

Thinking and Matter may be separated, *the eternal Existence of Matter, will not follow from the eternal Existence of a cogitative Being*, and they suppose it to no purpose.

§ 14. But now let us see how they can satisfy themselves, or others, that this *eternal thinking Being is material*.

First, I would ask them, whether they imagine, that all Matter, every particle of Matter, thinks? This, I suppose, they will scarce say; since then there would be as many eternal thinking Beings, as there are Particles of Matter, and so an infinity of Gods. And yet if they will not allow Matter as Matter, that is, every Particle of Matter to be as well cogitative, as extended, they will have as hard a task to make out to their own Reasons, a cogitative Being out of incogitative Particles, as an extended Being, out of unextended Parts, if I may so speak.

§ 15. Secondly, If all Matter does not think, I next ask, whether it be *only one Atom that does so*? This has as many Absurdities as the other; for then this Atom of Matter must be alone eternal, or not. If this alone be eternal, then this alone, by its powerful Thought, or Will, made all the rest of Matter. And so we have the creation of Matter by a powerful Thought, which is that the Materialists stick at. For if they suppose one single thinking Atom, to have produced all the rest of Matter, they cannot ascribe that Pre-eminency to it upon any other account, than that of its Thinking, the only supposed difference. But allow it to be by some other way, which is above our conception, it must be still Creation; and these Men must give up their great Maxim, *Ex nihilo nil fit*. * If it be said, that all the rest of Matter is equally eternal, as that thinking Atom, it will be to say any thing at pleasure, though never so absurd: For to suppose all matter eternal, and yet one small particle in Knowledge and Power infinitely above all the rest, is without any the least appearance of Reason to frame any Hypothesis. Every particle of Matter, as Matter, is capable of all the same Figures and Motions of any other; and I challenge any one in his Thoughts, to add any Thing else to one above another.

§ 14. Not material, First, because every particle of Matter is not cogitative. § 15. Secondly, One particle alone of Matter cannot be cogitative.

(1) and] 1-4; om. 5 (5) this] 1, 3 | this, 2, 4-5 (12) a] add. 1 Ter, 2-5 (15) does] 4-5 | do 1-3

* Cf. Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura*, I, 150 ff.

§ 16. Thirdly, If then neither one peculiar Atom alone, can be this eternal thinking Being; nor all Matter, as Matter; i.e. every particle of Matter can be it, it only remains, that it is *some certain System of Matter* duly put together, that is this *thinking eternal Being*. This is that, which, I imagine, is that Notion, which Men are aptest to have of GOD, who would have him a material Being, as most readily suggested to them, by the ordinary conceit they have of themselves, and other Men, which they take to be material thinking Beings. But this Imagination, however more natural, is no less absurd than the other: For to suppose the eternal thinking Being, to be nothing else but a composition of Particles of Matter, each whereof is incogitative, is to ascribe all the Wisdom and Knowledge of that eternal Being, only to the *juxta*-position of parts; than which, nothing can be more absurd. For unthinking Particles of Matter, however put together, can have nothing thereby added to them, but a new relation of Position, which 'tis impossible should give thought and knowledge to them.

§ 17. But farther, this *corporeal System* either has all its parts at rest, or it is a certain motion of the parts wherein its Thinking consists. If it be perfectly at rest, it is but one lump, and so can have no privileges above one Atom.

If it be the motion of its parts, on which its Thinking depends, all the Thoughts there must be unavoidably accidental, and limited; since all the Particles that by Motion cause Thought, being each of them in it self without any Thought, cannot regulate its own Motions, much less be regulated by the Thought of the whole; since that Thought is not the cause of Motion, (for then it must be antecedent to it, and so without it,) but the consequence of it, whereby Freedom, Power, Choice, and all rational and wise thinking or acting will be quite taken away: So that such a thinking Being will be no better nor wiser, than pure blind Matter; since to resolve all into the accidental unguided motions of blind Matter, or into Thought depending on unguided motions of blind Matter, is the same thing; not to mention the narrowness of such Thoughts and Knowledge, that must depend on the motion of such parts. But there needs no enumeration of any more Absurdities and Impossibilities in this Hypothesis, (however full of them it be,) than that before-mentioned; since let this thinking System be all, or a

§ 16. Thirdly, a System of incogitative Matter, cannot be cogitative. § 17. Whether in motion, or at rest.

part of the Matter of the Universe, it is impossible that any one Particle, should either know its own, or the motion of any other Particle, or the Whole know the motion of every Particular; and so regulate its own Thoughts or Motions, or indeed have any Thought resulting from such Motion.

