thus always in fraternity, even as for justifying faith, with the Jews and the Socinians? And if they

have justifying faith, they can therefore be saved like us; why then separate ourselves? That is thus justifying faith and salvation very well established, without having to do with Jesus Christ; who would have believed it? But let us return to our steps.

§.416. Page 46 and 47. Q. What are the consequences of Adam's sin? A. The miseries, of this life and principally death. Q. What harm is it that Adam's sin has done to his Descendants? A. It has subjected them to sin and to death. Rom. 5:12. By one man sin entered into the world and by sin death; thus death has come upon all men, because all have sinned. Q. Are all men sinners and inclined to evil? A. Yes from their childhood, and this bad disposition, is what one calls original sin.

That is all that the Author says of Adam's sin. He says nothing of the eternal death or of the rejection of God forever, which this sin has drawn upon us; for also he believes nothing of it, as appears on page 105. There he says, that God does not punish children with eternal punishments, except for their own sins. But, he says, He often envelops them in temporal punishments, with which He punishes the sins of their fathers.

He says that; but I would very much like to see him obliged to prove this management by Scripture; since it is only by Scripture that one can, and that one should decide this point. He believes without doubt, that it would be a great injustice in God, to punish children with eternal punishments for the sin of Adam, or in general for that of their fathers. But he admits nevertheless that God punishes sometimes children, with temporal punishments for these sins. However, as punishments are always punishments, he differs from the other Reformed, according to him, only from more to less. That is to say, that he admits that God can well do a small injustice, but not a great one. Is that not saving the honor of the justice of God, in a very edifying and very triumphant manner?

But if one wants to see clearly if the Author in that, is a good Reformed and true disciple of Scripture, let one cast one's view on our §. 255, and 256. On question 10 of the Heidelberg catechism, and to Eph. 2:1, 2, 3, to say no more.

§.417. The Author says on the name of Christ, that this name means that Jesus Christ has been clothed with the Holy Spirit, and that He has received from God the gifts necessary to be our King, our Priest and our Prophet: Page 49. Afterwards he continues thus. Q. What are these gifts? A. It is a perfect knowledge of the will of God, the power to do miracles, an accomplished holiness, the Holy Spirit which He was to pour out on His Church, and an infinite power in Heaven and on earth.

That is assuredly still one of the most surprising places; and I can say in truth, that in my life I have never seen a Reformed speak or write in this manner. For it seems by these words, that he regards Jesus Christ absolutely only as a simple man. Like Moses for example, who has also received the gift of doing miracles. If he regarded Him as God-man, such as He is indeed, he should not speak of this gift; since He has received it only in receiving the hypostatic or personal union, with the second

person of the most holy and adorable Trinity. And if in his idea of Christ, he included the Divinity itself, could one say of Him that He has received from elsewhere the gift of doing miracles; since He has it of Himself, insofar as He is eternal and all-powerful God?

Or else one therefore makes of Him a precarious, created and produced Divinity by the supreme Divinity, according to the Socinian sense. If he responds that he means that He has received this power, as for His humanity and not as for His Divinity; one will reply that humanity has never received this power, except in receiving the hypostatic union with the supreme Divinity by the incarnation, as we have just said; since the power to do miracles by Himself, as He did them, is incommunicable to the creature, being the infinite power itself, which no one can possess except the supreme and infinite Being: this power being inseparable from the supreme Divinity. That is why the power to do miracles, which was in Jesus Christ as in its source, cannot at all be mixed in Him, with the gift of knowledge of the will of God, of an accomplished holiness etc. which are of a completely different nature, and which have relation in this discourse, only to His humanity simply.

In a word, this language is perfectly Socinian; and there is there, at the very least, a great incongruity, and something extremely shocking and scandalous, for the true adorers of the Supreme Divinity of our all-powerful Redeemer.

§.418. Q. Who then will be the most guilty of all men? Page 67. A. It will be the bad Christians; and those among the bad Christians to whom God will have granted more lights, and more opportunities to make their salvation, will be the most miserable.

Although this expression, of making one's salvation, is not particular to the Author; I cannot help noting, that it is not at all acceptable, that it is not according to the analogy of faith, nor even reasonable. I have no doubt that one owes this expression, to the heresies and to the Papist superstition, which claims to make its salvation, that is to say, to establish its right to salvation, by force of macerations, satisfactions and merits.

If salvation, as we believe it; is a pure donation that the mercy of God makes us, giving us His Son for perfect Redeemer; how and in what sense can one say that we must make our salvation? One can and one must say, that we must receive it and embrace it with humility, gratitude and avidity: far from neglecting it, when God presents it to us by His grace. But that we should make it, that has no good sense, and strongly smells of the mercenary and the self-righteous.

§.419. Q. In what does the office of Pastor consist? Page 72. A. In two things. 1. In preaching the Gospel. 2. In governing the Church by discipline.

But where is the administration of the sacraments? Can one guess a legitimate cause for such an omission? That is impossible for me. For all that one could say on this subject, would be only very disadvantageous to the Author, who in passing always pleases the Socinians.

§.420. I will not scrutinize here the doctrine of the Author, concerning good works, it relates perfectly to what we have seen of it, on the Treatise of the sources of Corruption. He is there completely self-righteous and not at all orthodox. He is also there in manifest contradiction with himself: therefore he is also orthodox there. I refer all these confusions to my Treatise on justification, which I still hope from the grace of God, to see one day public: there where this important matter, will be by the favorable help that God has lent me, in such a great light, that there will be only the ill-intentioned who could be mistaken about it; people who do not expose the faithful to such a great danger, as those who sin there by surprise, very persuaded of their errors, as happens to several; and who are dazzled by the threats and the promises, which are annexed to the commandments of God.

However all admit that it is constant, that it is not at all our works, to speak with justice, which acquire for us, or which are capable of acquiring for us the effect of these promises, or of guaranteeing us from these threats, to speak rigorously; but the sole mediation of Jesus Christ, to the exclusion of everything else. One sees therefore well that for the faithful, there is no necessity to good works for salvation, drawn from these promises and from these legal threats, which no longer regard them as such; but that this necessity with them, is founded purely and simply, in the gratitude and in the love that we owe to God for His inexpressible gift which is pure and gratuitous; and in the natural duty to glorify God and to obey Him with joy: duty which is eternal and indispensable for all eternity, in all intelligent creatures.

But it is no longer for the faithful, (no more than for the blessed saints who are in Heaven) to merit before God, or to acquire from Him salvation; since all things are theirs; whether Paul, whether Apollos, whether Cephas, whether the world, whether life, whether death, whether present things or things to come, all things are theirs, and they to Christ, and Christ to God. 1 Cor. 3:21, 22.

The threats and the promises of which we speak, are therefore no longer for them, than the affectionate cares of an appeased father: who on one side, wants to prevent them by his threats, from neglecting their infinite happiness, and their duty as respectful children towards him; and who on the other, uses encouragements, to animate them by the promises of his paternal goodness, to love him always more and more: although all things are theirs, as we have just seen.

And as we can render nothing to God, which, properly speaking, can recompense Him for this infinite gift, which He makes us of salvation in His son, even if we would live a thousand years since our conversion; There is absolutely no incongruity in saying, and in believing, that God gives this grace of salvation, with the impression of a sincere conversion and of a lively and unfeigned faith, when it pleases Him, and at the moment that it pleases Him. To some from their youth, who have the leisure and the contentment, to serve Him and to glorify Him all their life: to others very little time before death, although they have lived in impenitence until then; and who consequently, can only glorify Him for it by their conduct, in blessed eternity.

That is clear, since all depends absolutely on a gratuitous gift of His pure mercy, which is founded for ones as for others, on the sole mediation, and on the justice and the obedience of our great and perfect Redeemer, which is imputed to them. No one can merit this grace, nor recognize it sufficiently by his conduct if one wants to consult the word of God, and even right reason.

That is what is conformable in this place, to the analogy of faith and to Scripture. And nothing in the world can be capable of preventing us, from speaking and from believing in this way, except a remnant of the heresy of the self-righteous: which is naturally rooted in the heart of man, because he had been created under this condition, as Jean Despaigne represents it so well, in Chapters III, IV, and V of the second section of his Popular Errors.

And although one boasts with the mouth of the contrary, and that one does not even believe to be tainted with it: If those who are repugnant to speak as I have just done, consult themselves well, they will easily notice, that it is because they do not consider maturely enough, and that they do not represent to themselves vividly and distinctly enough, that the salvation of the sinner, such as it is represented to us in the Gospel, is a pure and simple donation, which is made to us by the pure mercy of God in His son: without our merits, nor all that we can do, having the least part in it as meritorious or impulsive cause; nor as a reward for Him, which has the least proportion with the gift that He makes us of it; and that it is always some remnant of pride, which is contrary to this glory of the mercy of God in Jesus Christ, which prevents us from speaking of it worthily and boldly as Scripture does. Let us therefore pass this article and let us follow.

§.421. Q. How many kinds of laws did God give to the Jews? Page 96. A. He gave them the moral laws which regulate morals: The Political laws which regulate Civil government: The ceremonial laws which prescribe the external acts of Divine service, such as Sacrifices etc.

Since the Author marks for us the true use of the first two kinds of laws, why does he mark for us a false, or very defective one of the Ceremonial law? Few people will admit the use and the goal that he gives to it. To observe the ceremonies, was not to serve God properly speaking. And when one would admit it, he omits their true nature and their principal use; which was, to serve as types, emblems and figures which represented in an all divine manner, the principal mysteries and the great truths of the Gospel.

But those who like the Socinians, do not believe any Mystery in the Gospel, nor that there is any very transcendent truth concerning our Redemption, also believe nothing of this use, nor of this nature of the ceremonies of the law. And now the Author, Reformed Minister, comes to place us by his catechism, in this damnable society of renegades of true and saving Christianity.

§.422. Q. What is confidence in God? Page 111 A. It is a firm assurance, by which we rest on God alone, persuaded that if we fear Him, He will grant us all the goods which

are necessary for us, and that He will deliver us from all the evils which could harm us. Q. On what is this confidence founded? A. On the fact that God is all powerful, on the fact that He loves us as a good father, and on the promises He has made to us.

One builds therefore here our confidence in God, on the fact that if we fear Him, He will grant us His graces, on the fact that He is all powerful etc. without saying a word about Jesus Christ. Who would ever have expected that? It must be admitted that it is a surprising thing, and unknown among true Christians, at least so it seems to me.

But to show that this is not just a slip, and that there is something affected about it; let us see what the Author says about it even more amply elsewhere.

Q. What is the confidence which must accompany the service of God? Page 129. A. It is a firm persuasion, by which we are assured that God will accept the service that we render to Him, and that He will hear our prayers. Q. Can we have this confidence? A. Yes, provided that we fear God, and that we serve Him with a good heart. Q. But can we be assured that God will hear all our prayers? A. When we ask Him for things necessary for His glory and for our Salvation, we are assured to obtain them.

And not a word about Jesus Christ! There we are therefore again placed in the same communion and fraternity, even as for the confidence that we can and must have in God, in our prayers and in the service that we render to Him, with the Jews, the Socinians and the most infamous heretics, who will say just as much. How to believe one's eyes in such encounters, seeing this come from a Minister tolerated among the Reformed! Where was the judgment or the fidelity to the service of God, and the care for the salvation of souls, in those who gave him such a beautiful approval? O God! come to the aid of Your poor sheep, against which it seems that everything plots and conspires today to lose them!

§.423. Q. What is a sacrament? Page 214. A. It is a sacred ceremony that God has instituted, and that all Christians are obliged to practice.

Good God what a Response! Is it not like saying, that they are certain gesticulations, that God wants everyone to observe in His Church? And then that is all. Where then is the use, the goal and the meaning of these things? Not a word on that: it is not needed. Is that not surprising? Why remove from them the quality of signs, of seals and of assurances of the grace of God in Jesus Christ, which is proposed in the Gospel?

Here, for example, is the Response of the Heidelberg Catechism to this question, which is the 66th. The sacraments are visible signs, and seals, instituted by God, so that by their use He makes us better understand, and seals to us the promises of His Gospel; namely that in consideration of the sole sacrifice of Jesus Christ, once offered on the cross, He grants us the remission of our sins, and that He gives us gratuitously eternal life.

There is what is full and succulent. A Christian soul finds there its refection; it finds there what it seeks; it is content. Why then remove these things from us, to give us words which mean nothing? For myself I would almost say, that it is in order not to frighten away the Socinians, and in order not to move too far away from them who speak of it in the same way, in order to manage the Ecclesiastical reunion and the fraternity that one prepares with them.

§.424. Q. What is Baptism? Page 217. A. It is a sacred ceremony, by which we are received into the Church and into the covenant of God.

That is very dry, and greatly resembles a skeleton. Another would perhaps say: That it is a sacrament instituted by Jesus Christ, where by the visible sign of water and of washing administered in the name of the adorable and Holy Trinity, to all those who are received into His Church, the promise of salvation or of the remission of sins by His Blood, and of regeneration by the Holy Spirit, is sealed and confirmed in His Church, as a grace that God grants infallibly, to all the children of the faithful dying in infancy, and to all the adults who by a lively and unfeigned faith, have all their recourse to the mercy of God in Jesus Christ, for their salvation.

The Heidelberg Catechism is again rich and admirable on this. But here one removes from us again all that, to place there a ridiculous gesticulation and which means nothing; without saying why, nor without one being able to guess it while exculpating the Author.

§.425. Q. What is the Holy Supper? Page 220. A. It is a sacred ceremony, in which Christians eat bread and drink wine which are distributed there, in memory of Jesus Christ and of His death.

Let us now hear a little the Socinians in French, by translating here what I have cited previously in Latin, from their Catechism of Racow. Q. What are the commandments of the Lord Jesus, which are commonly called ceremonial? A. There is only one, namely the Supper of the Lord. Q. What is the Supper of the Lord? A. It is an institution of Christ the Lord, who wants the faithful to break and eat bread, and drink from the cup to announce His death; which one must continue until He comes.

Does one see any real difference between these words and those of M. Osterwald? Not the least. We have already seen above, what our catechisms say on this; but nevertheless I cannot prevent myself from reporting here again, the following two Questions and Responses, which are the 75th and 76th of the Heidelberg Catechism.

Q. How does the Holy Supper teach you, and assure you that you have communion with the unique sacrifice, that Jesus Christ has offered on the cross, and with all His goods? A. In that Jesus Christ has commanded me and all the faithful, to eat this broken bread and to drink this cup in memory of Him; and that besides that He assures me that His body has been as certainly offered on the cross and broken for me, and His blood shed for my sins, as I see in the Supper with my own eyes, that the bread of the Lord is broken for me there and that the cup is communicated to

me there. Secondly, that He also wants as certainly to nourish my soul in eternal life, with His crucified body and His shed blood, as I receive from the hand of the Minister and as I eat and drink with the mouth, the bread and the wine as true sacraments of the body and blood of the Lord.

Q. What does it mean to eat the crucified body of Jesus Christ and to drink His shed blood? A. It is not only to embrace with a lively faith, all the passion and the death of Jesus Christ, and thereby obtain the remission of one's sins and eternal life: but also to be more and more so united to the sacred body of Jesus Christ, by the Holy Spirit who dwells in Him and in us, that although Jesus Christ is in Heaven and we on earth, we are nevertheless flesh of His flesh and bone of His bones, and that we are eternally animated and led by the same Spirit, as the members of a body are by the same soul.

That is what is called speaking with an open mouth without prevaricating, and without adulterating the doctrine. The other particular catechisms that I have seen from among us, all unanimously relate to the same thing.

But, you will say, one does not say everything in a short definition; one explains oneself more afterwards, by representing the use of things. Well then! Let us see therefore the Question and the Response of the Author on that; here it is. Page 222. Q. What then is the goal of the Holy Supper? A. Jesus Christ established it to be a memorial of His death, and a pledge of His return. This is what the Apostle teaches us 1 Cor. 11:26.

That is all.

Is that satisfying what one should expect here from an Orthodox Pastor? Nothing less than that. Why make oneself suspect of heresy by preferring thus the ideas, the explanations and the proper terms of the most pernicious heretics, to ours which are full of force and unction to inculcate the truth? Why, as I have already complained about, want to banish from the idea of this sacrament, our spiritual nourishment and our union with Jesus Christ, under the pretext of obscurity; since that is essential to this sacrament, in which one gives on the part of the Lord, to drink and to eat? Is it not a nourishment which unites itself to our bodies, that is to say, to our persons, and which we receive by eating and drinking? And what one gives there to drink and to eat, bears the name in this institution, of the body and blood of Christ, of His body broken for us, and of His blood shed for the remission of our sins. How to better make all this felt to children, whom one instructs as one should, than by making enter into the definition of this sacrament, or at least into the explanation of its use, the symbol of our spiritual nourishment and of our union with Jesus Christ? which is what M. Osterwald finds too obscure. But this obscurity is light itself, in comparison with what he says about it after the Socinians. It is therefore an affected reticence, and a manifest and sovereignly criminal suppression, of the principal foundation of our consolation, of our hope and of our salvation.

§.426. But finally you will say, it appears at least enough from the pages of his Catechism, which you have cited from the beginning, that M. Osterwald is absolutely not a Socinian. I admit it. But why then everywhere else does he meet with them in abandoning us? Or why does he leave us confounded pell-mell with these pernicious heretics?

That is what is incomprehensible to me, and which renders his Catechism captious and seductive, instead of rendering it instructive and edifying. It is not enough to teach once in passing, the fundamental truth of our salvation, and then leave it there without making any more use of it, suppress it and make it eclipse afterwards from all the places, where manifestly it would be necessary that it appear. Far from acting in this way, if one believes it fundamental, one must make it felt and return everywhere, and build on it all that is good, important and salutary in Religion. And it is for that that one calls it fundamental, because it is the cause of all that is in God favorable for us, and that it is the cause in us of all that can be found there agreeable to God. That is to say that it is the cause of the love of benevolence that God has for us, and at the same time the only cause of the filial love and of gratitude, that we have for God, and of the legitimate and salutary principle of all the works that we do, and that God deigns to approve. But to act as our Author does, is manifestly to ravish from it its quality of fundamental truth and to reduce it to the rank of common truths, unimportant, which do not carry consequences, and on which one can err without danger. And how to call that?

Moreover, when one is orthodox and wants to well instruct youth, it is not enough to teach them these great truths once in passing, without making any more use of them afterwards; but one must also teach them to express themselves everywhere in terms that the most dangerous and the most pernicious heretics cannot have in common with you and which give everywhere marks of distinction and of opposition with them, as much as possible. For we must flee them and avoid them according to the exhortations of the Apostles. One must fear them like hell, and have in common with them only the least possible; since they are true enemies of God, of salutary truth, and of the salvation of men.

But instead of that, one can say of M. Osterwald, without doing him any injury, that whether by design or otherwise, it is not possible to be more favorable to them, nor to approach them more closely, than he has done in saying he is one of us. The precise or the summary of his Religion is the same as theirs, as we have seen on page 11. The idea that he gives of Jesus Christ page 20 is the same that these perfidious ones will give. His sentiments concerning the authority and the perfection of Holy Scripture and of its doctrines, are theirs; lax, treacherous and captious as much as possible: page 26, 27. His reasons for the title of father in God, are theirs page 38. The nature and the quality of his faith, which he says is justifying, is theirs, and even that of the Jews page 39, 82. His thoughts on the nature, the use and the necessity of good works for salvation, are those of the Arminians, first cousins of the Socinians, purely mercenary and self-righteous, page 39 and throughout. His thoughts on the

ceremonial law, are those of the Socinians page 96. The nature and the foundations of the confidence that he has in God, are theirs, and even of the Jews: page 111 and 129. The nature and the uses of his sacraments are theirs page 214, 217, 220. And what more is needed to declare oneself in their favor?

One can say in truth, that if there were no other catechism than his among us (which God forbid! and from which may He preserve us by His great mercy, as from the greatest of misfortunes!) one would see in a little while mutual tolerance and Ecclesiastical communion, established between us, the Socinians and the Arminians, and very soon after fraternity, since he makes all possible advances for that. This is also without doubt, what these heretics triumph over; and for which in any case, they will be forever obliged to him. For even if this design would not succeed; at least they see well that he has done his best to advance it.

May God by His infinite mercy kindle again the Zeal and the love of truth in our hearts, which seems to be extinguishing everywhere!

END.

NEW REFLECTIONS ON PHYSICAL PREMOTION, AND ON GAMES OF CHANCE.

Serving as a final Response on one side TO THE INVECTIVES OF Mr. NAUDÉ,
Professor of Mathematics in Berlin, AND ON THE OTHER TO MONSIEUR DE
JONCOURT, Pastor at The Hague.

By **JEAN LA PLACETTE**.

AT THE HAGUE, From HENRI SCHEURLEER, Bookseller near the Court. M. DCC.
XIV. [1714]

NOTICE

Here are two small Responses of a rather different character, but which nevertheless tend toward the same goal, I mean to end, if I can, two very disagreeable Disputes. In one I must repel the outrages of an Adversary the most fierce, the most carried away, and the most violent, that one has ever seen; and everyone can judge without difficulty if this occupation has something very pleasing about it. In the other I cannot avoid contradicting a man of great merit, for whom I have much respect, and with whom I would passionately wish to have no quarrel. This double Dispute being so contrary to all my inclinations, I am thinking very seriously about ending it, and it is to this principally that I destine these two Responses. I give them in the order in which I composed them, and in which it was necessary for other reasons to have them printed.

In rereading the first, I noticed a place that needs to be retouched. On page 56... I refer my Reader to page 34 to find there the proof of what I say, that Mr. N. who defends Physical Premotion, does not believe it. But there is firstly an error in the Number. Instead of 34, one must read 61. And besides, in this page 61, this proof is not sufficiently unraveled. But Mr. N. gives it himself in pages 269, 270, 274 of his 1st Volume, where he maintains that the Predeterminants are very wrong to agitate this Question, which it is impossible to decide without temerity, and which gives to the Adversaries of Christianity the occasion to make objections that he believes insoluble. He even proves by his own example that one can be Supralapsarian without being Predeterminant. This being so, this Dispute will have something very singular, Mr. N. will maintain what he does not believe, and I will refute with all my strength what I believe. This alone being posited, should we claim that there is anyone with enough leisure to read our Books?

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ABBREVIATED RESPONSE TO THE INVECTIVES OF Mr. NAUDE

CHAPTER I. Occasion and design of this Writing.

It has pleased Mr. N. to publish against me the most malignant Satire, or rather the most violent and most carried away invective that one has ever seen. It is a small thing to say that he keeps with me none of those measures of honesty, politeness, and propriety, from which all those who are not from the dregs of the smallest People, never believe themselves dispensed regarding the most unknown. The most crude insults, the most odious qualifications, the most atrocious accusations, cost him nothing. If one believes him, I am nothing less than a Blasphemer. This is already a lot. For who does not know that Blasphemy is, if I dare say it, the basis of that frightful sin, which will never be forgiven, neither in this century, nor in that which is to come? Who does not know that the ancient Law subjected it to one of those most rigorous punishments, ordering that those who would commit it, be stoned? Who does not know finally that even today the Civil Laws of most Christian States, perhaps even of all, punish it corporally? So that, if Mr. N. persuaded his Readers of the truth of his Accusations, everyone sees what I should expect.

But that is not all. If one relies on Mr. N., I am not a simple Blasphemer. I am a notable Blasphemer. I carry my blasphemies to the last excesses, to excesses complicated by fury and impiety. These are blasphemies that make the hair stand on end, that mortally scandalize good people, that make them shudder with horror and fright, and among which there are some that he has not dared to report, one in particular that he would not report, even if to engage him in it one offered him millions. See pages 332, 334, 383, and 387. These last two places are remarkable, and I ask my Reader to find it good that I report them. Here is the first. "He (La Placette) makes to this end a discussion so researched, so exact, so pushed, and reasonings so cruel, so scandalous, so abominable, and so capable of wounding the heart, the soul, and the conscience of all good people, that for millions I would not want to burden this Work with it. This is what I protest in sincerity, and before God."

The second resembles the first enough. "Here," he says, "is a frightful, cruel, and inhuman Chapter, destructive of souls, and of Religion. O God, is it possible that a well-intentioned man, as I still want to believe this one to be, can push things to such an excess! God keep me from reporting all that is in this Chapter, to expose it to the eyes of the world: I would believe I was sinning mortally in doing that."

I will not insist any further on this first head of Accusation. The second is that I am a Slanderer, p. 349 and 493, and by that same an imitator of the Demon. For who does not know that it is this detestable sin that has made him be given the name of Devil? But that is not all. I am a cruel, barbarous, inhuman Slanderer; and what carries this frightful excess to its height, is that I choose for the object of my

slanders, not some vile Creature, not even some innocent, some Saint, but the Creator himself, the Holy of Holies; the Master, and the Monarch of the World.

If one believes him, I have carried myself to excesses that pass all imagination, and which have never had similar ones since the world exists. Page 390. I have committed the most horrible and the most enormous sin that a man of my character can commit. Page 365.

If one believes him, I speak against my conscience. Page 334. I dispute with all my strength against the Supralapsarians, and against the Predeterminants; and yet I am one myself, and am most certainly. Page 276, 302, 303.

That is what I was when Mr. N. was composing his Book. Today it is quite another thing. Literally I have become since that time blacker than a Demon. In effect I am obstinate enough not to surrender to the triumphant proofs of Mr. N. This being so there is no return for me. Here indeed is the thundering Verdict that he has pronounced from the height of his Tribunal from the first page of his Preface. "As I am persuaded by good reasons that the Cause that I defend here is the Cause of God himself, I have so great a confidence in my heart, and so full an assurance that he will assist me favorably with his help, that I hope perfectly from his Grace to put at this time the last hand to a Work so important. I mean to say at least as much as suffices to make it so that henceforth none of those who will have seen my Defenses, will take the liberty any more to write lightly against a Doctrine which cannot be combated without making war on God directly, as it is going to appear in this Work: at least certainly am I very sure that none of those will fall any more into these excesses by inadvertence, as has often happened until now, and will commit no more this horrible fault, or it must be that he is altogether an incarnate Demon, if he comes still as in the past, to exercise his eloquence, and his art of speaking well, to vomit against God blasphemies which are such that there cannot be any more outrageous against him, in the abysses of Hell."

There is a sample of the treatment that it has pleased Mr. N. to give me. When after such excesses, I would lose patience, and would repulse a little harshly such envenomed traits, I am sure that many people would not find it bad; St. Jerome permitted it, or, to better say, recommended it in an occasion much less pressing. It is when one is accused, or even suspected of heresy. "In hæresis suspicione nolo quinquam esse patientem." What would he have said, not of a simple suspicion, but of a public accusation, not of a simple heresy, but of a blasphemy, and consequently, of a crime all otherwise atrocious than heresy?

In that however I am not of the sentiment of this learned Man. I am persuaded that not only those who are suspected of heresy, but further those who are accused of blasphemy and of impiety, are, the same as all the other oppressed and persecuted for justice, called and obliged to suffer patiently the wrong that one does them. I have for that the example of Jesus Christ. He was accused as well as me of

blasphemy. He was even more than once; and he suffered it always with an admirable gentleness and patience. Can I fail in trying to imitate so great a model?

I even doubted for a time if it was not my duty to be silent; or if I should speak, and justify myself from so many unjust Accusations. I have considered on one side that to respond exactly to a Book of eleven hundred pages, and to raise all the blunders, all the false reasonings, all the wanderings of the Author, all the illusions that he tries to make to those who have the patience to read his Book, would require at the very least a thick in folio. Can I however hope in the age, and in the state, in which I am, to see the end of a Work of such long breath? And when I could, would it be easy for me to find a Bookseller who would want to take charge of the costs of the printing? Even if it were printed, would one find Readers, who would have the courage and the resolution to read it? Finally, even if one could hope to overcome these difficulties, would this design be worth the trouble that it would be necessary to take to succeed in it?

I would refute Mr. N., I admit. But would I destroy by that the dogma of Premotion? Would the other partisans of this Dogma believe themselves vanquished for that? Would they not be quit by disavowing him? And is it not sure that they would do it, since he does not defend this dogma with as much address and ability as the Thomists? Would one not accuse him of prevaricating in admitting that Scripture has nothing express on this question?

These considerations prevent me from thinking of making an exact and detailed response. But also on the other side I have difficulty persuading myself that it is permitted to me to be silent. I am accused of horrible crimes, and such, in a word, that there are very few reprobates in Hell who have committed similar ones. Can I prevent myself from defending myself without sinning against what I owe to God, to my neighbors, and to myself.

God by his immense goodness has preserved me from the crimes of which I am accused. Should I not publish the good that he has done me? The lightness, and if I dare say it, the malignancy, of which one sees only too many examples in these sad times, could carry some of the less reasonable of those who will read Mr. N.'s Book, to believe that I am guilty. Should I not do something to spare them this sin?

I owe to myself the care of preserving this little that I can have of reputation. Can I neglect this interest without doing myself wrong? And am I not as strictly obliged to render to myself what I owe myself, as to acquit myself of this duty toward my neighbors.

For all these reasons then, I resolve to respond, but in few words, without bitterness, without carrying away, without insults, being persuaded that the proceeding so little Christian of my Adversary does not authorize me to imitate him. I hold it certain that one should as little follow bad examples as give them. And regarding insults in particular, my maxim has always been that of a great Man of our century. "Ego bis illum vincere semper existimavi, qui rationibus cum vincat, vinci se conviciis libens

patitur." I have always regarded as doubly victors, those, who having the upper hand on the side of reason, let themselves be vanquished for insults.

That is my resolution. But as I feel my fragility and my weakness as much as anyone, and as I believe I know to what point it is difficult to be master of oneself in these occasions, I pray God to sustain me in this one, to strengthen me more and more in the resolution that he has inspired in me, and above all to do me the grace to execute it.

CHAPTER II. Whether I have blasphemed by refuting the Dogma of Physical Premotion.

I am accused of nothing less than having vomited I don't know how many blasphemies, impieties, and slanders, against God, and against men, in disputing against the Dogma of Premotion. I believe I am justified in regarding this accusation, not only as atrocious, and as defamatory, but as the most defamatory, and the most atrocious, with which it was possible to charge me. I believe I have proved in my Treatise on Games of Chance, that absolutely speaking blasphemy is the blackest and most detestable of all crimes, and that sacrileges, incests, and parricides, do not approach it. It is besides a crime that one cannot either excuse, or extenuate in anyone whatsoever, but above all in a Minister of the Gospel, particularly still in a Minister who has passed his life in meditating on, and explaining the Morality of Jesus Christ. What indeed would it be if one could say that all the use he has made of his meditations and his researches has been to learn to blaspheme in a manner more outrageous, than the most impious, and the most lost do each day? That goes so far, and carries the crime to such an excess, that however persuaded I am that there are great villains in the world, I do not know a single one that I would dare suspect of anything similar. I believe that nothing approaches more this excess of wickedness, than the malignancy of those who believe others capable of it.

Finally, blasphemy is a crime that the Civil Laws of several Peoples punish by death. So that if the devout, the charitable Mr. N. could succeed in his black project, and persuade all the earth, as he is himself, that I am a consummate blasphemer, it is beyond doubt that it would be necessary that I lose my life by the infamous hands of an Executioner. This is what I could not avoid, and from which neither Mr. N. nor any other could guarantee me.

What evidence of truth, what force of proofs, what means of conviction, would it not be necessary to have to authorize an accusation so terrible? Jurists ordinarily say that when it concerns a capital crime, the proofs that one produces to convince the Accused of it must be more dazzling than the most luminous day, "Luce meridiana clariores." What will it be then of a crime so distinguished, or to better say of such a heap of great crimes?

It is however true that when one looks for these Proofs in Mr. N.'s Book, one looks for them uselessly. One does not perceive them anywhere. One does not even find

the impious and blasphematory propositions that one claims that I have spread, so that the Reader does not know most of the time what it is about.

To proceed regularly it was necessary to articulate these propositions. It was necessary to report them in so many words, without changing anything in them. It was necessary to indicate the pages, the lines even of these pages, where they are found. It was necessary to mark what each of these propositions can have of impious, and for this effect it was necessary to begin by defining blasphemy. It was necessary to research what crime is in it, and to show that it is found in the denounced Propositions.

But none of all that appears in Mr. N.'s Book. One finds indeed on each page that I blaspheme. But what is this blasphemy, this is what one sees nowhere.

I have tried to guess it, and here is what appears to me the most plausible. I have undertaken to refute the Dogma of Physical Premotion, and I have produced various proofs to make felt its falsity and absurdity. But as the most striking are without doubt those that one takes from the consequences that are born of this frightful Dogma, I have indicated these consequences, and have attached myself to proving two things, one that they are horrible, and abominable; the other that they are necessary and inseparable consequences of a Dogma of Premotion.

As the first is of the utmost evidence, and as no one contests it, I have insisted less on it than on the second. But whatever it may be I have expressed it, and repeated it in various places, as one will see presently. However, by I don't know what dazzlement, Mr. N. has imagined that I adopted all these consequences that I have drawn from the Dogma of Premotion, that I put them on my account, and that I was as responsible for them as if I had spread them of my own accord.

It would have been to be wished for his own honor that he had considered attentively these two things. One, that there are three manners of writing, or of uttering blasphemies. The first, to report them historically as uttered by others. The second, to deduce them by way of reasoning as necessary consequences of a Dogma that one refutes, and of which one wants to make felt the venom, or the absurdity. The third, to affirm them and spread them of one's own accord, as believing them true.

He should have added that it is only this third manner of uttering blasphemies that is criminal, and that the first two are innocent.

But Mr. N. appears to have quite another Morality. He believes that one blasphemes, not only in speaking of one's own accord, but further in reporting historically the blasphemies and impieties of others, and with stronger reason in deducing them as consequences of the Dogmas that one refutes. For regarding the first, it appears, by the two places of his Book, that I have reported in Chapter I, that he regards as a great crime the simple report of the blasphemies of an Adversary. In the first he takes God as witness that for millions he would not want to burden his Work with

my words. And in the second he asks God very devoutly that he keep him from reporting all that I say in a certain Chapter, and that if this misfortune happened to him he would believe he was sinning mortally.

That shows that according to this new Casuist it is not a simple sin, but a great and enormous sin to report historically the pretended blasphemies of others.

But in that it is certain that he is mistaken. This is what appears clearer than the day by the example of the Sacred Authors, who did not make themselves any scruple about reporting in so many words the blasphemies of the impious. Witness David who teaches us that the fool has said in his heart, There is no God. Witness the Author of the Books of Kings, and the Prophet Isaiah, who have inserted in their holy Writings the horrors uttered by Rabshakeh; Ezekiel those of the captive Israelites; Daniel the blasphemy of Nebuchadnezzar; and the Evangelists those of the Scribes, of the Pharisees, of Caiaphas, etc.

But this is not properly of our subject. For as I do not remember having reported any blasphemy as uttered by anyone whatsoever, I have difficulty believing that Mr. N. accuses me of it. He regards, if I am not mistaken, only the second manner of enunciating impious propositions, which is to deduce them by way of reasoning from the Dogma that one refutes. For regarding the third, which consists in blaspheming of one's own accord, it would be necessary to have lost all shame to accuse me of it.

Everything thus reduces to the consequences that one draws from the Dogmas that one wants to refute. It is in that apparently that consists the crime of which one accuses me, and I find a place in Mr. N.'s Book where it appears that this is precisely his thought. Here it is. "What cruelty, what slander, and what injustice! or what frightful dazzlement! To give oneself a thousand tortures, and a thousand movements, to extort these horrors from a sentiment which being envisaged with cold Blood, and by equitable eyes, is no more poisoned than that same one that we profess." A. page 349. This is to say quite clearly that my crime consists in the efforts that I make to draw impious consequences from the Dogma that I combat.

But also the dispute being reduced to this point it is very easy to terminate it. For firstly I agree to the fact. I admit without torture that I have drawn impious consequences from the Dogma of Premotion. But I do not agree that there is any evil in doing it, provided that besides these consequences are well drawn, and hold firmly to their principles. I maintain that that is permitted, and I am surprised to see that in a century so enlightened, and where one has spread so much light on Logic, I have need to prove a thing as evident, as the innocence of this manner of disputing.

Is it thus necessary to teach a Professor that there are two manners of disputing, one direct, that some name offensive; the other indirect, and which consists in showing that the Dogma that one attacks, leads to something absurd?

Is it necessary to teach him, that as one knows that there is this great difference between the true and the false, that instead of sometimes being able to conclude the true from the false, one can never conclude the false from the true. "Ex falsis," one says in the Schools of Logic, "Ex falsis quandoque verum, ex veris nil nisi verum." Thus the more a consequence is absurd, the more it is impious and blasphematory, provided that besides it is linked tightly with its principle, the more the proof that one draws from it is strong, convincing, and demonstrative.

Is this not the same a truth that Mr. N. has expressly recognized? "This Argument," he says page 6. A., "is one of these Arguments, that Logicians call ab absurdo, and which appear all the stronger, as the consequence that they draw is more evidently false."

This is thus that we reason ordinarily in our familiar discourses. This is above all thus that one acts in dispute. For example, Descartes, and his Disciples maintain, that if evidence could deceive, it would be God himself who would be the cause of our error. A thousand people say each day that to multiply the Divinity is to destroy it. All our Theologians maintain that if Transubstantiation took place, the certainty of the Senses would be ruined, and that thus Faith would lose the firmest of its foundations. A celebrated Author has proved that if Socinianism were true, one would have nothing good to oppose to the Mahometans.

But here is a Judge, and a Witness that Mr. N. cannot reject. It is himself. Disputing against the Socinians who ravish from God the glory of his Prescience, he opposes to them his predictions. "If," he says, "God not knowing certainly the future predicted it, it could happen that his prediction would be belied by the event; which would show clearly two things. One that he would have been mistaken, and that he would have fallen into a positive error, which would be a great defect, of which the all-perfect Being is very certainly incapable. The other is that he would have exposed himself voluntarily to this danger even if the thing had happened as he had predicted it, if it were true that he had known it only by conjecture, which one regards as a blamable imprudence in a simple man, and which consequently cannot be imputed to God, cannot be it without blasphemy."

Here is something much stronger. Mr. N. has turned back against Permission all that I have objected to Premotion, and has drawn from this first act all the consequences that I have drawn from the second. If thus I have blasphemed in acting in this way, how can it be that he is not guilty of the same crime, since he has done all that one finds so bad in me? Here thus is a great Accomplice, who is besides my Accuser.

But here are even greater ones. These are the inspired Authors, the Prophets, and the Apostles, who have employed this same manner of reasoning, and in employing it have authorized it. Elijah has said to the Israelites, If Baal is God, Follow him. St. Paul has said to the Corinthians, "If Christ is not resurrected, our preaching thus is vain, and even we are found false witnesses of God. If Christ is not resurrected, your faith is vain, and you are still in your sins. Those thus also who sleep in Christ have

perished. If we have hope in Christ in this life only, we are the most miserable of all men." He says to the Galatians, "If you are circumcised, Christ profits you nothing. Christ is annihilated with regard to all of you who want to be justified by the Law." St. John all the same assures that if we imagine ourselves to be without sin, we make God a liar.

If it has been permitted to all these holy Men to draw these impious consequences from the errors from which they wanted to distance the Peoples that they instructed, and if it would be a true impiety to accuse them of blasphemy for having done it, with what justice can one treat me as a blasphemer for having done the same thing?

But here is something a little more particular. I am neither the first, nor the only one, who has drawn the consequences that one reproaches me for from the Dogma of Premotion. To say nothing of the Molinists, the Lutherans, and the Remonstrants, three of our most famous Theologians, Robert Baronius Professor of Theology in the University of Aberdeen, John Strangius holding the same rank in that of Glasgow, and Richard Baxter celebrated Presbyterian of England, Author of several excellent Works, of which most have been translated into various Languages, these three pious and learned Authors have written amply and exactly on this matter, and have combatted Premotion with the same arms, with which I have served myself after them, and of which the principal ones are the frightful consequences that they have drawn from it.

This is what Strangius has done with much management, but Baxter, without managing anything; for regarding Baronius I can say nothing very precise about it, not having presently under my hand his Metaphysics, where he treats amply this question. Baxter has explained himself strongly, and perhaps a little hardly in a rather ample Dissertation, which he has inserted in his Method of Theology, and which has been translated into French, and printed in these Provinces since the year 1687.