§ 18. Others would have *Matter* to be *eternal*, notwithstanding that they allow an eternal, cogitative, immaterial Being. This, tho' it take not away the Being of a GOD, yet since it denies one and the first great piece of his Workmanship, the Creation, let us consider it a little. *Matter* must be allowed eternal: Why? Because you cannot conceive how it can be made out of nothing; why do you not also think your self eternal? You will answer, perhaps, Because about twenty or forty Years since, you began to be. But if I ask you what that *You* is, which began then to be, you can scarce tell me. The Matter whereof you are made, began not then to be: for if it did, then it is not eternal: But it began to be put together in such a fashion and frame, as makes up your Body; but yet that frame of Particles, is not You, it makes not that thinking Thing You are; (for I have now to do with one, who allows an eternal, immaterial, thinking Being, but would have unthinking Matter eternal too;) therefore when did that thinking Thing begin to be? If it did never begin to be, then have you always been a thinking Thing from Eternity; the absurdity whereof I need not confute, till I meet with one, who is so void of Understanding, as to own it. If therefore you can allow a thinking Thing, to be made out of nothing, (as all Things that are not eternal must be,) why also can you not allow it possible, for a material Being to be made out of nothing, by an equal Power, but that you have the experience of the one in view, and not of the other? Though, when well considered, Creation of a Spirit will be found to require no less Power, than the Creation of Matter. Nay possibly, if we would emancipate our selves from vulgar Notions, and raise our Thoughts, as far as they would reach, to a closer contemplation of things, we might be able to aim at some dim and seeming conception how Matter might at first be made, and begin to exist by the power of that

§§ 18, 19. *Matter not co-eternal with an eternal Mind.*

(11) ; why] 2-5 | , why 1 (14) then] *add.* 2-5 (30)-629(9) a Spirit ... that] 2-5 | one, as well as t'other, requires an equal Power: And we have no more reason to boggle at the effect of that Power in one, than in the other; because the manner of it in both, is equally beyond our comprehension. For 1 (33) , to] 4-5 | to 2-3

eternal first being: But to give beginning and being to a Spirit, would be found a more inconceivable effect of omnipotent Power. But this being what would perhaps lead us too far from the Notions, on which the Philosophy now in the World is built, it would not be pardonable to deviate so far from them; or to enquire, so far as Grammar it self would authorize, if the common settled Opinion opposes it: Especially in this place, where the received Doctrine serves well enough to our present purpose, and leaves this past doubt, that the Creation or Beginning of any one SUBSTANCE out of nothing, being once admitted, the Creation of all other, but the CREATOR himself, may, with the same ease, be supposed.

§ 19. But you will say, Is it not impossible to admit of the *making any thing out of nothing*, since we cannot possibly conceive it? I answer, No: 1. Because it is not reasonable to deny the power of an infinite Being, because we cannot comprehend its Operations. We do not deny other effects upon this ground, because we cannot possibly conceive the manner of their Production. We cannot conceive how any thing but impulse of Body can move Body; and yet that is not a Reason sufficient to make us deny it possible, against the constant Experience, we have of it in our selves, in all our voluntary Motions, which are produced in us only by the free Action or Thought of our own Minds; and are not, nor can be the effects of the impulse or determination of the Motion of blind Matter, in or upon our Bodies; for then it could not be in our power or choice to alter it. For example: My right Hand writes, whilst my left Hand is still: What causes rest in one, and motion in the other? Nothing but my Will, a Thought of my Mind; my Thought only changing, the right Hand rests, and the left Hand moves. This is matter of fact, which cannot be denied: Explain this, and make it intelligible, and then the next step will be to understand Creation. For the giving a new determination to the motion of the animal Spirits (which some make use of to explain voluntary motion) clears not the difficulty one jot. To alter the determination of motion, being in this case no easier nor less, than to give motion it self: Since the new determination given to the animal Spirits must be either immediately by thought, or by some other body put in their way by thought, which was not in their way before, and

(9) v. 628(30), n. or] 2-5 | , or 1 SUBSTANCE] 2-5 | thing 1 (10) all other] 2-5 | every thing else 1 (17) the manner of] *add.* 2-5 (18) any ... [ur] Body] 4-5 | Thought (or any thing but motion in Body) 1-3 (22) Action or Thought] 4-5 | Thoughts 1-3 can] 2-5 | cannot 1 (31)-630(2) For ... before.] *add.* 2-5