There he keeps no measure with the Predeterminants. For example, he says on page 492 that the dogma of Premotion makes God a cruel Tyrant. Page 495 that it charges his Laws with injustice and opprobrium. In the same place, that it profanes grace, and the actions of Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit. Page 497 that it makes God more cruel than if he constrained men to sin. Page 499 that it represents God under the form of the Demon.

I have abstained from these sorts of expressions, which ordinarily serve more to irritate spirits than to persuade them; and I have reduced myself to what I could not omit without prevaricating.

Whatever it may be, if I am a blasphemer; how is it possible that, either Baxter, or those who have preceded him, and who have followed him, have been exempt from this horrible crime? How can it be also that being so guilty, one has let them live and die in peace, without making them the least reproach about it? Why is it necessary

to accuse me alone, in the time that I have such a great number of accomplices? Is this not to show that one has double weight, and double measure?

After such strong proofs I do not fear that one will doubt my innocence. I fear only that some quibbling spirit will take it into his head to say that in truth it is permitted to employ sometimes these sorts of proofs, but that sincerity and good faith do not suffer that one does it without warning the Adversary that one wants to convince of what one says to him. He will add that as I have not done it, I must not find it bad that one has taken my thought badly. This is to what I respond two things.

The first that it appears indeed that what one demands is not necessary, since the sacred Authors, that I have reported, have omitted it; and in effect the thing understands itself well enough. Also I am persuaded that no one other than Mr. N. has been deceived by it.

But I add secondly that I have done, and redone what one wishes. For not only do I adopt nowhere these impious consequences, but I declare expressly and formally that I detest them. Here are the first words of my Chapter VIII which contains the most triumphant of our proofs. "What appears to me the most insupportable in the sentiment that I examine, is that it gives visibly place to say that God is the true Author of sin, which all Christians regard, with reason, not as a simple error, not as a simple absurdity, but as a blasphemy."

In another place I maintain that one could not give a more frightful idea of the Dogma of Premotion, than in proving, as I do, that it ruins absolutely the certainty of Faith. Pag. 318.

I carry even the thing so far, that instead of admitting these consequences as true in themselves, I declare that I am persuaded that the Predeterminants themselves detest them as well as me. Here are my words. "I declare thus in the first place that when I say that the dogma of Physical Premotion makes God Author of sin, I am very far from thinking that the Defenders of this sentiment believe, or maintain expressly this impious and blasphematory proposition. God forbid that I have such thoughts. I am persuaded that all the Predeterminants, without excepting any, have horror for this impiety, and that if they saw that it is a necessary consequence of their hypothesis, they would renounce it with pleasure, and with all their heart. I am persuaded that far from the principle making them receive the consequence, on the contrary the consequence would make them abandon the principle."

But nothing appears to me more express than what I say on page 378. There I give a sure and infallible means to render useless the escape taken from the distinction of the formal and the material. I say that for this effect one has only to propose our Argument in these terms. "It is absurd to say that God is as truly, and as properly the physical cause of evil as of good. It is however true to say that he will be it if Premotion takes place. Thus the Dogma of Premotion is an absurd Dogma."

Could I say in a more intelligible manner that my Argument is of the order of those that one calls *ab absurdo*, and that it tends, not to show positively that God is the Author of sin, but to prove that the dogma of Premotion is absurd, by this convincing reason, that if it were true one could not prevent oneself from admitting this impious, and blasphematory consequence?

CHAPTER III. Reflections on Mr. N.'s procedure in this first Accusation.

After all that I have just said, I believe I can maintain without fear of being mistaken, that by the grace of God I am innocent of the crime of which I am accused. I believe I can suppose this fact as constant and verified. But also on the other side this alone being posited, many things appear to me to be of the utmost evidence.

I. The first that Mr. N. cannot wash himself of what there is of unjust and criminal in what one calls a rash judgment. In effect no one is ignorant that this sort of judgments have been very expressly condemned, and very severely forbidden by Jesus Christ, and by his Apostles. And if anyone doubted it he would only have to take the trouble to read what I have written on this subject in the IV. Volume of my Essays on Morality, Disc. 7.

However, has one ever seen a judgment more rash than that which Mr. N. has pronounced against me in declaring me guilty of the horrible sin of blasphemy, without having, I will not say any solid reason, but even any apparent reason, any shadow of foundation to accuse me of it?

What is more rash than a judgment pronounced by an incompetent Judge, and who has over me no shadow of power and of authority? "Who are you, you who judge the Servant of another?" says the Holy Apostle. What is more rash than a judgment pronounced with parties not heard, not even called, so that one has seen the execution of it before knowing that one was accused?

Mr. N. could have avoided this excess, if he had observed exactly the Precept of Jesus Christ, who does not permit us to carry our complaints before the Church, except after various particular warnings, given to the one who has angered us. "If your brother has sinned against you, go, and reprove him between you and him. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen to you, take still one or two with you, etc."

If Mr. N. had followed exactly this Law, so wise, so salutary, so worthy of its holy Author, he would have warned me of what shocked him in my Book. I would not have delayed on my side to respond to him, and I have some hope that I would have satisfied him. But the impatience of his zeal has not permitted him to subject himself to the rules of our Savior, and he has preferred to make the fracas that we have seen, than to act in a manner conforming to the most indispensable maxims of the Gospel.

II. But here is something much more grievous. If what I say is true, it is beyond doubt that Mr. N. has slandered me, but slandered me in the strongest, and most atrocious manner in the world. In what in effect does Slander consist if not in spreading rumors disadvantageous to the reputation of one's neighbor, and in making him pass for guilty in the time that he is innocent? And is this not what Mr. N. has done against me, if what one has read in the preceding Chapter is true? If that is so, he accuses me of having blasphemed in the time that it is beyond doubt that I have done nothing that approaches this horrible crime. This slander would not cease to be frightful, even if Mr. N. had expressed it only verbally, and in the presence of few persons. What is it then just to think of it, if one considers that he has put it in writing, that he has published it through printing, and that it is not up to him that all the human race does not have knowledge of it, and that it does not pass to the last men who will inhabit the Earth?

He has thus slandered me, and slandered me even in the most atrocious and most bloody manner. He knows however what sin slander is. He cannot be ignorant that this is one of those capital sins, which close the door of Heaven, and of which St. Paul has told us in two places of his Epistles, that those who will commit them will not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

It is true that one must understand this only with this restriction; Unless those who will have committed this sin, or some of the others similar, repent of it sincerely, and in good faith. But it is also very certain that this repentance could not be sincere, nor consequently useful, if it is not accompanied by two things, by an effective amendment; and by an exact care to repair the evil that one has done. This is on what all the Sects, which divide Christianity, agree, and which I believe I have proved strongly in my abridged Morality.

This is what causes me real pain on the subject of Mr. N. In effect if the judgment of condemnation, which he has pronounced against me, had consisted only in some words let go without much reflection, I would attribute them without repugnance to the furies, and to the excesses of this bitter zeal, of which St. James speaks, and which makes so many illusions to persons otherwise very well-regulated, and who appear to have good intentions.

But this is what it is impossible for me to apply to Mr. N. A Book of eleven hundred pages has not been made in a quarter of an hour. It was necessary to meditate on it, and to think about it before putting one's hand to it. It was necessary to employ time to write it. I am assured on the other side that it was necessary for him to contest for entire years with the Bookseller to be able to obtain from him that he would make the costs of the printing. And during this time he has persisted in the design of publishing it, and has finally executed it.

He believes even still today to have done very well. He has written to me on this subject a rather humble Letter, where he condemns the harsh and shocking expressions, which he has used, but he maintains that he is right in the foundation,

and that in all that he has said, he has only followed the movements of his conscience. I would insert here this Letter, if I had his consent, and if I did not know that even in the most declared wars, there are measures that one must keep with the most enraged enemies.

Here thus are entire years, during which it is evident that the conscience of Mr. N. has always been, and is still today in a deplorable state, and where one can say of him without exaggerating what St. Peter said of Simon, that he is in a very bitter gall and in the bonds of iniquity. And that being so how can one reconcile such obstinacy in great sins with this eminent piety, which his Friends attribute to him, making him pass for one of those people that one calls Fine in this Country, because one claims that they refine on Devotion, and carry it much further than the common of the faithful?

This is on what it is impossible for me to satisfy myself. I cannot in effect content myself with what one has told me that it is a dazzlement similar to that of Noah, still less with what others have added on the fervor of his zeal, on the doctrine of his intentions, and on the privileges of ignorance. For regarding the first, an injustice, a slander, furious transports, atrocious insults, excesses in a word, continued, renewed, defended, during years, are quite another thing than dazzlements of a moment: And if all the rest had place, it could justify the fury and the violences of the Jews, the cruelties and the barbarity of the Persecutors, of whom Jesus Christ has said that even when they would make us die they would believe to do service to God.

I have besides a small difficulty on the purity of the zeal, and on the goodness of the intentions of Mr. N. It is that this zeal has permitted him to keep during several years a profound silence on the pretended Blasphemies, which have caused him so much emotion, and that it has only awakened when they have appeared in my Book. He knows that the Chairs and the Pulpits of the Temples and of the Universities of Germany resound with almost nothing else. He knows with how little management the Lutherans display them for a hundred years. He knows that, as I have remarked, the late Mr. Baxter gathered most of them in a long Dissertation inserted in his Latin Method, translated into French, and printed in these Provinces since the year 1687. He knows finally that besides the notoriety of these facts, I had warned him of it, and that thus he could not ignore them.

From where comes it thus that all that could not extract from him a single word during so many years, and that as soon as my Dissertation appeared, he put on paper such a heap of declamations, of exaggerations, and of repetitions, which have made two Volumes of eleven hundred pages? This is what appears very difficult to guess, posited that he has acted by a pure movement of zeal, but which has nothing but what is very easy, if one posits that he has acted by other motives.

Whatever they may be I maintain to him that he could not wash himself of the crime of slander, and of all the shame attached to this great sin by the unanimous consent

of all the Peoples, if he does not do promptly one or the other of these two things; either if he does not indicate exact, and detailed citations of the impious and blasphematory Propositions, of which he accuses me, and does not show that I have advanced them, not as consequences that I draw from the Dogma that I combat, but as certain truths, that I spread of my own accord; or if not being able to do it, he does not retract expressly, and publicly the defamatory accusations with which he has blackened me, and with which he has filled all his Book.

I declare to him still that if he cannot do the first, which in effect is impossible, and if he does not want to do the second, which would be so just, his conscience is reduced to a deplorable state. He is engaged in a sin of habit, and by that same incompatible, not only with this happy state that one calls the state of grace, but still with the quality of faithful and of child of God; in a capital sin, and which holds a rank which distinguishes it only too much among those which close the door of Heaven; I maintain to him finally that if he does not pull himself out of this sad state, it is impossible that he not perish.

It is to that alone that I stop. For regarding what there may be of disobliging and of dishonest in the manner in which he has acted with me, besides that he has recognized it himself, which suffices for me, besides that, I say, I would be quite ridiculous if in an age so advanced, and after all that I have written and preached on the forgiveness of injuries, I were the least bit sensitive to it. Thus far from such a small thing being held in my heart, I pray my Reader to pay no attention to it. The principal is the obligation where he is to retract what it would be greatly to be wished that he had never advanced. This is on what he has a very great need of the help of God, and it is our duty to ask for it with ardor from this Father of mercy, who alone can give it to him.

CHAPTER IV. Second Accusation. I spoke against my Conscience in disputing against the Predeterminants and against the Supralapsarians.

Here again is a very atrocious Accusation, and which yields in nothing to the preceding one. Nothing could be more cowardly, nothing more unworthy, I will not say of a Pastor, I will not say of a Christian, but of a man, than the proceeding that Mr. N. attributes to me.

If one believes him, I am persuaded as strongly as anyone of the truth of Physical Premotion, and of that of the Sentiment of the Supralapsarians; and however I do not cease to attack one and the other of these two Dogmas, the first with all my strength, and by a rather long Treatise, and well worked; and the second in passing, but by reasons that one cannot deny that they are not, or that they do not appear, very strong.

Thus in the foundation I am Predeterminant and Supralapsarian. I am it even very certainly. See page 276 and 302. Thus still in combating these two Dogmas I speak against my Conscience, and say the contrary of what I know. Page 334. And what there is of considerable, I carry myself to such an excess, only by a perfect hatred against Supralapsarianism, this same Supralapsarianism, of the truth of which I am persuaded in the depth of the heart, and in believing it true, I do not cease to detest it with horror. See page 3 of the Preface.

Here without doubt is a very terrible Accusation, and which cannot be well founded, if I am not the last, and the most detestable of all men. With what proofs should it not be supported, to be received by Judges even slightly equitable? Here however is what those of Mr. N. reduce to.

He produces two of them. He takes the first from the fact that in responding to a place of St. Paul, which implies that we have in God being, movement, and life, I have said that these words are verified enough in positing that God is the Author of our being, of our life, of our faculties, and consequently of our actions. page 427 of my Treatise.

He takes the second from the fact that in responding to another Objection, which tended to show that to deny Premotion is to render the Creature independent of the Creator, and wanting to prove the contrary, I have asked if it is not to submit absolutely, and in every sense, the Creature to the Creator, to say that this Creature has nothing that its Creator has not given it..... and that every time that it will please him he will turn it, incline it, bend it, and determine it, to do what he will find most appropriate. Page 428.

But to begin with the second of the Objections, because I have only a word to say on its subject, I have said in truth that God can turn the Creature, bend it, incline it, determine it to do all that he finds most appropriate. But I have not said that he can find appropriate to turn it, to incline it, and to determine it, to evil. I have said rather the contrary, not in some other Work, but in this one, and what is indeed more in the same page, and on the same Objection. Here in effect is what follows immediately what one objects to me. "It is good to remark that if we do not admit what one calls Physical Premotion, it is, neither that we reject all Premotion; nor even that we believe the Physical in particular impossible. We are very far from these two errors. We believe firstly that God moves us and determines us efficaciously; not to evil, but to good, and sometimes even to indifferent things." Page 429. If that is not clear and precise, I know nothing that should pass for such.

I. I say nearly the same thing of the other Objection. I have said that in my System God is the Author of our actions, and I want firstly that this manner of expressing myself be as precise, and as little susceptible of two diverse senses, as the terms of Predetermination, and of Physical Premotion. By what Right, and by what new Law, will this unique word, a single time employed on this matter, prevail over so many others? which on each page, and in each period, say the contrary? By what new rule

of interpretation must one count more, to judge the sense of an Author, on a remote place, than on a thousand, which are all conforming the ones to the others?

II. At worst it will follow from that that I have contradicted myself. But this being posited what can one demand reasonably of me, except to choose between the two branches of my pretended contradiction? And am I not always in time to do it? And when I will have done it, and when I will have declared myself for what I say everywhere, what advantage will Mr. N. find in it? Will he say that it appears by that that I am not infallible? Great marvel! Is there in the World a man mad enough to imagine being it? And is it necessary to make Books to force the most full of themselves to confess that they are not it!

III. But let us not go so fast. This expression, To be the Author of our actions, can it receive no other sense than that of Physical Premotion? If it can, as the thing is incontestable, Mr. N. holds nothing. As I am by natural Right the first Interpreter of my words, it will be up to me to explain myself on this, and equitable persons will have difficulty not believing that I speak sincerely in saying that I have understood this particular proposition in the sense that I give it everywhere else.

IV. But let us not stop at these generalities. This expression, To be the Author of our actions, is visibly equivocal. It can equally signify to be the mediate Author of them, and to be the immediate Author of them. When, for example, we say that the first Man is the Author of the evils that make us groan, we do not understand that he is so immediately by himself, but only by the intermediary of our Ancestors. Before thus accusing me of having contradicted myself, it is necessary to be in a state to prove that I have understood that God is the immediate Author of our Actions, without which the Accusation falls of itself. And how will Mr. N. prove it? How even could he do it even if the thing were true?

It is however easy for me to justify the contrary. It is not necessary for me for that to leave the Chapter which has furnished to Mr. N. the matter of the Objection. For in page 432 I say in so many words. "I will say finally directly, without detour, that the Modes (and consequently the Actions, which are one of the most considerable species of them) come from God, not immediately like the Substances, but mediately, and by the intermediary of the causes to which God has given the power, and the strength to produce them."

V. Here thus is the contradiction removed, and consequently the proof of Mr. N. completely ruined. But that is not all. I want God to be the immediate Author of our Actions. Does it follow from that that he is so of the evil which is found joined to them? He would be, I admit, if this evil were inseparable from the action, as it is in Lying, in Blasphemy, in the Hatred of God, etc. In this supposition God determining invincibly to the action, would determine by that same to the evil, which would be found attached to it. But is it not easy to understand that God determining to act can not determine to act badly, and that this evil, which is found joined to it, comes

from elsewhere, sometimes from the free will of the subject, sometimes from his bad disposition?

This is what one explains ordinarily by the example of a Horseman, who mounts a lame Horse, and who in spurring it truly makes it so that it walks, but is not the cause that it limps. This is what I explain amply in Chapter XI of the Treatise of which this one is the defense.

VI. But it is not necessary to seek so far the Sense of my expressions. I explain myself in the very place that one opposes to me. I agree there so little that, according to St. Paul, God determines men to evil, that I maintain there that from what this Apostle tells us, it does not even follow that there is any Concourse, neither predetermining, nor simultaneous. "I do not believe thus," I say in this place, "that one can conclude from these words any species of Concourse of God, neither predetermining, nor simultaneous. But even if one could, how could one prove that they induce precisely the first, which is the only one of which we dispute? Is there anything in the words themselves which makes it understood? Does it even appear that the Apostle had this distinction in view when he wrote what one objects to us." Page 428.

VII. To make Mr. N. feel the injustice of his proceeding, one would only have to ask him if he would be very pleased if one maintained to him that whatever he may say, he is not a Supralapsarian, and that he speaks against his Conscience when he boasts of being it. Would he approve that to convince him of it one produced to him these words from page 312 of Vol. I. "God has put on a new character in relation to men. It is that of Repairer and of Savior of a mystical body of poor sinners, which he has chosen for his heritage from among the corrupted and lost mass of the human race, and that according to his good pleasure, to the glory of his infinite goodness and mercy."

Constantly these words are more formal in favor of the Infralapsarians than those which he opposes to me are for the opposed sentiment. Consequently he has only to choose, and to do one of two things, either to renounce his Objection, or to give his hands to mine. Let him take that of these two sides which it will please him. He will find himself caught in his own nets, and beaten by his own arms.

CHAPTER V. Reflections on Mr. N.'s procedure in this second Accusation.

What I have just said suffices without doubt to annihilate the second Accusation of Mr. N. But as I work much less to justify myself, than to make him feel his fault, of which it is necessary that he know all the greatness to obtain from God pardon for it, I will make on this subject some reflections, from which it will be up to him to profit.

The first is that this second Accusation is perhaps the most atrocious that has ever been brought against the most villainous. In effect I know no crime blacker, nor

more horrible, than that with which it charges me. To write against a revealed truth is an action which cannot be innocent, even when one will do it in good faith, and in taking this truth for an error. But the sin where one falls in this fashion is light compared to that which one commits in writing against this revealed truth, knowing that it is revealed, and not doubting at all that God has marked it with his Seal. This circumstance aggravates the horror of this crime almost to infinity, by whatever motive one commits it.

This is however the excess that Mr. N. attributes to me. If one believes him, it is not by error that I write against Premotion. It is by pure wickedness, and in acting directly against my Conscience. But that is not all. One can commit this great sin by diverse motives; by complaisance for some enemy of this Dogma, by resentment against some of its partisans who has not managed us enough, by fear, by interest, by vanity, etc. The most innocent of these motives are without doubt very criminal, and far from extenuating the sin, aggravate it. But there is none of them which approaches that which my Accuser wants to make act. If one believes him, I combat the sentiments that he defends, I combat them, I say, not by fear, not by complaisance, not by interest, or by vanity, but by a movement of hatred, of a perfect hatred, and accompanied by detestation and horror, that I have for this Dogma, not doubting at all of its truth, and regarding it as revealed, and attested by God.

I ask now if it is possible to carry the crime further, and to add anything to such an excess? This is not at least the thought of most of our Theologians, who conceiving nothing more horrible, find nothing in which they can make consist with more plausibility that which the irremissible sin has of most frightful. All in truth do not enter into this sentiment. But it is not that this crime does not appear to them great enough to merit never being pardoned. It is rather that it appears to them so great, and so prodigious, that they believe it absolutely impossible: And in effect one would find oneself quite embarrassed if it were necessary to give an example of it.

This is however what it pleases Mr. N. to impute to me. Consequently it is difficult to imagine an Accusation more atrocious, and by that very more criminal, if it is not well founded. For finally one agrees that the evil that there is in condemning one's neighbor is equal and proportioned to two things, to the atrocity of the crime with which one charges him, and to the temerity, and to the lightness with which one charges him with it.

There is without difficulty more evil in accusing falsely a man of a great crime than of a small one. There is still more in accusing him on slight conjectures than on reasons which have some air of solidity. Thus the more an Accusation on one side is atrocious, and on the other is badly supported, the more it is horrible, and worthy that one detest it.

What will we say thus of that of Mr. N. where these two defects are so manifest? It is firstly very atrocious, this is what one has already seen. It is besides in no way proved, and it is even impossible that it be. For even if it were true, it would not be

possible, I will not say to prove it, but to know the truth of it, and to have some certainty of it. It would be necessary for that to read in my heart. It would be necessary to perceive the most secret movements of it. It would be necessary to unravel all my thoughts. And what other can do it than God alone? For who does not know that he alone is the Searcher of our hearts?

On this foundation Mr. Nicole maintains that there are no judgments more visibly rash than those by which we claim to penetrate the motives and the intentions of others, principally when we attribute to them ones that they disavow: He adds, that there is something more injurious to God in these sorts of judgments than in the others, because he has particularly reserved to himself the knowledge of the secret of hearts, and that he has not given it, neither to the Demons, nor to the Angels themselves. *Essays on Morality Vol. I. Treatise V: n. 25.*

Nothing thus is more rash than the Accusation of Mr. N. But there is not only Temerity. There is also Malignancy, and there is even extremely much of it. In effect one shows Malignancy. In the first place when being able equally to absolve and condemn, as it happens when the reasons of the for and the against appear of an equal force, one prefers to condemn than to absolve. The reason for it is that Malignancy is precisely the contrary of Charity. Thus Charity wanting that, when the probability is equal on the two sides, one always leans to the most favorable side, there is reason to believe that Malignancy consists in making lean towards the most disadvantageous side. Then in effect one must presume that there being a perfect equilibrium in the reasons, it is the will, it is a secret hatred, and consequently a true malignancy, which makes the balance tip.

One has above all reason to make this judgment when the reasons which carry to absolve are stronger than those which want that one condemn, and the more the first prevail over the second, the more the Malignancy discovers itself.

In the second place Malignancy appears when it being a matter of guessing the secret motives of an equivocal action, and which can come from diverse principles, some criminal, the others innocent, one declares oneself for the first, when again among the criminal ones one gives the preference to those which are it the most.

This is precisely our case. In supposing that I am wrong to reject Premotion, I can have done it by error, by prejudice, by defect of penetration. I can also have failed by pure wickedness, and despite the oppositions of my Conscience. According to all appearances it is the first. I write on a rather difficult matter. I write with all the application of which I am capable. I produce a rather great number of reasons, and these reasons are so strong, that Mr. N. himself, who believed himself above all that one could oppose to him on this matter, has been dismayed by it, doubting if ever one could fill the abysses that I have dug to precipitate his System into them, as he declares in his Preface.

What is more natural than to conclude from it, that even if what I have said on this subject were false, I have said it only in believing it true, seen above all that I had no

interest in maintaining it? What is more opposed to all the maxims of Charity, of Equity, and even of Justice, than to decide positively the contrary? I say even of Justice, because in effect this Virtue does not permit condemning the accused whose crimes are not entirely verified.

But that is not all. Let us imagine that one knows with certainty that in combating Physical Premotion I have acted against my Conscience. It remains to know by what motive I have done it. I could not have had good ones, but I could have had more and less bad ones. As I have remarked in another place of this Chapter, I can have done it by fear, by complaisance, by vanity, by interest, etc. It is not also absolutely impossible that I have done it by hatred for the truth. The first of these motives are abominable, but they are venial in comparison with the last, which one can regard as the Non plus ultra in matter of wickedness. It is however this last that Mr. N. attributes to me, and not the first. And for what reason does he do it? He does not indicate one. But the only one that it is possible to imagine, is that this imputation was the most proper to blacken me well, and by that same to satisfy his Malignancy.

What an assortment for this distinguished Devotion, and of the first order, which his Friends attribute to him! And what a Commentary for these two Verses so often cited!

"Tantane animis cælestibus iræ!" [Such anger in celestial minds!]

"So much gall enters into the soul of the Devout!"

CHAPTER VI. Third Accusation. I have spread the equivalent of Physical Premotion.

This third Accusation is not by much as atrocious as the first two. All that one could conclude from it, even if it were well founded, is that I lack penetration, which is indeed a defect, but is not a crime. Thus I could well leave it without risking much. But as Mr. N. makes a great affair of it, and believes to find in it the resolution of my Objections, it will not be useless to examine it.

Here in few words is what it is. I have maintained that if Physical Premotion took place, one could not prevent oneself from admitting I don't know how many absurd, impious, and blasphematory propositions, which are so many necessary and inevitable consequences of this false principle. I display these consequences one after the others, and show that one cannot reject them, if one receives the Dogma of Premotion.

Mr. N., to respond to all these Proofs, contents himself with maintaining that the same consequences are drawn with an equal necessity, in the first place from the Permission of sin, and in the second place from the circumstances, where God had placed the first sinners. He maintains that this is a truth that Mr. Bayle has proved in a manner so convincing that there is nothing solid to oppose to him.

He does not content himself with saying it once, or twice. He repeats it, he inculcates it on each page, and there is none of my reasons to which he does not apply it, and which he does not claim to destroy by that. But it will not be difficult to show that he is mistaken. Let us stop for this effect at the most grievous of these consequences, and let us see in the first place if they are born of the simple Permission, after which we will make the same research on the subject of the circumstances, where God placed the first sinners.

One of the most grievous of these consequences, is that if God determines us physically and invincibly to all that we do, we no longer have the liberty necessary to act morally. I have shown that it is necessary, and cannot be contested. But can one claim that one is justified in drawing it from a simple Permission? To permit, to suffer that men sin, not to prevent it, to let them do what it will please them, is this to take away their Liberty? Is this even to limit it and to compress it? Is this not to leave it to them in all its extent? And can one have the least pretext to maintain the contrary?

A second consequence, which one can regard as a follow-up of the first, is that the sinner will have no reproach to make to himself after the sin. It is drawn naturally from Physical Premotion. But can one deduce it from Permission? God has not prevented the sinner from violating the Law, but the sinner has carried himself to it of himself. It is very freely, and very voluntarily that he has done it. Can one conclude from it with the slightest shadow of plausibility that he has no reproach to make to himself on this subject?

Here is a third consequence that one can draw from Premotion. It is that Divine Faith will no longer have any certainty. I have proved it strongly. But can one prove with a similar force that the same thing will follow from simple Permission? God suffers the false Prophets to spread their extravagances, and the Peoples to be mad enough to listen to them. Does it follow from that that he is the cause of their error?

A fourth consequence as impious, and blasphematory as the preceding ones, is that God will be the Author of sin. Will he be it if one posits that he permits it? Is there no difference between not preventing someone from doing a bad action, and pushing him to it, above all pushing him to it invincibly? To push him to it in this manner, is without doubt to be the Author of it. But is it to be it not to prevent him from doing it? If nothing else were necessary to be the Author of an action, of what prodigious number of sins would the most good people not be guilty?

Finally, I have shown that if God determined invincibly to evil, and above all if he did it in the design to eternally lose those whom he would push to it, he would act in a manner opposed to all the rules of Goodness. But can one say the same thing of Permission? Will one say that to permit evil, is to act against the maxims of Goodness, since it is not even an action, but a simple suspension of act?

It seems that Mr. N. supposes that simple Permission is followed as necessarily by the permitted action as Premotion, and in effect that can happen sometimes, but

not always. It happens, I confess, when the agent is determined of himself, and of his nature, to a certain manner of acting. Thus a stone that one holds in the hand, and that one lets go, falls very certainly. But it is not the same with free agents. Even when one permits them to do certain things, they can not do them. Thus the permission that one grants them is not always followed by the action.

As thus Men and Demons, whom God let fall, were free, it is clear that this permission was not followed necessarily by sin. But as this is very important, it is good to give new proofs of it. Here are four, which appear to me demonstrative.

1. The first that if the Permission of God had been necessarily, and inevitably followed by the action of the Creature, this action of the Creature could not have been a sin, it being impossible that a necessary and inevitable action be criminal.
2. The second, that if the innocent Creature, abandoned to itself, sinned necessarily, this sin would be the follow-up and the effect of a determination, and of an inclination, which would carry it to it invincibly: And this inclination from where could it come to it if not from God, who has given it all that it has, since it has nothing of itself?
3. If one posits the contrary, what difference will remain between Manichaeism, and Christianity. Will sin not have its source, not in the depravation of Nature, but in Nature itself, such as it was in leaving the hands of its Creator?
4. When God did not prevent the first man from sinning, did he leave him in such a way master of himself, and of his conduct, that he could equally sin and persevere? Or indeed does one claim that in letting him sin God prevented him positively from persevering? If it is the first, one returns to my sentiment, and one admits that the Permission of sin has been able to not be in any way followed by it. If it is the second, one returns to Premotion, and one obligates oneself to digest its absurdities.

All that shows clearly that it can very easily happen that Permission is not at all followed by the permitted action, and that thus there is something absurd and insupportable in claiming that one can draw from Permission the same consequences that one draws from Physical Premotion. Nothing is more false, nothing even is it more evidently, than such a pretension; and it is astonishing that in a century so enlightened one spreads absurdities so palpable.

I say the same thing of circumstances. They impose no necessity to sin; and to say the contrary is in the first place to give hands to Spinoza, who, as everyone knows, maintains that we do nothing to which we are not carried invincibly by the concurrence of internal and external causes, which determine us; and which differ in nothing from the circumstances of Mr. N. What could one oppose to this impious person, if what Mr. N. maintains is true? What difference even can there be between these two Hypotheses?

We judge the thing by itself. If the circumstances which surround us, determined us invincibly to the actions, to which they incline us, these actions would not be free. For as I have justified in my Clarifications on the difficulties that are born of the consideration of Liberty, absolute, and antecedent necessity ruins without reserve the Liberty necessary to act morally. Consequently the System of Mr. N. which wants circumstances to determine us invincibly, ruins without reserve our Liberty, transforms Man entirely into a machine as little mistress of its movements as a Watch, or a Clock, and by that same destroys absolutely Religion in general, and Christianity in particular.

It is not that I deny that circumstances have some efficacy to carry us to certain actions. What I maintain is that this efficacy, which is sometimes greater, sometimes smaller, is never so strong, and so invincible, that we cannot resist it, and that if that were not so there would remain no Liberty for us, and our actions would no longer have any goodness, nor any moral malice.

CHAPTER VII. Examination of a Response that could be made to me.

I have some suspicion that Mr. N. will find that I do not take his thought well. He will perhaps say that the equivalent of Premotion, which he accuses me of maintaining, is neither the simple Permission of crime, nor the circumstances where the sinner is placed, but these two things joined to a third, which is the knowledge that God has of it by his Prevision, and which is such, that it is impossible that he be mistaken in it.

He will say that to foresee that Man will sin if one places him in such and such circumstances, and to place him there, is the same thing as pushing him to it, the first of these actions being no less certainly followed by the sin of Man than the second.

But nothing is more contrary to the truth than this thought. These two things are so little equivalent, that there are between them two differences that jump to the eyes.

The first is that the necessity which is born of the infallibility of Prevision, is only a necessity of supposition, and even of subsequent supposition, instead of which that which would be born of Premotion would be an absolute, and antecedent necessity, which goes to nothing less than to say that the one ruins the liberty necessary to act morally, and that the other does not wound it at all.

All Christians of all Sects, disputing against the Socinians, who deny the Prescience of God, and who say that if it took place it would ruin our liberty, maintain on the contrary these two truths. One that the necessity which is born of Prevision, is only a necessity of subsequent supposition. The other, that such a necessity has nothing contrary to the liberty required to act morally, which is so true, that if it were not, there would be absolutely nothing that would be free, there being absolutely nothing

which is not accompanied by a thousand such necessities, as I have justified in my Clarifications.

On the contrary Physical Premotion gives birth to a total, absolute, and antecedent necessity, as I have proved in the Dissertation of which this one is the Defense.

Here thus already is a great difference between the two things that this Objection represents as so similar, and that it wants to make pass for equivalent. But there is still a second one, which is neither less sensible, nor less important in relation to our Question. It is that if Physical Premotion took place, it would be true to say that God would act in a manner directly opposed to all the rules of Goodness, which one cannot say of Permission, preceded by Prevision and accompanied by all its circumstances.

What indeed can there be more opposed to this virtue than to take an innocent Creature, to determine it and to push it invincibly to evil, which it would never do without this impulse, and to push it to it only in the design to render it by that eternally criminal, and eternally unhappy? If Goodness consents to this, to what will it be opposed?

Can one say the same thing of Permission? Is it positively contrary to the maxims of Goodness! With what color, with what shadow of plausibility can one claim it?

To permit evil is to not prevent it, to not impede it when one could. Consequently it is to not do a particular good, of which one has the power, and of which one does not have the Will. And to not do a particular good, however easily one can do it, is this something opposed to Goodness! Who would want to say it?

If one said it, it would be necessary to add 1. that it was thus possible that God act in a manner positively contrary to this high perfection, since it has been very possible that he create absolutely nothing, and consequently that he do no good to anything whatsoever. It would be necessary to add secondly that he has used this power during all this eternity, which has preceded Creation, producing nothing, and by that same doing good to no one. It would be necessary to add thirdly, that it is thus that he has used it, and that he will use it eternally, with regard to this prodigious number of possible Creatures, which will never exist. It would be necessary to add finally that it is thus that he uses it with regard to the most favored of his Creatures, among which there is not one to whom he has done all the goods that he could do to it.

How after that can one say that it is equally possible that God push positively and invincibly to evil, and that he permit it in whatever circumstances one will want? Is it as possible that he act in a manner opposed to this virtue, as it is that he not exercise it, either absolutely, or in certain regards.

Let us judge of this virtue of God by the others. Is it as possible that God lie, or what comes to the same thing, that he attest some falsity, as it is that he attest nothing?

Is it as possible that he act weakly, or imprudently, as it is that he exercise, neither his Power, nor his Wisdom?

To express the same thing by the terms of the School, does he have the Liberty of contrariety for all that, for which he has the Liberty of exercise?

It is thus to be grossly mistaken to say that Permission, whether alone, or accompanied by the Prevision of what can happen in such circumstances as one will want, is the equivalent of an operation as powerful, and as invincible as Premotion. It would be necessary that the balances be very deceptive to make these two things appear in equilibrium.

I know that Mr. Bayle has claimed it. But I know also that all the earth has contradicted him on this, and Mr. N. would have done himself much more honor in following the other Defenders of Christianity, than in extolling to us the pretended Triumphs of this declared Enemy of Religion.

He would have well done without saying, as he has done page 360 and elsewhere that this Advocate of falsehood has put in this regard to level all his Adversaries, and has so well, and so solidly convinced them, all, and each in Particular, according to his System, that they are guilty of making God the Author of sin in a certain sense (it does not matter here which one) that one must have lost all shame, or all reasoning to be able to deny it.

To hold this language, and to borrow the arms of such an Adversary, is at the very least to render oneself suspect of managing very badly the interests of the Truth, in a time when it is attacked with so much violence.

"Non tali auxilio, nec defensoribus istis, Tempus eget." [Not such aid, nor such defenders, does the time need.]

CHAPTER VIII. Fourth Accusation. My reasonings differ in nothing from the Objection that St. Paul makes to himself. Rom. 18, 19.

Here is the favorite Accusation of Mr. N. He applies it to everything, and puts it to all sorts of uses; which makes that one sees it return on each page. It consists only in saying that all my reasonings are nothing other than the Paraphrase of an Objection that Saint Paul made to himself, and that he rejected with horror in Chapter IX of his Epistle to the Romans, "You will say to me, why does he still complain? For who is the one who can resist his Will?" There is the Objection. Here now is the response that St. Paul makes to it: "But rather, O man, who are you, you who contest against God? Will the thing formed say to the one who formed it, Why have you made me thus? The potter, etc."

From where one concludes that the Objection being, not only false, but impious, it is impossible that our proofs, which are not distinct from it be reasonable. But I have various things to oppose to this vain speculation.

I want in the first place that I have employed only a single proof, and that this proof differs in nothing from the Objection that Saint Paul makes to himself. Does it follow from that that it is less good? Who does not know that the same proof can be good and bad according to the diverse uses that one makes of it?

For example the Socinians reject the Mystery of the Trinity, because they claim that it is filled with contradictions. Should the bad use that they make of this reason prevent me from using it against the Transubstantiation of the Roman Communion? These same Heretics claim to find in the Unity of God a strong proof against the same Mystery. Does it follow from that that it is forbidden to us to produce this same proof against the Pagans and the Tritheists?

I could give a hundred other examples of it, but these two suffice without doubt, to show that a Proof good in itself loses nothing whatsoever of its force by the bad use that others make of it, and that thus even if mine did not differ in anything from the Objection that St. Paul makes to himself, it would not be necessary to conclude from it that they were worth less.

But I add, secondly, that there is something ridiculous in claiming that there is no difference between my Proofs and this Objection. Firstly I do not content myself with producing a single proof against Physical Premotion. I put forward ten or twelve of them, and these ten or twelve are very different from each other. Some are taken from Scripture, the others from Reason. Some indicate the grievous effects that this Dogma operates, the others what it has contrary to the most common notions of Piety. Some show that Premotion ruins what we believe touching the Goodness of God, and the others that it is injurious to his Holiness.

That alone shows that it is impossible that reasons so different from each other do not all together differ from the Objection that St. Paul makes to himself. That proves still that even if some of these Reasons were not different from this Objection, and that this consideration destroyed it, all that would not prevent the others from subsisting, and from making their effect.

But let us not stop at this prejudice. I deny that among my Proofs there is a single one which does not have something which distinguishes it from the Objection that St. Paul makes to himself.

I. This Objection supposes falsely, as I hope to show in the sequel, which one cannot say of my Reasons.

II. This Objection is taken from the consideration of the Justice of God, and I have had my reasons to take my Proofs from elsewhere, and to limit myself to those which are born of the consideration of his Holiness and of his Goodness.

III. The Objection speaks of the Will of God, and my Proofs speak only of Physical Premotion. How after that can one say that things so different are only a single one?

One will say perhaps that in truth these reasonings are distinct, but that they have this in common, that they are all taken from the consideration of some Attributes of

God, that one regards as opposed, some to what God does, the others to what he wants: and one will add that this resemblance suffices to make them all reject.

But it is easy to respond that a conformity as vague as this one, and taken from a quality common to so many subjects, does not suffice to render suspect a reasoning to which one can make only this single reproach.

In effect Scripture furnishes us the example of some very solid reasonings, and which are taken, not in general from some Attribute, but in particular from the Attribute, which makes the matter of the Objection, I mean from Justice. Is it not on this Perfection that St. Paul has based himself when he has said to the Hebrews, that God is not unjust to put in oblivion the work of their Charity, and to the Thessalonians, that it is just towards God that he render affliction to those who afflict them?

And in effect why would the truths which concern the Attributes, and the Perfections of God, not have the privilege of all the others, which consists only in being able to serve as principles to draw from them conclusions, which extend our knowledge, and which enrich more and more our minds?

One will say perhaps that the Author of the Objection, whoever he may be, supposes that God wants men to sin, and wants it with a Will so efficacious, that it is impossible that one resist him; which makes all that there is hardest in the Dogma of Premotion. One will add that St. Paul does not reject as false what he reports of it, but only as incapable of serving as foundation to just complaints that one can make of the manner in which God acts with sinners, and that by that same he authorizes it.

I will not amuse myself in replying that if St. Paul authorizes Premotion, Mr. N. is wrong to make difficulty admitting it, as I remark, page 34 of this Response, that one can infer it from his Writings.

I will say rather that in truth St. Paul could have denied what the Objection supposes, but that neither he, nor the rest of the sacred or profane Authors, have ever believed that one was obliged to oppose to an Objection all the responses that one can make to it. One contents oneself often enough with a single one, when it is good, and one suppresses the others.

For example when the Jews say to Jesus Christ, "We do not stone you for some good work, that you have done, but because being man you make yourself God," he could without doubt respond that also he was it, possessing a same Essence with his Father, and in saying it he would have said nothing that was not very true. He does not say it however, and he takes another turn to justify what he has just said. "Is it not written in your Law, I have said; You are Gods? If it has called those Gods to whom the word of God is addressed, and Scripture cannot be broken, do you say that I blaspheme, I whom the Father has sanctified, and sent to the world, because I have said, I am the Son of God?" John X. 34, 35, 36.

It is the same in this occasion. There were two responses to oppose to the Objection that St. Paul makes to himself, one more direct, more immediate, and by that same more to the taste of the School; the other more indirect, and more popular, in appearance, but in effect more profound and more Theological.

The first consisted in denying the Supposition, and in maintaining that God does not want men to sin or perish. The second reduces to saying, that God is the absolute Master of his graces, and that in whatever manner he disposes of them, no one has any right to complain of it.

St. Paul has had his reasons to prefer the second of these responses, as we will see presently. But in preferring it he has not renounced the right to use the first. Still less has he retracted what both he, and the rest of the sacred Authors, have said so often, and so strongly, that God wants, neither that men sin, nor that they perish. On which one can see the excellent Work of Strangius, "De voluntate Dei circa peccatum," where he treats this matter with much erudition and exactitude.

Here in few words is the Analysis of the reasoning of St. Paul in Chapters IX, X, and XI of his Epistle to the Romans. I suppose with Mr. Jurieu that St. Paul does not treat there the Questions of Predestination and of Grace, although he says there various things which spread much light on this matter. He speaks only of the rejection of the Jews; and of the calling of the Gentiles.

The calling of the Gentiles had nothing which was troublesome. Nothing fits better the Divinity than to do good to miserable ones. But to reject a People after having for so many centuries declared oneself the God of it, was a proceeding, which offered first to the mind something a little shocking: This is why St. Paul does all that he can to soften what appears there most hard. All reduces to these three Questions.

The first, from where it comes that God has rejected the Jewish People after having received it in his alliance, and it is to this that St. Paul responds, that if God has acted in this way, it is in punishment of the incredulity of this People. "The natural branches," he says, "have been cut off by incredulity." Rom. XI. 20.

One asks secondly, from where it comes that Israel has been incredulous, and one responds that it is because being carried naturally to evil since sin, and there being only Grace which can conquer this inclination, God has not found it appropriate to give it this help. "God," says St. Paul, "has given them a spirit of torpor, and eyes for not seeing, and ears for not hearing." Rom. XI. 8.

One asks, thirdly, from where it comes that God being able to prevent the incredulity of the Jews, and to give them the most lively Faith, he has not done it: And it is to this that there is no other response to make than to say, that God has acted in this way because it has pleased him and that he has all sorts of rights to do with his goods all that it pleases him. This is indeed to what it is necessary to return. It is even to this that all the Sects, which divide Christianity, come finally, as I have justified in a particular Dissertation that I have added to my Response to two Objections of Mr.

B. Thus St. Paul not being able to prevent himself from coming there, it is with reason that he comes there first, and does not wait until he is forced to it by a long suite of discussions chained the ones with the others.

One will say perhaps that the expressions of St. Paul are too strong to be able to suffer all my softenings. One will say that God does with regard to sinners something more than to refuse them his Grace, witness those whom he hardens, and witness still those to whom he gives a spirit of torpor, and eyes for not seeing.

I respond in a word that provided that one does not claim that God produces or augments by a positive action of his Power the malice, the hardness, the obstinacy of the sinner, which in effect one cannot say without blasphemy, I will admit, or little will be missing, all that one has been accustomed to say on this subject.

For example, Cocceius explaining these words of our Apostle, "He hardens the one that he wants," reduces this hardening to five acts, which I admit all without exception. I. God judges that the sinner merits to be deprived of his Grace. II. He resolves to deprive him of it. III. He deprives him of it actually. IV. He permits the Demon to tempt him. V. He does not cease to fill him with temporal blessings. I admit all that, and I have no intention of contesting the least part of it.

I believe I should add that there is a double hardening, one common to all the Reprobates without exception, the other particular to some, who have carried crime extremely far. The first consists in the refusal of converting and regenerating Grace. The second adds to the refusal of converting Grace that of this other Grace, which does not convert us in truth, but which prepares us little by little for conversion.

I am persuaded that St. Paul speaks of the first of these hardenings when he says that God has pity on the one that he wants, and hardens the one that he wants. But as all that is not properly of my subject, I will not undertake to prove it. I will content myself with concluding from all that I have just said in this Chapter that this place of St. Paul has nothing which favors the Dogma of Premotion.

CHAPTER IX. Fifth Accusation. I worked on an incomprehensible matter, which is neither useful, nor edifying, nor necessary.

It is with this Accusation as with all the others. It returns very often, and one finds it almost everywhere, and in particular in pages 269, 277, 279, 291, 309, 319. But all these repetitions do not render it more conforming, either to the Truth, or to Justice.

For firstly who has told Mr. N. that the matter of Concourse is as incomprehensible as he represents it? It is so for him, I admit. But does that prevent others from seeing more clearly in it?

Nothing besides is more equivocal than what he says, and that a hundred others have said like him, that certain subjects are incomprehensible to men. What one says

of it can receive several senses, but principally these two. One that we do not know perfectly these subjects, and do not have of them this knowledge, that one calls comprehensive in the Schools, which penetrates, which exhausts all that there is of true and of knowable in its object, that we know a part of it, and are ignorant of another. The second sense is that we have no knowledge, neither perfect, nor imperfect, of these subjects, and that when one speaks to us of them we understand no more what one says to us of them, than if one spoke to us a Language which was absolutely unknown to us.

If the matter of Concourse, and the others that one believes incomprehensible, the Trinity, the Incarnation, etc. were so in this second sense, I admit that there would be something ridiculous in speaking of them. One would not even believe anything on their subject, or at least one would not have explicit Faith of them.

But whatever it may be, no one will admit that among the things of Religion there are some incomprehensible in that sense. One understands it without doubt in the first sense. In saying that the matter of Concourse is incomprehensible. One wants to say that this subject contains truths that we are ignorant of, which without doubt is very true, but is not at all particular to Concourse. On the contrary this is common to it, not only with the other matters of Religion, but still with those of Nature. For what is there in Nature of which we have a comprehensive knowledge? Would the most skilled of all Men dare to boast of knowing perfectly a flea or a louse?

If thus it were not permitted to speak, to write, to dispute on the things that we do not understand perfectly, it would be necessary to not speak, not write, not dispute on anything whatsoever, there being nothing that the most learned know perfectly; nothing even on which they are not ignorant of more things than they know.

It is good still to remark that I have not undertaken to explain positively the Nature and the properties of the Concourse of God. I have said only that it is not a predetermining Concourse. I have advanced on this subject only a negative Proposition. And who has ever believed that there is nothing that it is permitted to deny of the subjects most elevated above the human Spirit? How many things do we not contest with the Heretics on the Trinity, on the Incarnation, on Grace?

Here thus is a poor pretext to condemn me.

Mr. N. produces a second one, which is not better. He maintains that all that one can say on this subject is neither useful, nor edifying, nor necessary.

But this is a decision to which one can not acquiesce without being a Heretic.

For firstly is it a useless work, and not at all edifying, to refute a Dogma which ravishes from God the Glory of his Perfections? A Dogma which serves as principle to a great number of absurd, impious, and blasphematory consequences? A Dogma of which the simple suspicion distances from our Communion an infinity of persons who imagine that we hold it? A Dogma finally which gives so much hold to the

Enemies of the Christian Religion, and which facilitates for them the means of putting it in opposition with the purest lights of Reason?

But is it necessary that I enter into all this detail to defend all that I have done? And can an equitable Reader see without indignation that I am constrained to justify myself for having spread the ancient Doctrine of our Churches? Can one in effect doubt that it is necessary to give this name to that of the Infralapsarians, and to that which condemns and rejects Premotion?

It is not necessary to consult the History of our Doctrine to be assured of it. It suffices to pay attention to what one saw at the famous Synod of Dort. In this celebrated Assembly, the most venerable and the most august that one has seen among us since the Reformation, where it was a question of expounding in an authentic manner what we believe on the matters of Predestination and of Grace, one did it not only in the principles of the Infralapsarians, as it appears by the simple reading of the Canons, but besides that still, Doctor Baccanqual, one of the Deputies of England, who kept an exact Journal of what happened in each Session, and which one has inserted in the Collection which has for Title, "Præstantium Virorum Epistolæ Ecclesiasticæ," this Doctor, I say, teaches us on this subject various curious particulars.

He says firstly, that among the foreign Theologians, who had come in great number, there was not found a single one who followed the sentiments of the Supralapsarians. "Observatu dignum est nullum hactenus fuisse Collegium, quod Gomari sententiam de subjecto Prædestinationis non rejecerit. (It is worthy of note that there has so far not been a single College that did not reject Gomarus' opinion concerning the subject of Predestination.)" These Colleges, of which he speaks, are those of the foreign Theologians, as it appears by what precedes.

He adds that in that of the Professors of the United Provinces, and who were to the number of five, there was only the sole Gomarus who supported the sentiments of the Supralapsarians. Still he did it only by word of mouth. V. pag. 556. col. 1.

He says finally that among the Deputies of the Provincial Synods none declared himself in favor of the Supralapsarians, but that only the Deputies of the Synod of South Holland declared that they wanted to decide nothing on this Question. "Estque hoc notatu dignum quòd omnes definirent hominem lapsum prædestinationis subjectum esse. Gomarum eximo, quem omnes huic sententiæ refragari norant, & Hollandos Australes, qui solummodo dicebant se ea de re nihil velle definire. (And it is also worthy of note that all defined fallen man to be the subject of predestination. I except Gomarus, whom all knew to dissent from this opinion, and the South Hollanders, who merely said they did not wish to define anything on that matter.)" Pag. 258. col. 1.

He remarks that the Deputies of England asked up to three times that the Synod condemn certain extremely harsh Propositions, that various Writers had advanced, above all these two, which express clearly the Dogma of Premotion.

That God moves the tongues of Men to blaspheme. That Man can do more good than he does. "Deum movere hominum linguas ad blasphemandum. Et hominem non posse plus boni facere quam facit." Pag. 569. col. 2. ext.

Here is something much stronger. A Professor of Franeker, named Sibrandus Lubbertus, had accused Maccovius, one of his Colleagues, of having spread fifty Propositions, some Jewish, others Pagan, etc. The affair was carried to the Synod, which named Commissioners to examine it. The Commissioners justified Maccovius for the principal, but found three or four things to say in his Doctrine, of which the two principal ones were that he had denied that fallen Man was the object of Predestination, and that he had said that God wants and resolves sins. "Hoc vitio vertendum... quod negaverit humanum genus lapsum esse objectum prædestinationis; Quod dixerit Deum velle & decernere peccata. ("This is to be imputed as a fault... that he denied the fallen human race to be the object of predestination; that he said God wills and decrees sins.")" Pag. 574. ext.

The Judgment of the Commissioners was approved by all the Synod. "Legitur, & per plura Synodi suffragia approbatur sententia Deputatorum in causâ Maccovianâ, qui eum ab omni hæresi absolvendum censuerunt, sed monendum ut Theologiam docendi modum commodiorem sequatur, verborumque formis ex Sacra Scripturâ petitis utatur; etiam justam eam reprehensionem incurrere ob quasdam propositiones ab ipso crudius & rigidius assertas. ("It is read, and by a majority of Synod votes the judgment of the Deputies in the case of Maccovius is approved, who judged that he should be absolved from all heresy, but that he should be admonished to adopt a more suitable method of teaching theology, and to use forms of speech drawn from Holy Scripture; and that he had also incurred just criticism for certain propositions asserted by him too crudely and harshly.")" Pag. 576. col. r.

Maccovius himself, who apparently had complained of this Judgment, acquiesced to it in some manner by his silence. "Qui (Maccovius) suum passus est tacitè obvolvi negotium. (He (Maccovius) allowed his case to be quietly wrapped up in silence.)" In the same place.

All that shows clearly three things. The first, that the Synod of Dordrecht condemned formally the two Dogmas, that of Premotion, and that of the Supralapsarians, in the person of Maccovius, who maintained them. The second, that the sentiment opposed to these two Dogmas was in that time the common sentiment of the Reformed Churches that this Synod represented. The third, that it is for having maintained the Decisions of this Venerable Assembly that I have been treated so unworthily by Mr. N.

CHAPTER X. Conclusion.

These are the principal Accusations with which it has pleased Mr. N. to blacken me. I leave the others that he has added to them, and which destroy themselves enough. As the Public tires itself very soon of this sort of contentions, I would fear to

importune it if I lengthened this one. Thus I will wait in rest and in silence the effect that it will produce.

That which it would be just to expect, is that Mr. N. think seriously of pulling himself out of the sad state where he has put himself by his imprudence, and of promptly repairing the evil that he has done. This is the only side that remains for him to take. It is besides the most conforming to his duty and to his interest.

All Christians of all Sects agree that it is the duty of those who have done wrong to their neighbor to repair it. And this is not in effect a fantasy of the Casuists. It is a very certain truth, and perfectly conforming to several clean and precise Decisions of the Word of God, that I have gathered in the Treatise that I published already some time ago on this matter.

One agrees secondly that this duty is not only just, but absolutely and indispensably necessary, at least when it is possible to acquit oneself of it, and when one has the means of it, and the occasions of it, without which the most burning remorse, the tears, and the prayers, are useless to obtain pardon for it, following the celebrated Maxim of St. Augustine, which the Authors of all Centuries have adopted, "Non remittitur peccatum, nisi restituatur ablatum, si restitui potest." Sin is never remitted, if what one has ravished is not returned, when it can be.

One agrees finally that this duty obliges not only to restore the goods badly acquired, but still to reestablish the reputation of one's neighbor that one has ruined by Slander, in making him pass for guilty in the time that he is innocent.

These are certain and indubitable truths, and of which the most relaxed Casuists, the Sanchezes and the Escobars agree.

In particular I do not doubt that provided that one proposes the thing only in Thesis, Mr. N. will agree to all, and if someone treated him in the manner that he has treated me, he would claim that the least that this insolent should do would be to retract in all the forms what he would have had the audacity to publish against him.

I admit that Mr. N. knows very well that we must do for others what we want others to do for us, and that thus there is reason to hope that he will act with regard to me in this occasion in the same manner in which he wants one to act for him, and for any other.

But however just that would be, I have only too good reasons to fear that the repugnance that we all have to recognize publicly the faults in which we fall, above all faults of the nature of this one, prevents him from acquitting himself of a duty so opposed to the inclination of Nature.

It is not long ago that a celebrated Preacher, speaking of the necessity and of the justice of Restitution, told us, that in truth one sees from time to time some of a certain very equivocal order, and which prove nothing, or almost nothing, but that there should be some of two other orders a little more striking, and of which however he had never seen example.

One is that of a Man, who possessing great goods, but all badly acquired, returns them voluntarily in full health, and reduces himself by that to indigence. The other is that of a Slanderer, who having ruined the reputation of his Neighbor recognizes publicly that what he has said is false, and that it is unjustly and inappropriately that he has accused him of one, or of several crimes, of which he knew that he was perfectly innocent.

As this thought had never come into my mind, I was keenly touched by it, and one of the first reflections that it gave me the occasion to make, was to ask myself, if as I have lived much longer than the Author of this Remark, I would not have been more happy than him to see some of these effects of Grace, or in its default, some other which resembled them.

I recalled in my memory all that I could have seen on this subject. But with whatever care I have searched, it has been impossible for me to find anything.

Here is what is very sad, and which could give place to a great number of reflections capable of penetrating with pain the most insensible. But as they are not of this place, I content myself with saying that they make me all the more fear for Mr. N. that it is certain that the persons of his character are in possession of confounding all their interests with those of God, and of permitting themselves on this foundation the things most contrary to common Laws.

That Charity that Justice demands that one spare, or that one manage someone. It suffices that this someone has had the misfortune to displease one of our Devout by profession, to make it so that all is permitted against him, and that the more a proceeding is fierce, barbarous, and inhuman, the more one finds it praiseworthy, and one makes honor of it.

There are thus great subjects to fear for Mr. N. But there are also ones to hope. Grace, without which this happy effect is never produced in anyone whatsoever, is All-powerful, and undertakes nothing, of which it does not succeed with the utmost facility. The greatest miracles cost it nothing. This is why I supplicate the one who is the Author of it, the fund and the source, that it please him to make feel the sweetest attractions of it to the one who has insulted me with so little management, that he make him know his fault, and give him the strength to repair it.

What makes me wish for it is not the consideration of my interest. I take very little in it. I have firstly more than one reason to believe that Mr. N.'s Book will not do me much harm. Very few people will undertake to read it. Much fewer will have the patience to read even a quarter of it. The manner in which it is written will rebuff them all, or almost all. The bitterness, the animosity, and the transport, which reign in it from the beginning until the end, will excite the anger and the indignation of those who have some equity.

But even if it were otherwise, and if most of the Readers condemned me, I would not have reason to afflict myself over it. To be condemned by men is an evil so small

in itself, it is common to me with so many persons of the first order in every sense, it can be so useful to me in various regards, and there remains to me so little time to feel it, that it would be necessary that I be very delicate if it happened to me to worry about it.

I have reached a very advanced age. My constitution is very weak, and I am actually attacked by two mortal illnesses, which should apparently carry me off very soon. What interest thus can I have in what is enclosed in a space of time, which is going to pass with so much rapidity.

It is thus not my interest which makes me wish that Mr. N. do his duty. It is uniquely his. For finally in whatever manner he acts with me, it is not permitted to me to forget that he is my brother, that he is my neighbor, and consequently one of those that I must love as myself, and with whom I must wish, and hope to live, and to reign eternally in Heaven.

As this is impossible, if he does not repair the evil that he has done, I cannot, nor must wish weakly and languishingly that God do him the grace of it. I must make of it a capital affair, and neglect nothing to succeed in it.

But also I do not believe that this consideration obliges me to continue to write on this matter. If what I do is useless, as I have only too much reason to fear, what I could add would not be more effective. Perhaps even it would carry my Antagonist to all new excesses, which would augment the evil instead of remedying it.

This consideration has made me abandon a design that I had formed in conceiving that of making this Response. It seemed to me that 75 years of life, and 53 of Ministry, authorized me to give him certain advice, which could be very salutary to him, and spare him many pains that he gives himself without any necessity. But the facility with which he takes fire in all sorts of occasions, and his transports against those who leave him the most in peace, have made me fear that my advice, far from being useful and salutary to him, would serve only to excite a new tempest as much, or more, violent than the first, and by that same very opposed to my intentions. That makes me suppress them, and resolve to keep with regard to him a profound silence.

Whatever side thus that Mr. N. can take, whether he obstinates himself in harassing me, or whether he lets me die in peace; I have strongly resolved to no longer write on these matters. I have other things entirely otherwise pressing to do, and even if there remained to me some little strength, and some moments of leisure, I would have an entirely other use to make of them, than to consume them in such disagreeable contentions. Whatever they may be, I pray God to make them succeed to his Glory, and to the enlightenment of his Truth.

ABBREVIATED RESPONSE TO THE REPLY OF MONSIEUR DE JONCOURT, Concerning Games of chance.

CHAPTER I. Occasion & design of this Writing.

Monsieur de Joncourt has done me the honor of examining my Defense against his Objections, and of publishing the Judgment that it has pleased him to make of it. But as I cannot acquiesce to this Judgment without betraying the Cause that I have undertaken to defend, and of the justice of which I am convinced, I find myself engaged in the necessity of responding.

But also it comes back to me from various places that the Public is beginning to be bored with the continuation of this Dispute, and I have no trouble at all believing it. I myself suffer this continuation only with pain, and I am persuaded that it can produce only grievous and disagreeable effects.

I find myself thus in an uncomfortable situation, being able neither to be silent without doing myself wrong; nor to continue speaking without shocking those whom I must try not to displease.

To pull myself out of this strait here is the side that I am going to take. I am going to try to put an end to this Dispute, or to better say, I am going to show that it is finished, in fact, or in law, for the principal, that it is even finished in part for the accessories, and to declare for the rest that I consent that the Public pronounce after having read a very small number of Reflections that I am going to make on this subject.

I declare in effect that I do not claim any more to take up the pen to write on this subject, and that whatever Mr. de J. can do, or not do on this occasion, my fixed and settled resolution is to keep on this a profound silence.

There are only three cases in which I could still speak.

The first would be if Mr. de J. produced in a Reply something demonstrative and convincing against what I have maintained, for then it would be necessary that I speak to retract myself, and to give glory to God and to the Truth.

The second, if Mr. de J. said something dazzling, and which was capable of making illusion to the most enlightened of those who do not penetrate the foundation of this Question; for then my silence could only be criminal, and I would betray equally the interests of the Truth, and those of the neighbor, if, being able to dissipate these illusions, I neglected to do it.

The third, if one attributed to me things contrary to the truth, and which it was necessary to disavow.

As I fear none of these three things, I believe I can promise absolutely to be silent on this subject. I am going even to begin to do it presently, in abstaining from refuting step by step the Reply of Mr. de J. and from raising a quantity of things in which I can say, without exaggerating, that he opened his flank to me.

I am going to limit myself to what shows that we are not by much as far from sentiments as we appear at a first view.

CHAPTER II. That Mr. de J. & I are in agreement in the foundation. That Mr. de J. admits it. I. Admission.

I say thus in the first place that Mr. de J. and I are entirely in agreement on the principal Question, which has divided us until now.

The thing is certain, and nothing is easier than to prove it.

It suffices for that to remark that the Question which divides us does not consist in knowing if Games of chance become criminal by the abuses which mix with them, by the sins that one adds to them, and by the circumstances which accompany them. I have not only recognized this in very strong terms. I have still proved it with all my strength, and the proofs that I have given of it have not displeased Mr. de J. He has even done me the honor of adopting them for the most part, and of inserting them in his Letters.

It is thus impossible that our Dispute consists in that.

It consists in knowing if the Game of chance, which by accident becomes so bad and so criminal, is not already so of itself, of its nature, and independently of the circumstances which accompany it. This is on what we are divided. Mr. de J. has declared himself for the affirmative, and me for the negative.

There is indeed more. Mr. de J. has declared expressly that these are our sentiments. In particular in the 26th page of the first Letters he says that I establish the innocence of Games of chance in themselves, separated from the bad consequences, &c. And in page 114 he says that he disputes only on games of chance: that I hold, he says, criminal independently of the inconveniences and of the circumstances. And in his last Letter page 13 he assures that he has been afflicted to see that I have made an express Treatise to prove that Games of chance in themselves are not an abuse of Chance, and that in themselves they have nothing reproachable, provided that one separates them from some very ordinary, and very dangerous in truth, inconveniences, but which are not inevitable.

On my side I have declared a hundred times that this is my true thought. This is why in positing the state of the Question in Chapter V of my Defense. I have said, that it is not a matter of knowing if Games of chance are sometimes criminal, if they are even very often so, almost always, but if on one side they are always so, and on the other if they are so of themselves, of their nature.

Thus by the consent of the two Advocates, this is the true state of this Dispute: And consequently as I would give victory to Mr. de J. if I admitted to him that Games of chance are bad of themselves; by parity of reason, Mr. de J. will pronounce in my favor, if he declares that these Games are neither bad, nor blamable, except by accident.

Now this is what he declares in his last Letter in the most formal manner in the world. Here are his words. "Chance, of which the usage debased in Games of chance, is the true cause of what they have reproachable, is not by itself a bad thing, because there is of Chance a legitimate usage, and that the Game of Dice, for example, is according to me illegitimate, only when the subject is not grave enough, or that there is to employ it, neither necessity, nor considerable utility. For when two condemned Soldiers play at Dice for life, or for death, this is not an evil. Thus this Game is directly, and by its nature, neither a crime, nor a sin, nor even a reproachable disorder, it is indirectly an irreverence towards God by the abuse, and the debasement of a thing, which demands a grave occasion, and a motive of some considerable utility, to be in the terms of the respect that one owes to God, the unique Arbiter of Chance. I add that there are even cases, where the subject can be small, and receive gravity by the interest of peace between two Men, as, for example, if two Beggars in the countryside ready to separate to take different routes, find together, or receive in common some piece of money of two or three sols, the equal right that they have to it authorizes them, if they cannot make a partition, to have recourse to Chance, without them being considered guilty of irreverence. It is easy to suppose similar cases by hundreds, where the usage of Chance will be legitimate, and from which one can infer that when it is vicious, it is not of its nature, it is only by accident."

I ask my Reader to remark four things in this long Extract.

The first that Mr. de J. speaks there of Chance in general, of Games of chance in particular, and in an even more singular fashion of the Game of Dice, so that his decision comprises all that makes the subject of our Dispute.

The second, that he says in so many words that this Chance, this Game of chance, is not by itself a bad thing, that it is directly, and by its nature, neither a crime, nor a sin, nor even a reproachable disorder, and that when it is vicious, it is not of its nature, but by accident.

The third thing, that I ask my Reader to remark well, is that the cases in which Games of chance are innocent, are not these rare and metaphysical cases, that one sees only from century to century. These are cases so ordinary and so frequent, that one can suppose them by hundreds: In which Mr. de J. goes further than me, and I had only been able to imagine five or six of these cases, instead of which for him he perceives them by hundreds.

Finally, it is remarkable that Mr. de J. not only recognizes that the Game of chance is innocent in itself, but uses still this truth as a means proper to show that one is not held to return what one has won at it.

I had objected to him that if this Game were criminal, it would be a very illegitimate way to acquire what one did not possess, from where it would follow that it would be necessary to return it. I had alleged some maxims of Law, to support what I was saying, and in particular this one; crimes are never favorable, and must never augment the rights of those who have committed them.

Mr. de J. says nothing of the other maxims that I had produced, and which are indeed more express and more decisive than this one. He contents himself with saying on this latter, that to use it it is necessary to suppose an action essentially bad, and known as such, which this one is not, as he proves it by all that I have just reported. See page 7 of the VI. Letter.

It appears thus by that that he is well persuaded of what he tells us, since he uses it to invalidate the most considerable of my Proofs. It is not a matter of knowing if he is justified in claiming it. It suffices to know that this is his claim.

CHAPTER III. Second Admission of Mr. de J. which confirms the preceding one.

One will imagine perhaps that as I have produced only one place where Mr. de J. makes this Admission, it is not just to pay much attention to it. But besides that he says and repeats the same thing there, this place of the last Letter is not the only one where he explains himself on this subject. There is another similar one towards the end of this same Letter, where he assures us that he has made the same declaration a hundred times. Here it is. "I have," he says, "explained myself a hundred times, I have said that the usage of Chance is legitimate when the subject is grave, and when there is to have recourse to it, either an absolute necessity, or a considerable utility, such as is the utility of preserving order, and peace between Men, be it between two Beggars or two Porters. It is not to abuse Chance to put Dice in the hands of two condemned Soldiers to determine between them, at the highest point, the one who will profit from the grace, whether it be a matter of exemption from death, or whether it be a matter of avoiding the whip, or some other punishment. It is not to abuse it either to permit its usage to Boatmen, or to Carters, when it is a matter of regulating between them who will be the one who will have the benefit of some extraordinary load to transport." VI. Letter page 137 & 138.

I ask my Reader to suffer that I make him remark three things in this extract.

The first that Mr. de J. recognizes that there are cases where it is permitted to play at Dice, and consequently at any other Game.

The second, that among these cases he indicates one which returns in these Provinces, and in all maritime Cities, and other similar ones. It is that of Boatmen, of

Porters, of Carriers, and others, that Chance accords, in deciding which of the claimants will have the profit, of which the occasion presents itself.

The third, that Mr. de J. assures that he has said the same thing a hundred times, and that thus he has declared a hundred times that we are in agreement on the foundation of the Question that we have believed divided us.

Someone perhaps will say that Mr. de J. has advanced a little too much, and that he should be quit for retracting himself. But this is what one cannot say. What Mr. de J. admits, is on one side so true, and on the other so tightly linked with the most essential parts of his System, that he cannot shake it without overturning everything, and without throwing himself into frightful absurdities. In a word, what he has just confessed to us is such, that if he had not admitted it, he should do it.

If the Game of chance, and consequently the usage of Chance, were criminal of itself, this usage would have of itself nothing venerable, nothing respectable, and with stronger reason nothing sacred and religious. And this posited, how could one profane it, in which one makes consist what one believes that there is most criminal in this vain occupation?

But here is something more decisive.

If the Game of chance were criminal of itself, there would be no motive which could give us the right to practice it, no necessity, or utility which would authorize us to do it, not even the desire to save one's life, and to avoid the most rigorous punishments. If that were not so, what would have been the simplicity of the Martyrs, who preferred to endure such cruel pains than to render themselves guilty of idolatry?

I do not know what others think of it, but for me I admit that I do not know where I am when I hear speaking of motives capable of rectifying a bad action of its nature, above all when among these motives one counts the winning or loss of some sols.

If that passed for certain, what could one oppose reasonably to the partisans of officious lying, and generally to those who maintain that it is permitted to do evil so that good may come of it? What will become finally of all the V. Letter of Mr. de J., which this alone annihilates?

If the Game of chance, or, which according to Mr. de J. comes to the same thing, if the usage of Chance were criminal of itself, it would be impossible that God permit it, and with stronger reason that he command it, as it is impossible that he permit, and with stronger reason that he command, to lie, to blaspheme against him, to hate him, to deny him, to slander the neighbor, &c. because if he did it, he would act in a manner directly opposed to his own perfections, and which would be absurd, and contradictory.

Thus God having several times ordered to cast the Lot, that alone makes us see well enough that its usage is not bad of itself, and that if it becomes so, it is only by accident.

If the Game of chance were criminal of itself, it would be so always, and in all sorts of cases, of conjunctures, and of circumstances, as it is always so to lie, to blaspheme, to hate God; &c. "Quod secundum se malum est in suo genere, nullo modo potest fieri bonum & licitum, (What according to itself is evil in its genus, can in no way become good and licit)" says Mr. Turretin Theol. Vol. II. pag. 143, and with him all the others.

As thus one tells us that there are cases by hundreds where it is permitted to play; does it not appear clearly that if it is very often bad, as I admit, it is so only by accident?

As all that is beyond doubt, one must not blame Mr. de J. for having admitted it. The only thing which displeases me in it, is that he has so delayed making this admission. If he had made it at first, and had made it with reflection, he would have spared himself the trouble of attacking me, and would have spared me that of repulsing his attacks.

But it is always something that he has made it finally, and there remains for me no more wish to make on this subject, if it is not that he remain firm in this admission that he has just made to us. It needs only that alone to put an end to our Dispute.

CHAPTER IV. That we agree on the meaning of the Passage from Proverbs. Third admission of Mr. de J.

Besides these two general Admissions, which decide the entire dispute, Mr. de J. makes other more specific ones, but very important, which taken together have the same effect. I noted the first of these in my Defense. But as Mr. de J. has not responded to it, and it seems on the contrary that he retracts it, it will not be useless to try to reestablish it, but briefly. I do not remember having read a single one of these Theologians, who condemn Gaming as criminal in itself, who does not rely primarily on the passage from Proverbs XVI. 33, where it is said that the Lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the Lord. From this, one concludes, not that God presides over the Lot, for what is there over which He does not preside, and which is not conducted and directed by His Providence? but that He presides over it in a more particular way than over the rest of events: From which one concludes that the Lot is the object of Special Providence, and that by the same token it is worthy of our respect, to which the use made of it in gaming appears opposed. Mr. de J. has used this Proof, like the others, and did not fail to produce it in his First Letter, pages 14 and 15. The Holy Scripture, he says, will decide the Question without reply. The Lot is cast into the lap, and all that comes from it is from the Lord.

I responded in my Treatise on Gaming, page 17, that truly Solomon assures that God governs the Lot, which nobody disagrees with, but that he does not say that God governs it in a different manner than the rest of events, which completely ruins this Proof. It is however true that Mr. de J. agrees with what I say, and admits it in three

places in his Second Letter, which I will repeat once more, after having produced them in my Defense. Here they are in as many words. It is visible that Solomon's intention was solely to place all events under God's Empire, both those related to our freedom, and those that do not depend on us in any way, such as the Results of the Lot, and it is no less visible that he did not aim to speak of the difference between these events regarding the manner of direction, which distinguishes itself sufficiently. Second Letter page 91. He repeats the same thing on page 93. I say it once more. I am persuaded that Solomon in these passages did not intend to explain if God directs all things in the same, or in different ways. And a little further down. Regarding the more or less particular manner, in which God directs events, Solomon had no need to say anything about it.

This admission seems very considerable to me. It completely ruins the proof drawn from this passage in Proverbs, which is the main one, and almost the only one opposed to us... For how could this passage prove something, which we are admitted it does not speak of? On the other hand, what Mr. de J. admits is in my opinion of the utmost evidence. One need only have eyes to remain convinced of it. This is enough to see clearly that the Sage, who says that God governs the Lot, does not say in what manner he governs it, and does not decide whether it is mediately, or immediately, whether it is by observing the general Laws, or by suspending their observation. This sacred Author touches none of these Questions; and consequently no one should blame Mr. de J. for having admitted it.

CHAPTER V. Three things in which Mr. de J. makes the evil consist that he believes exists in gaming. That none can be admitted.

When Mr. de J. is asked what makes games of chance essentially criminal, he does not always give the same answer: Sometimes he says that it is a Degradation of the Lot, which he regards as something venerable, and which deserves all our respect; Sometimes that it is a profanation of Providence which presides over it; and sometimes an irreverence towards God, whom one takes as Judge of a trifle.

But nothing seems more strange to me than this manner of reasoning. For finally, we are not disputing about the Lot, but only about games of chance: And to prove to us that games of chance are evil in themselves, we are told about the properties and attributes of the Lot. It even appears that one primarily has in view the Lot mentioned in the holy Books, and which in effect is the one that most deserves consideration. But what consequence can one draw from the Lot to the game of chance, if one does not suppose, either that the game of chance is the same thing as the Lot, or that it is a species of it, or at least that one should say and think of one all that one thinks and says of the other? If one does not suppose one or the other of these three things, this manner of reasoning will be very absurd. But also on the other hand how could one admit such a supposition, if one considers that the Lot of

the Ancients, and our game of chance, are two things so dissimilar, that they barely have any attribute in common, not even one that does not distinguish them?

I. The Ancient Lot had been instituted by God, and one finds in the Books of the Old Testament various durable and perpetual Laws, and various particular commandments without consequence for certain occasions which prescribed it? And who would dare say the same thing about games of chance? Are they not simply men, perhaps even Infidels and Idolaters, who invented them, and who gave them currency?

II. From the very fact that God had instituted, and ordained the Lot, one had reason to conclude that it was something holy and venerable, for what is more venerable, and more holy than what God has instituted and recommended? On the contrary, one sees nothing in Games that should earn them respect.

III. The ancient Lot was undoubtedly a signal favor from God; which produced a thousand good effects, whereas Gaming causes an infinity of disorders, and should be regarded as one of the most dangerous snares that the Devil sets for men to become their master.

IV. The ancient Lot was an event that God conducted by a very particular Providence, as appears by several examples found in sacred History. I have noted up to eight, which may come in the sequel; one notices nothing similar in Gaming. I have even shown that one has various indications of the contrary.

V. This diversity gives rise to another very remarkable one. It is that the Lot gave to those whom it favored, a legitimate and incontestable right over what it assigned them. Who can doubt it? And who would dare deny that each Tribe, for example, had the right to preserve the possession and enjoyment of the portion which had fallen to it in the division of the Land of Canaan? Who can doubt that Saul had similar Rights over the Throne of Judea, and Matthias over the Apostleship? Would one dare, however, say the same thing about the game of chance? And how many Laws are there that deprive Players of all sorts of rights over what they may have won?

VI. Finally, the Lot was one of the external means by which God made known immediately and certainly to men, sometimes hidden truths; like the crime of Achan, that of Jonathan, etc. sometimes his will in certain cases. Witness what the Apostles said to him, Lord, show which one you have chosen. That is why there is no doubt that if after the Lot had discovered the crime of Achan, someone had taken it upon himself to maintain that this Man was innocent, he would have sinned by that very act against Faith, and against the respect due to the testimony of the supreme Being. In a word, the Lot of the Ancients was an Oracle, which is the name that Spencer gives it. See, however, if one would want to say the same thing about games of chance.

All this shows that nothing resembles each other less than these two things, and that thus there is no consequence to draw from one to the other, as Mr. de J. does on every page.

What then, someone will perhaps say, is it not permissible to give the name of Lot to games of chance? It is, I admit, provided that one understands that it is a Lot of an entirely different order than that which was in use in the holy Nation. Indeed, this term Lot is often taken in our ordinary Language to designate a simple chance, as when speaking of a man who has won the big Prize of a Lottery, one says that the Lot has favored him. That is why also our Dictionaries explain one of these expressions by the other.

Provided that one understands it in this way, I consent that the name of Lot be given to our Games. But I cannot suffer that these vain amusements be confused with these immediate revelations, with which God had favored the ancient People.

I will perhaps be asked what is the most accurate idea that I believe one can have of the game of chance, and I will answer that it is in my opinion that of one of those Conventions that Men often make among themselves, and on which they make the execution depend on some fortuitous and unforeseen event, submitting themselves in case it happens to do or to suffer, to lose or to win, such or such a thing that depends on them.

I have given various examples of this in Chapters VI. and XII. of my Defense, such as Lotteries, Insurance Contracts; and Gross Adventure, Pacts of mutual succession in the great Houses of Germany; of several Clauses, which are inserted almost everywhere in Marriage Contracts, etc. Scripture itself furnishes us with an example in the various Treaties that Jacob made with Laban to ensure payment for his troubles. Mr. de J. provides us with two, and Jurists with a much larger number.

Nothing seems to me to have more conformity and resemblance with this species of Conventions, than games of chance, and among the terms that I have included in the definition I have given of them; I notice none that does not suit them. But also nothing resembles them less than the ancient Lot, which I define as A way of consulting God to try to learn from him something that was unknown, sometimes a hidden and unknown fact, and sometimes what he wanted Men to do on certain occasions; to which God responded, not by distinctly uttered words, not by Dreams, or Visions, but by sensible Symbols, placed, situated, and moved in a certain way, to which an arbitrary significance had been given in truth, but known, and authorized by usage.

It is only this last particularity in which these two subjects resemble each other. All the rest is very different, and suffices to prove that one is not the other. A Painting, a Statue, a Monkey, and a Man, resemble each other in several respects, but also they differ in others. Does this very limited and very imperfect resemblance give the right to attribute to each of these subjects all that one notices in the three others?

CHAPTER VI. Whether the Game of chance is a Degradation of the Lot. Fourth Admission of Mr. de J.

After this general reflection we must enter into the details of the Accusations that Mr. de J. brings against Gaming and Players. The first is that Gaming degrades the Lot, which he represents as something very venerable. The Lot, he says, whose use is degraded in games of chance, is the true cause of what is reproachable in them, is not by itself, &c. Letter VI, page 7.

But firstly, he himself destroys this Accusation by declaring that he is persuaded that the Lot in general is a purely human invention. When, he says, I think about the origin of the use of the Lot, I cannot imagine anything else, except that Men finding difficulty and inconveniences in uniting their wills by themselves, either in sharing, or in elections, agreed to renounce equally their own will, to seek a determination in the obscure and impartial source of the Lot. Letter II. page 49. and in Letter VI. page 49. I recognize the Lot as a human invention. See also pages 36. and 37. of the same Letter.

If all this is true, what can the Lot have so venerable that one cannot use it for relaxation without sinning? Why would it be more privileged than Games of skill, and so many other occupations that come from the same source?

But to say what I think about it, I cannot persuade myself that the Lot properly so called, and which was in use in the holy Nation, was an invention of Men. I hold it certain that it had its source in God's institution. It is true that one cannot mark the precise time at which God authorized it the first time: But it has this in common with Sacrifices, the distinction of meats, and several other things, which were in use even before the Law, and which nevertheless came from God. I believe it is the same with the Lot, and I have three reasons to believe it.

I. The first is taken from Analogy. Some species of the Lot were constantly instituted by God, witness the Lot that made the choice of the Scapegoat, and that which distributed the functions of the Priests and Levites. If these two species of Lot came from God, why would one have difficulty in persuading oneself that the others came from the same source?

II. The use of the Lot, such as I have described it in the preceding Chapter, was without difficulty one of the functions of Religion, like the Oath, Prayer, and thanksgiving. It was in effect a real recognition of the supreme Authority of God, and an acknowledgment of some of his perfections. And in effect I am not afraid that one will deny me that the Lot consecrated to some false Divinity, like that of Praeneste dedicated to Juno, was an act of Idolatry. Now who does not know that it is essential to every act of Religion to have been commanded by God? In vain do they honor me, said Jesus Christ, teaching only Traditions, which are commandments of Men.

III. Finally, the Patriarchs, whom Mr. de J. believes to be the Authors and Inventors of the Lot, and whom he represents as wise people, and full of good sense, would

hardly have been so, if they had taken it upon themselves to dispose of God's actions without his participation, engaging him without consulting him to answer our Questions, whenever it pleases us to ask him one.

All this persuades me that the Lot, which is spoken of in the holy Books, was of divine institution. It is our games of chance that men have invented. And this being established, it is beyond doubt, that they have nothing sacred, nothing venerable, no more than the other productions of the human mind, which suffices to destroy this first response of Monsieur de J.

CHAPTER VII. Whether the Game of chance is a profanation of Providence. Fifth Admission of Mr. de J.

Mr. de J. responds secondly, that what makes the crime of games of chance, is that they outrage, or as he sometimes explains, that they profane Providence, occupying it to govern our most frivolous amusements. He says, that it is to make an unworthy use of Providence, to make it come five hundred times in an hour in arbitration without necessity, for a matter of nothing. Conscience, he adds, is convinced that God, who can be honored when one remits to his decision an important sharing, which ensures the peace, and the rest of a Family, or when one makes him arbiter of life and death, is dishonored when one makes him Minister of our amusements, and the Judge of our childish contentions, and consequently that if Games where the Lot intervenes, are an abuse of the Lot, a profanation of Providence, as one cannot reasonably doubt, the smallest Games, where there is the least to win and to lose, are by that very fact the most profane. Letter I. pag. 18. 19.

But there are two very important Remarks to make on all this. The first is that nothing is easier than to find the same thing in Games of skill. Is it not certain that God governs them all by his Providence as well as the rest of events? Are they more worthy than those of chance to occupy this supreme Being? If then these latter are so many outrages one makes to Providence, if they even profane it as Mr. de J. says; how can one justify from this same reproach Games of skill?

One could excuse just as little from this same crime the most innocent of our walks. When I take a few turns in my room, or in my garden, Providence presides over each step that I take, and what is considerable, it presides over it in a manner that ravishes in admiration those who meditate on it, and who know what prodigious number of secret springs the Author of Nature must make play to give us the means of making a single one of these steps, which goes quite further than what must be done to prevent a die from falling on the face, on which it had to fall following the impulse that was given to it. I say the same thing of all the words that we utter, and I could add to it a hundred other similar things, which the most severe do not condemn.

One will perhaps say that neither the Games of skill, with which we amuse ourselves, nor the steps that we take, nor the words that we pronounce, are the object only of a general Providence, whereas games of chance are governed by a particular

Providence. But we will see that Mr. de J. has closed this door for himself, which was the only one through which he could have some hope of escaping.

This is the second Remark that I had to make. All our Theologians distinguish a double Providence, one general, common, ordinary; the other special and particular. And when they are asked what difference there is between these two species of Providence, which, properly and exactly speaking, are not two distinct Providences, but only two manners in which one and the same Providence governs things, they respond that the first is that which conforms to the general Laws, which it establishes at the beginning, and that the second on the contrary suspends when it pleases the observation of these Laws by miracles, sometimes sensible, and manifest, sometimes hidden, and imperceptible. *Providentia Dei*, says Mr. vander Mullen, *secundum omnes Theologos, vel generalis, vel specialis statuitur. Generalem illam dicunt, quâ Deus secundum leges natura circa omnes res versatur. Specialem verò illam vocant, cum Deus à communi natura lege recedit, ut cum facit miracula.* (The Providence of God, according to all Theologians, is considered either general or special. That is called general by which God operates according to the laws of nature concerning all things. But that is called special when God departs from the common law of nature, as when He performs miracles.) *Jus Fori &c.* pag. 88. See also Mr. Pictet *Theol.* Book VII. chap. 3.

On this foundation when those of our Theologians who hold like Mr. de J. that games of chance are criminal in themselves, are asked in what consists this alleged crime, they respond that it is in that they have a visible relation to the particular Providence, of which one should not make a Game. *Istiusmodi ludi, says Amesius, sunt sua natura illiciti, quia non debet illud in ludum verti, quod suâ natura singularem respectum habet ad specialem Dei Providentiam.* ("Games of this kind," says Amesius, "are by their nature unlawful, because that which by its nature has a particular relation to the special Providence of God ought not to be turned into a game.") *Lib. IV. cap. 23. n. 3.* And Voetius. *In ratione suâ formali sors omnis includit respectum ad Deum, & dependentiam ab ipsius speciali, atque immediata Providentia.* ("In its formal nature, every lot (or casting of lots) includes a reference to God and a dependence on His special and immediate Providence.") *Dispp. sell. Tom. III. pag. 1195.*

Mr. de J. says nearly the same thing in his I. Letter page 21. and 22. God, he says, regulates by constant and uniform Laws the majority of natural effects, like the course of Rivers, of Stars, and determines by free and particular Wills all the things that we call casual and indeterminate, so that when one throws a Die on a table without any design except to make it roll, one makes a natural action, which responds to the general Providence, and which has no consequence, no more than a stone, that one pushes with the tip of the foot. But when one throws a Die under certain arbitrary Laws on the side of men, and under the convention that the highest point will produce gain, and that the lowest will cause loss, one should relate this convention to the particular Providence. One should say that Men, who cannot

determine the Die according to their wish, either in whole, or in part, nor know in any manner the determination which must come of it, make a small consultation to God, the only Director, the only Master of the Lot, and pray to him in some manner, at least tacitly by their submission, to mark by a determination, which depends absolutely only on him, to whom he wants to give the gain that two persons desire equally and which can be only to one alone.

There it is visible that Mr. de J. recognizes a general Providence, and a particular Providence. It is no less so that according to him general Providence regulates the majority of natural effects by constant and uniform Laws, but that with regard to casual events, such as games of chance, he determines them by a particular Providence, and by free and immediate Wills. It appears finally that according to Mr. de J. if without playing one throws a Die on a table, the general Providence will regulate its fall, but that if one throws it while playing, its fall will be the object of the particular Providence.

That was then the sentiment of Mr. de J. when he wrote his I. Letter. Today it is something entirely different. It is no longer the particular Providence that regulates the Lot, it is the general. That is in effect what he declares in various places, once in pages 76. and 77. of the last Letter, twice in page 78. and once in 92.

I content myself with reporting one of these places, which is the second. The Lot, he says, by the consent of Mr. de la P. who can no longer retract, is an Arbitration voluntarily remitted by Men to the general Providence of God. I do not stop to note what he makes me admit, that the Lot is an Arbitration remitted to Providence, which I have never, neither said, nor thought, and which is even directly opposed to my sentiment, as will be seen in the sequel. I limit myself to what Mr. de J. tells us that it is to the general Providence that is deferred the Arbitration of which he speaks to us, which is so contrary to what he had said in his I. Letter, and which I have just reported. Indeed, in the I. he assures, that it is a particular Providence which regulates the Lot, and in the II. he declares up to four times that it is not the particular which takes this care, but the general, which I am careful not to regard as a contradiction, I honor Mr. de J. too much to have such thoughts. I regard it only as a simple retraction, and by that very fact as an action, which the greatest Men make an honor of.

CHAPTER VIII. Continuation of the same subject.

That is what seems most reasonable to me. However, I admit that I do not find it quite satisfactory. There is none of these Propositions that I find a way to reconcile with the System of my Illustrious Adversary. I do not see how one can say without overthrowing it, either that God governs the game of chance by simply observing the general Laws, or that he conducts it, by sometimes suspending their observation.

I. If it is the first, what difference will remain between the manner in which God governs Games of skill, and the manner in which he conducts games of chance? This being established, he will conduct them all in the same way. He will do for some only what he does for the others.

II. If that is still so, what can the Lot have more venerable, than the least important events, for example, than the slightest accidents that happen to the vilest insects, to gnats, and to little worms, not one of which escapes the vigilant care of Providence?

III. If that is so, Mr. de J. and I are more or less in agreement, and if there is some difference, it is that I distance myself a little less from his sentiment than he himself. For although I believe that ordinarily, and almost always, God conducts games of chance by making the general Laws be observed, I do not cease to be persuaded that this is not perpetual. The contrary can happen when the Game has extraordinary consequences, as when one of the Players absolutely loses all his property, and this loss makes him return to himself; also when two Players quarrel, fight, kill each other. This itself will not happen, if God does nothing else in relation to games of chance than ensure that the general Laws are exactly observed.

IV. If God in governing the Lot, does nothing else than make these Laws be observed, what use will the prayers be, which Mr. de J. approves of sometimes accompanying this manner of consulting God, as when it is a question of knowing which of two Soldiers must die, which of two Pastors must visit the sick in time of plague, to whom certain employments must be given, &c. What will all this amount to, if God never suspends the observation of the general Laws? Will he do, neither more, nor less, for all this that one may do?

Mr. de J. cannot therefore take this first position without throwing himself into inextricable embarrassments. However, he will not find lesser ones in the second.

I. He will first have to revoke all that he has said and repeated up to four times, as has been seen in the preceding Chapter, namely that it is the general Providence, and not the particular which conducts the Lot.

II. It will be necessary to refute the Proofs that I have given of the contrary, and which will be found in Chapters XI. XII. XIII. XIV. and XV. of my Defense.

III. To be able to count on what is told to us, it would be necessary first that God had obliged himself to respond by the Lot to all the Questions that the least of Men could ask him. II. That he had obliged himself absolutely and without restriction, whether Men want it or not, or even if they wish the contrary; whether these Men who cast the Lot intend to consult by this means the true God, or some false Divinity, or the Devil himself. III. It would be necessary that he had not been content to resolve it in himself, but that besides this he had made known this obligation, where he wanted to enter.

Let us imagine that one of these three things is missing for us. Let us imagine that God has not obliged himself to answer us. Let us imagine that entering into this

engagement, he has done it only under some condition, and with some reservation, known, or unknown. Let us imagine finally that having resolved it in himself, he has discovered nothing of it to Men. What temerity will it not be to count absolutely on this?

It is however certain that one would not dare to maintain, I will not say all these things together, but whichever it may be of the three. It is certain secondly, that even if one could manage to say it and to think it, one could not prove it. It is certain thirdly that the thing is very little believable, and that if it were true, it would be so singular, that one could not indicate whatever it might be that resembled it.

Is it very believable that God having made infinitely wise Laws derogates from them at every moment without any necessity, without any utility? Is it very believable that he does in favor of an action that is represented to us as essentially criminal, what he does not do in favor of the most lively Faith, of the most eminent Piety, of the most distinguished Holiness, to which he refuses various things, instead of which he refuses nothing to Players? Is it very believable that he hears them, whether they wish it or not, whether they even wish the contrary? What force of Proofs, and what evidence of truth, would it not be necessary to persuade us of things so incredible, and so destitute of all appearance of truth, and what is much more, to authorize condemning as guilty of a very great sin, an infinity of persons, who, apart from that, live without reproach, and conduct themselves with the most regularity and exactitude? However, hardly are produced some slight suspicions, and some weak conjectures, in an occasion where one should distrust the clearest Demonstrations, and admit them only after having examined them well.

CHAPTER IX. Whether the Game of chance contains any irreverence towards God. Sixth Admission of Mr. de J.

The third thing in which Mr. de J. makes the crime of games of chance consist, is an irreverence towards God, which he believes he perceives in them. He says that it would be losing the respect one owes to a Man of merit and distinction, to take him as Judge of a trifle, such as could be the equality, or inequality of two turnips. From this he concludes that it must be a great crime to do the same thing towards God, taking Him as Judge of our small and childish contentions.

This is nevertheless what he maintains that one does every time one resorts to the Lot; for the Lot, as he claims, cannot be better defined than by saying that it is a voluntary Convention between Men to renounce their strength, and their industry, and generally all advantages, either of Nature, or of Art, to submit a common claim to a decision, which is above the will, and the power of Men, and which can consequently come only from the Will and Power of God. Last Letter page 32 and 33.

We will see shortly if this reasoning is solid. Here I content myself with declaring that I am very far from denying, either that irreverence towards God is a very great

sin, or that this sin cannot accompany games of chance, and does not even sometimes accompany them. Who can doubt, for example, that two Men who would play in the Temple during the Sermon, or in their house on a day of Communion, a day of public Fast, or even on a Sunday, especially during the time of sacred Exercises, would show by that alone a horrible irreverence towards God, and would render themselves thereby guilty of a great sin?

I say the same thing of those whom Gaming leads to utter Blasphemies and impieties, and I admit in a word that this is one of the circumstances that can make Gaming criminal. But I maintain that it is with this as with the others. It can accompany the Game, both of skill and of chance. It can be separated from it, and this is a truth that Mr. de J. recognizes in a hundred places in his Letters.

How many times does he not bring back the example of two Soldiers, who have deserved death, and to one of whom one wants to grant pardon? Nothing is more ordinary than to make them draw Lots to know which of the two must die. Then, says Monsieur de Joncourt, they play for life or death, and this Game is done without any irreverence towards God, because the matter is very important. He permits it to two Pastors, who have agreed in a time of plague that one will preach, and the other will visit the sick. Mr. de J. consents that one make the division of these two functions by Lot. He does not condemn it in the Cities and in the States where the Lot decides who must exercise certain Offices. He permits it in the division of Inheritances, and in the dissolution of Societies between Merchants. He even permits it to two beggars, who have found, or received in common a small piece of money. So true is it that even according to Mr. de J. irreverence is not inseparable from Gaming, which suffices to prove that this deficiency which is sometimes noticed in it does not show that it is criminal in itself.

Indeed, one has no more certain mark to discern things indifferent in themselves from those which are essentially criminal, than to see that they are sometimes permitted. It does not matter that they are permitted only rarely. Even if they had never been permitted except in a single case, that would suffice to show that they are not criminal by their nature. How many Jurists and Theologians are there, who, to prove that the Marriage of brothers and sisters is not criminal in itself, allege only the necessity in which the children of Adam found themselves to marry their Sisters? If therefore a single example suffices to prove that an action is not evil by its nature, what will one say of Gaming, which is so often innocent?

I do not know if I am mistaken, but whatever it may be, it seems to me that what I say has evidence, and indeed I would wish that one would respond clearly and without detour to this Argument: The game of chance is not criminal in itself if there are cases where it can be innocent. There are such cases, and Mr. de J. admits it. It is therefore not essentially criminal, and when it is indeed, it is only by accident.

CHAPTER X. Examination of the Definition that Mr. de J. gives us of the Lot.

This sixth Admission seems very considerable to me. It ends the entire Dispute. It is moreover express and formal, and even repeated several times. What he recognizes is certain, and it is finally without difficulty, there being nothing that one can oppose to it with any shadow of likelihood.

It is true that Mr. de J. opposes to me the definition of the Lot which he says is a convention that Men make to renounce their industry, to submit their claims to the power and Will of God. But nothing is more imperfect, nothing less exact than such a definition. It sins against all the rules of Logic, and it is astonishing that as able a Man as Mr. de J. could regard it as good.

I. It is not accurate enough, and applies to subjects very distinct from the one it undertakes to make known. When, for example, it is reported at the beginning of the Book of Judges, that the Israelites consulted God to know which of the twelve Tribes should attack the Canaanites, and that God answered that it would be that of Judah, it was a convention, such as the Definition poses it, and however it was not at all a Lot. It was according to Grotius and according to Spencer a consultation of the Oracle, which Scripture calls Urim and Thummim.

II. As on one side this Definition has too much extension, on the other it does not have enough, and there is such a Lot to which one could not apply it. Such is, for example, that which is called Divinatory, and which is not at all a convention to submit to the will of God a common claim. Thus it is on one side too extensive, and on the other too restricted.

III. The term Convention insinuates that it is necessary to be more than one to cast the Lot. I believe however it is difficult to prove that a single person cannot do it.

IV. This Definition speaks well of a convention of Men among themselves, but it says nothing of another much more important convention. It is the one that one supposes that God has made with Men, obliging Himself to accept the quality of Judge, and to pronounce, every time that one will require it of Him. Without this second convention the first will be ridiculous. For by what right will simple men take it upon themselves to dispose of God's actions?

V. According to the definition, every time that one employs the Lot, one renounces all industry that one has, &c. But in effect this does not take place in the Games that one calls mixed, such as are the majority of those of Cards, and where each one reserves the right to play the best that he can.

VI. According to the Definition, those who resort to the Lot submit thereby their claims to the decision of God. That being so, there will be no Lot wherever there will be no claims. But what claim can one notice in the use of the Divinatory Lot, in the choice of the Scapegoat, in the Game where one plays nothing? I am even persuaded

that Matthias and Joseph the Just had enough humility to not claim, neither one, nor the other to the Apostleship.

VII. This Definition, although rather long, does not say a word about a thing that makes the most distinctive character of the Lot. It is that of making known the will of God, not by words that explain it, not by images, but by fortuitous events, to which one attaches an arbitrary signification.

Let one judge by all that I have just said, if a Definition, which has so many defects, is very proper to serve as foundation for a good proof.

CHAPTER XI. That it is not true that in playing one takes God as Judge of the claims one has on what one plays.

It is therefore visible that Mr. de J. does not prove at all that either in general to cast the Lot, or in particular to play at a Game of chance, is to take God Himself as Judge of the claims that one can have on certain things. I add secondly, that it is easy to prove, that even if that could happen, it would not be perpetual, which suffices for me. For if one can play without deferring to God the Arbitrage of which one speaks to us, and which one regards as a pure irreverence towards God, one will be able to play without rendering oneself guilty of this sin, and in this way this Game can be innocent, which suffices to prove that it is not criminal in itself.

I. What is easier however than to justify that the contrary is not perpetual? Or to better say have I not already justified it by the example of the Divinatory Lot, by that of the Lot which made known the Scapegoat, and by that of the Game where one plays nothing.

II. One can apply here a good part of what I said in Chapter VIII. all that having the same force against the third reproach that one makes to Gaming, as against the second.

III. If what is told to us were true, it would be necessary to recognize that God would make each day, and without any necessity, an infinity of hidden and imperceptible miracles, of the same order as those which, according to the Roman Church, are the consequences of Transubstantiation. This consequence is inevitable, and moreover very absurd, as I justified it in Chapter XV. of my Defense; that is why also I do not insist on it.

IV. What is told to us, is so strange that one can be assured that no one believes it. I have a sensible and demonstrative proof of it. If God had obliged Himself to judge, and to pronounce on our claims, every time that one would require it of Him by the Lot, Litigants would only have to cast it to infallibly obtain a Ruling. But if one believed it, who does not see that the Tribunals would soon be deserted? For who is it who would not prefer to be judged by the most enlightened, the most equitable, and the most incorruptible of all Judges, by the best even and the most indulgent of

all Fathers, than by weak and mortal Men, capable of being dazzled and of being mistaken, to say nothing stronger?

Where are those who entering into a lawsuit would prefer to expose themselves to expenses, to fatigues, to mortifications, to rebuffs, to fears and to inquietudes inevitable to those who practice the unfortunate profession of Litigants, than to immediately get out of affairs by a way as short, and as sure as this one, which demands only a throw of the Die, or three or four Cards turned? And what should one think of the human Race, if such a good offering itself, one would obstinately everywhere, and at all times, reject it? Where is the Litigant who could resist one of his Friends, who at the birth of a Lawsuit would propose to him to get out of it, or to prevent it by this way? Where would he find, I will not say reasons, but pretexts to defend himself from it?

With what eyes should one regard a Man, who not only would reject on the spot such a proposition, but still would obstinately for some days, or some weeks reject it?

For myself I am persuaded that if God had resolved to pronounce in this way on all the Questions, of which one would ask him the decision by the Lot, and if he actually dealt in this manner for Players, he would have done another thing. He would have warned us of it clearly and expressly, and would have forbidden us to plead before any other Tribunal than his. Since it is sure that he has not done it, I hope that one will permit me not to believe what is told to us.

That seems pressing enough to me to merit a word of response. However although I had indicated it, and even extended it, and applied it to other subjects in my Defense, all that could not obtain the grace of being refuted.

CHAPTER XII. Seventh Admission of Mr. de J.

Here is still a seventh Admission, after which it will not be necessary to look for others. Mr. de J. admits that it is no longer permitted, as it was formerly, to resort to the Lot to discover some hidden truth, even if it would be important. I admit, he says, that if today to discover a secret theft one took it upon oneself to cast the Lot on all the Inhabitants of a City, that would be more or less that, that would be to tempt God, who has not promised to reveal to us secret things when it pleases us. The temerity would be still greater, if one took it upon oneself to put to death the one on whom such a lot had fallen... II. Letter pag. 46.

Let us not examine if the reason that he alleges is good and solid. Perhaps one would find something to say about it if one undertook it. But as all that is not of our subject, and as it is a question here only of a simple admission, it should suffice for us to note two things in these words of Mr. de J. One is his Thesis, which holds that the Divinatory Lot no longer exists, and that it is no longer permitted to have recourse

to it to discover the hidden Truths, that one would wish to know. The other is the reason that he gives for it. It is that to act in such a way would be to tempt God.

Each of these two things decides our Question. For as for the first, if the Divinatory Lot, although authorized by the procedure of Joshua, and by all that happened on the subject of Jonathan, no longer exists, does one not have reason to presume that it is the same with the other species? What appearance is there that this one being able to be so useful, or to better say so necessary, God would have suppressed it, and would have left the others to subsist, of which it is so easy to do without?

I admit that this should not stop us if one had some good proof of the contrary. But as one has none, one cannot deny that this consideration has its weight, and that it is just to have regard for it.

But the reason that Mr. de J. alleges to prove that one cannot resort to this species of Lot, furnishes us with another much more decisive one. He takes it from the fact that we have no promise that God has made to us to make known to us by this way these sorts of truths, from which he concludes that it would be tempting God to pray to him for it. If this reason is good against the Divinatory Lot, why would it not be so against the two others? Do we in effect have more promises in favor of the Lot of sharing, or of the elective, than in favor of the Divinatory? Either therefore this reason is good against the three species of Lot, or it is not against any. Thus Mr. de J. has only to see what will appear more advantageous to him, either to reestablish the Divinatory Lot, or to suppress the two others.

Here is another consideration which has some relation to the preceding one. I have noted in another place that there is none of these Theologians, who hold that the game of chance is criminal in itself, who does not rely principally on the passage from Proverbs, which says that the Lot is cast into the lap, but that what comes from it is from the Lord. If therefore we can wrest this passage from them, we will overturn their System on its foundations.

That however is easy. Indeed the Sage does not speak more of the Lot of sharing, or of the elective, than of the Divinatory. He speaks generally and indefinitely of the Lot. Consequently there would be injustice in claiming that in authorizing the two he would except the third. Either he accredits them all, or he accredits none.

I cannot resolve to quit this matter without asking a small question to Mr. de J. He believes that it would be tempting God to resort to the Divinatory Lot to discover the truth of a hidden and unknown fact. Let us allow him to pass what he says, and which one will be able to take back in a moment. Let us limit ourselves to the fact. It is known that there are various places, where the thing is still practiced today, and where one claims to discover by this means the Authors of domestic thefts. Let us imagine that one currently employs this means, and that in an occasion of this nature one resorts to this species of Lot. What will happen? Will God respond in this sort of occasions, as in games of chance, directing the whole by a particular Providence or will he let things go their natural course, permitting the Lot to give

sometimes to the right, sometimes to the left, and decide sometimes the true, and sometimes the false?

If it is the second, what good reason can one give for such a diversity? And why will one believe that God, who responds always in the other species of Lot, never does it in this one?

If it is the first, here is a sure and infallible means to convince Unbelievers of the existence of God, and of the cares of Providence. It will be necessary for that only to make the test, and to reiterate it ten, twenty, thirty times. If it always succeeds, and if the Lot never falls except on the guilty one, the Unbelievers will have nothing to say, and they will not be able to prevent themselves from giving glory to the truth.

Will this utility itself, so great, so inestimable, not render the thing permitted, since an interest of a few pennies can do it, as we are told?

Finally, what harm can there be in making serve for such a use a means established by God in this design, and for this purpose?

CHAPTER XIII. Response to an Objection.

Mr. de J. imputes to me to believe that the Lot was an Oracle always open to the least of men to consult it, and gives himself much trouble to show that its usage was much rarer than I represent it. He believes to have on me in this regard great advantages, and does not consider that all that is foreign to our Question, and that, whether this usage was rare, or frequent, games of chance are neither more, nor less criminal in themselves. Consequently to hook onto this incident, and to make of it a great affair, is to give place to suspect that it is not the truth, but the victory, that one seeks.

But it is certain that even with regard to this incident Mr. de J. does not have all the advantage that he imagines. It is true that I suppose that the Ancients could consult the Lot when it pleased them. But how do I suppose it? Is it as a thing that I positively believe? Not at all. It is as a thing that Mr. de J. believes, and that I let him pass. For firstly it is sure that this is his thought, that not only in Israel, but throughout the earth, the least of Men have always been able, and will always be able to resort to the Lot for the smallest things, and that if one does not have the occasion, one can bring it about. If therefore this hypothesis has something strange, he should put it on his own account, and not charge me alone with it.

Moreover no one is unaware that it is here one of the privileges of Dispute to build as well on what the Adversary maintains as on what one thinks oneself. This manner of acting even has a particular name in the School, which is that of arguing to the man, or to the person. *Argumentari ad hominem*, and there is no one who does not use it thus. I do not even except from this the sacred Authors, who furnish us with various examples of it. It is thus that I understood it, and by that alone one can see if I have given to Mr. de J. as much grip as he imagines.

But that is not all. I maintain that the usage of the Lot could be ordinary without being frequent. That appears by the example of what was called Urim and Thummim. The usage of it was without doubt ordinary, since it was established by a constant Law, and observed during several centuries. However one finds very few examples of it in sacred History, which one imputes to one or two restrictions which one believes that God had added to the Law that he had made of it. Indeed, one believes that this Oracle did not respond to the consultations of individuals, but only to the questions made on behalf of, and for the interest of the Public. In the occasions even of this second order, this Oracle did not always respond, as appears by what happened to Saul, who consulted God, but God did not answer him either in dream, or by Urim, or by Prophets. 1. Sam. XXVIII. 6.

If sacred History had marked for us clearly and distinctly the institution of the Lot, and all the precautions that it was necessary to observe when one wanted to have recourse to it, one could say something more precise about it. But as Scripture does not speak of it, it is not permitted to us to speak of it in a manner even a little bit affirmative, and one cannot venture to do it without temerity.

I add that whatever Mr. de J. may say, the examples of the Lot directed by an immediate, and particular Providence, are not by a long way as rare as he imagines. I find, not two or three, as he says somewhere; but up to eight, which are those 1. of the sharing of the Land of Canaan compared with the Testament of Jacob, 2. the discovery of the sin of Achan, 3. of that of Jonathan, and 4. of that of Jonah, 5. the election of Saul to Royalty compared with the history of his anointing, 6. the Lot cast by King Nebuchadnezzar to know which City he would besiege; 7. the choice of Zacharias to offer the perfume, and 8. that of Matthias for the Apostleship. Is it not enough to have the right to conclude from it that the Lot was formerly directed in a very particular way by Providence? And could one produce something similar to show that it is the same presently?

CHAPTER XIV. Response to another Objection.

In the VI. Letter of Mr. de J. there is a Passage which I am assured he is very pleased with, and which has dazzled some of those who have read it. He compares the two routes that one can take to repress the fury of Gaming, his and mine, and maintains that his, which absolutely condemns this vain exercise, is without difficulty the safest.

To enliven the matter he proposes his reasoning in the form of a Parable. "I suppose," he says, "a Royal Garden, in which a large number of strangers wish to enter; and as several are heading there, and find themselves at the door to satisfy themselves, they perceive two men ready whom they ask for advice to visit this entertaining Work, without inconvenience, and without danger. The first tells them that they are permitted to enter, that he does not believe that the Prince has made a Law that prevents it, and that provided they take care with some dangerous places, they will

be able to exit without a miracle. The second counsels absolutely, and without reservation, not to enter." There is no doubt that the second of these men, whom one calls serious, is Mr. de J. and that I am the first. Thus it only remains to see if these two roles suit us, and if what Mr. de J. makes us say expresses our true sentiments.

It is evident that the aim of the Parable is to suggest that the System of Mr. de J. is more suitable to repress the fury of Gaming than mine. Two pretexts can color this claim. One is that effectively Mr. de J. says more bad things about Gaming than I do. For instead of being content to say that it has frightful consequences, Mr. de J. assures that it is criminal in itself, and by its nature. The other is that Mr. de J. maintaining that Gaming is criminal in itself; he has committed himself thereby to never permitting it, whereas for me, I approve it in a small number of occasions.

But it is certain that these two pretexts have no solidity. For as for the first it is quite true that Mr. de J. says more bad things about Gaming than I do, but he does not prove what he says about it, or if he gives some proof, besides that it is weakness itself, he destroys them all by clean, and formal confessions, which overturn their foundations.

I act in another manner. I prove invincibly the evil that I say about Gaming, and the proofs that I give of it have this advantage, that Mr. de J. approves them, and even does them the honor of adopting them. That being established, I maintain that I work more effectively than he does to make Gaming hated, accusations less strong, but well proven, being quite otherwise proper to produce this effect, than accusations more atrocious, but destitute of all sorts of proofs. Nothing therefore is more vain than the first of these two pretexts.

The second has no more solidity. It is very true that Mr. de J. maintaining that Gaming is criminal in itself, has committed himself thereby to never permitting it, and it is astonishing that such a skilled man has not perceived a commitment as sensible as this one. But whatever it may be about Right, it is certain that he has renounced it. He has maintained in a hundred places that there are various cases where Gaming, although criminal in itself, does not cease to be permitted and innocent, and if there is in this regard some difference between him and me, it is that he poses many more of these cases than I admit. I have only been able to notice five or six, whereas for him he has found them by the hundreds.

One can see by that with what precision, and what equity Mr. de J. makes the division of the roles that he assigns us. He makes me say absolutely and without reservation, that Gaming is permitted. The first tells them that it is permitted to enter, that is to say without difficulty, to play. Who would not say upon hearing me speak in such a way, that according to me Gaming is absolutely permitted, or at least that it is more often than it is forbidden? Instead of in the truth of the matter there being no proportion between these two sorts of cases, those where I permit Gaming not being the hundred thousandth of those where I condemn it.

That is not all. To enter into the Labyrinth, is indeed without difficulty to play. But one can play in two manners, criminally and innocently. One plays criminally when in playing one carries oneself to one of the fourteen excesses that I have indicated, one plays innocently when one avoids all these abuses, and when moreover one has good reasons to play. Which of these two senses is the one in which Mr. de J. makes me say that it is permitted to play? Is it the first? I could not persuade myself of it, not even suspect it. I would fear to outrage him, or to better say, I would outrage him indeed, if I believed him capable of an injustice as glaring as would be that of attributing to me such a detestable language. Does he understand then that according to me it is permitted to play, provided that one plays innocently? If that is so I consent to it. But firstly it was necessary to make me say it clearly to prevent one from suspecting the contrary. II. In understanding it in that way, what harm is there in saying that it is permitted to play? III. Does not Mr. de J. believe it as well as I do? Why then was it necessary to put us in opposition on a point on which we are in agreement?

But here is something very important. When it is Mr. de J. who speaks, he counts expressly among the dangers to which one exposes oneself by entering into the Labyrinth that of perishing there. Thousands and thousands of indiscreet ones have lost their lives there. When it is my turn to speak, it is no longer a question of death. It is no longer a matter of some slight wound. A large number of heedless ones, I am made to say, have fallen, and have wounded themselves, some more, and others less. Would one not say that Gaming is according to me only a venial sin, that one expiates, at worst, in Purgatory, whereas according to Mr. de J. it is a mortal sin which leads to damnation. Once again, to enter into the Labyrinth, is one of the two, either to play criminally, or to play innocently. If it is the first; he does not make me say enough. And if it is the second, he himself says too much. By playing criminally one kills oneself. By playing innocently one does not do the least harm.

Mr. de J. therefore does not at all make me speak in a manner conformable to my hypotheses. I add that he does not speak himself according to his own. I speak, he says, in a firmer tone. However no one understands what he says. What Enigma indeed does one not find in the conclusion of his Parable? The three and a half quarters of the people of the Court, who see the Prince closer, have assured me that he has forbidden all sorts of people.... to enter..... Without his permission, and without a Guide characterized for that. What is this characterized Guide? I admit that that is beyond me.

He says that the three and a half Quarters of the people of the Court, that is to say of the Theologians, assure that the Prince has forbidden entering into the Labyrinth without his permission. I note on that two things. The first is an enormous error of calculation, which makes him believe that he has for himself the three and a half quarters of our Theologians. I believe that so little true that I am persuaded that he does not even have a single one. And indeed, who other than he has ever said that the game of chance being criminal in itself, there are nevertheless hundreds of

cases, where it is permitted to play it? Who other than he has ever said that it is the general Providence that games of chance outrage? On the contrary I notice every day some of those who are of my sentiment, and whose thought I was unaware of when I wrote my Defense. For example Mr. Braunius in his Common Places page 101. and Mr. Pictet in his Christian Morality Vol. VI. Chapter 18. page 232. Finally these Theologians who tell us that God has forbidden playing, should mark for us the places of Scripture, where they find this prohibition. That however is what they do not do.

CHAPTER XV. Conclusion of this Dispute.

These are the main reflections that I had to make on this Question. But as I have strongly resolved to no longer importune the Public with the continuation of this Dispute, and as I wish that it would end, it will not be out of place to mark as distinctly as possible the state in which I leave it. It is with this that I will finish.

We agree on the state of the Question. We are in agreement that it is solely a question of knowing if, both the Games of pure chance, and those that one calls mixed, are criminal in themselves, by their nature, and independently of the manner in which one applies oneself to them, and of the other circumstances, which accompany them, or if being indifferent in themselves, and by their nature, they become criminal, and worthy of blame, by the abuse that one makes of them, and by the excesses that one adds to them. Mr. de J. takes the first of these two positions, and I the second.

As he carries himself as Accuser of Gaming and of Players, it is for him to prove his Accusation, following the maxim of the Jurists. *Actori incumbit opus probandi* [The burden of proof falls on the plaintiff]. If he does not do it, he loses his case, and the Public will release the accused, even if they say nothing to defend themselves.

Let us see then what are the proofs of Mr. de J. He produces three of them. He takes the first from the fact that the game of chance degrades the Lot, which has, if one believes him, something venerable, as appears by all that the holy Scripture tells us about it. He takes the second from what he claims that the game of chance profanes Providence by occupying it with trifles. He takes the third from what he maintains that the Lot is nothing other than an Arbitration that one defers to God on contentions of nothing, which one cannot wash from the crime of irreverence.

To respond to the first of these three reasons, I have said that games of chance being a purely human invention they have thereby nothing venerable; nothing consequently that one should fear to degrade. And because one imagines to justify the contrary by saying that the Lot has some relation to God, as appears by all that the holy Scripture tells us about it, I have shown that the game of chance, and the lot that is spoken of in the holy Books, are two things so different, that there is no consequence to draw from one to the other.

I have answered to the second, that I do not agree at all that the game of chance is conducted by a more particular, and more immediate Providence than Games of skill, and than the rest of events, and I have proved the contrary by several reasons, which are the matter of V. Chapters, and to which Mr. de J. has not responded.

I have said against the third, that I do not agree at all that the game of chance is an Arbitration that one defers to God, and by which one consents that he assign to one of the Players what they are disputing. I have destroyed the Proofs on which Mr. de J. supports this claim, and in particular I have shown that the Definition that he gives of the Lot, has several defects, which do not permit that one admit it. Finally I have proved directly that the Lot is something entirely different than an Arbitration.

That is the substance of the first part of our Dispute. I come to the second which turns on the Objections that I have made to my Adversary. As they are dispersed in various places of my three Writings, I will gather them here to spare Mr. de J. the trouble of looking for them. I will even number them, so that he can make sure of not omitting any, if he undertakes to refute them. Here they are in the order that appears to me the most natural.

I. Several of our Authors have shown that the game of chance was very common, at least among the Pagans, several centuries before Jesus Christ and his Apostles announced the Gospel. They have shown that one has carried this abuse to such an excess, that after having played all one's property, one played one's freedom, and rendered oneself a slave for all of life, as Tacitus assures of the ancient Germans. They have finally justified that the Apostles were not unaware of it, since they have employed in their Writings Ephes. IV. 14. a term which marks by its origin the cheating of Dice Players. From that I have concluded that if the game of chance was such as one represents it, it would be inconceivable that Jesus Christ and his Apostles had said nothing about it. And because one has responded to me that these holy Authors have spoken as little of the consequences of Gaming, as of Gaming itself, I respond presently that I do not agree at all with the truth of this fact. I maintain on the contrary, that there is none of these consequences, blasphemies, knaveries, the loss of time, of which they have not spoken very expressly, as it would be easy to justify, if the thing were necessary.

II. I have shown that if the game of chance were criminal in itself, the Players would be bound to restore all that they win in it, and could only perish, if they neglected this duty. Mr. de J. has responded that they are dispensed from it by the privileges of ignorance. But I have replied that, according to all our Theologians, ignorance of natural Law excuses no one, and that in particular Messrs. Jurien and Saurin of Utrecht, have demonstrated it in refuting the Philosophical Commentary, not to speak of what I have said about it myself in my Treatise on Conscience.

III. I have said that if the Lot were criminal in itself, a hundred things that one believes innocent would be very bad, for example, Lotteries, Insurance Contracts, Gross Adventure, &c.

IV. If the use of the Lot were criminal in itself, what could it have venerable, that one should fear to degrade and to profane?

V. If that were so the game of chance could never be innocent; for things bad by their nature are always so, and never become innocent, witness blasphemy, calumny, &c. However we are assured that there are cases by the hundreds where Gaming has nothing bad.

VI. If Gaming were criminal in itself, no utility, no necessity would authorize us to resort to it, for one must never do evil so that good may come of it. However Mr. de J. permits it in occasions where it is only a question of a few pennies.

VII. He permits it in particular to two Porters, who cannot agree, to know which of the two will carry a certain burden, and will have the profit from it. If this reason suffices to justify Gaming, why will it not have the same power to justify lying? Why will it not be permitted to lie, every time that without harming anyone one will be able to procure for oneself some considerable advantage? It is, one will say, because lying is criminal in itself. It is, I admit it. but does one not claim that the game of chance is also? If therefore a good reason can excuse the game of chance, why will an even better reason, not be able to do the same thing for lying?

VIII. Moreover that alone, that the game of chance is sometimes innocent, makes it clear that one can separate from it what makes the crime. But if one can, does it not appear that it is not bad in itself? For one agrees that there is this difference between things bad by their nature, and those which are so only by accident, that one can separate from these latter what renders them vicious, and that one cannot in the former.

IX. Finally my last Proof consists in the express and reiterated confession of my Adversary. He has declared clearly and formally, that the game of chance is not criminal in itself, and that if it is sometimes it is only by accident. One will find his own words in Chapters II. and III. of this Response.

All that shows that Mr. de J. has only two positions to take. The first to destroy by an exact and precise refutation, both my proofs, and my exceptions. The second to hold to the seven Admissions that he has made, and which absolutely end the Dispute. I believe the first difficult, and I even doubt that it is possible. The second appears to me more just and more reasonable. That makes me wish that Mr. de J. would take it, and I even dare to hope for it.