

But the want of reason may be considered as twofold; *first*, in its *theoretical* use, and *secondly*, in its *practical*. The first want I have just mentioned; but it is obvious that it is but conditional, that is, we must assume the existence of God, if we *would* judge of the first causes of all that is contingent, chiefly in the order of the ends actually placed in the world. Far more important is the want of reason in its practical use, because it is unconditional, and we are then necessitated to presuppose the existence of God, not only if we *would* judge, but because *we must* judge. For the pure practical use of reason consists in the precept of the moral laws. But they all lead to the idea of the *chief good*, that is possible in the world, so far as it is possible by *liberty only*, *Morality*; on the other side, to that, which does not concern human liberty merely, but nature, namely, the greatest *felicity*, so far as it is distributed in proportion to the first. Reason now requires to suppose such a *dependent* chief good, and for the behoof of it a supreme Intelligence, a chief *independent* good; not indeed to deduce from him the commanding authority of the moral laws, or the spring to their observance, (for they would have no moral value, if their motive were derived from any thing, but from the law only, which is of itself apodictically certain); but only, in order to give objectivity to the conception of the chief good, that is, to hinder it together with all morality from being held a mere ideal, if that, whose
idea

idea inseparably accompanies morality, existed nowhere.

It was therefore not *cognition*, but a felt* *want* of reason, by which Mendelssohn oriented himself (without his knowledge) in speculative cogitation. And, as this mean of guidance is not an objective principle of reason, a principle of introspections, but a merely subjective one (that is, a maxim) of the use allowed it by its limits only, a consequent of the want, and constitutes *of itself* only the whole determinative of our judgment on the existence of the supreme Being, of which it is but a casual use, to orient one's self in the speculative essays on the same object; so he no doubt failed in confiding so much in the faculty of this speculation, to effectuate everything of itself only by the way of demonstration. The necessity of the former mean could have place but when the insufficiency of the latter was fully acknowledged: an acknowledgment, to which his acuteness would at last have brought him, if together with a longer life had been granted him the phansy of mind more peculiar to juvenile years, to alter easily an old familiar cast of mind according to the alteration of the state of the sciences. However the merit remains to him of maintaining, that the last touchstone of the admissibility

ness

* Reason feels not; it perspects its deficiency, and operates by the instinct of cognition the feeling of the want. It is with this as with the moral feeling, which occasions no moral law; for this arises entirely from reason; but it is occasioned or operated by moral laws, therefore by reason, as the moved and yet free will requires determinate grounds.

ness of a judgment here, as well as elsewhere, is nowhere to be sought, but in reason only, whether it be guided in the choice of its positions by insight or mere want and the maxim of its own profitableness. He denominated reason in its latter use the common reason of man; for this has always its own interest first in view, but one must have wandered from the natural track, to forget that, and idly to explore conceptions in an objective view, in order to enlarge one's knowledge merely, whether it be necessary or not.

But as the expression, *Decision of sound reason*, in the question on the carpet is still ambiguous, and may be taken, either, as Mendelssohn himself misunderstood it, to be a judgment from *insight of reason*, or, as the author of the Results seems to take it, a judgment from *inspiration of reason*; it will be necessary to distinguish this source of judgment by another denomination, and none is more apposite to it, than that of *a belief of reason*. Every belief, even the historical, must be rational (for the last test of truth is always reason); but a belief of reason is that which is built upon no other *data*, than what are comprised in pure reason. Belief is however a subjectively sufficient holding-true, but objectively with *consciousness* an insufficient one: it is therefore opposed to knowing (*scire*). On the other hand, when something from objective, though with *consciousness* insufficient, grounds is holden-true, consequently *opined* merely; this *opining* may nevertheless by a gradual completion in the same sort of grounds finally

finally become a *knowing*. Whereas when the grounds of holding-true, according to their species, are not at all objectively valid, the belief can never become a knowing by any use of reason. The historical belief, *exempli gratia*, of the death of a great man, of which several letters give notice, *may become a knowing*, when the magistrate of the place makes mention of it, of his burial, testament etc. Hence it is perfectly consistent, that something historical is held-true from testimony merely, that is, believed, for instance, that there is a city named Rome: and yet he, who never was there, may say, *I know*, and not merely, *I believe*, there exists a Rome. On the other hand, the *pure belief of reason* can never be transformed into a *knowing* by all the natural *data* of reason and of experience, because here the ground of holding-true is subjective merely, namely, a necessary want of reason, (and, as long as we are men, will ever remain) *only to presuppose* the existence of a supreme Being, but not to demonstrate. This want of reason for its *theoretical* use satisfying itself would be nothing else than a pure *hypothesis of reason*, that is, an opinion, that were sufficient to holding-true from subjective grounds; because another ground can never be expected to *explain* given effects, and yet reason stands in need of a ground of explanation. Whereas the *belief of reason*, which rests upon the want of its use in a *practical* view, may be named a *postulate* of reason; not as if it were an insight, which satisfied to a certainty every logical demand, but because

this

this holding-true (when in man all is but morally well-disposed) according to the degree is inferior to no knowing,* though according to the species it is totally distinct from it.

A pure belief of reason is therefore the way-mark or the compass by which the speculative thinker may orient himself in his excursions of reason in the field of supersensible objects, but it can point out to the man of common yet (morally) sound reason his way, in a theoretical as well as a practical view, fully suitable to the whole end of his destination; and it is this belief of reason, which must form the basis of every other belief, nay, every revelation.

... in God and even the conviction

that any one phenomenon should, even but according to the quality, exhibit that, which can be cogitated only, but never intuited; yet so much at least is clear that, in order but to judge whether that, which appears to me, which acts internally or externally on my feeling, be God, I must compare it with my idea of God and prove it accordingly, not whether it be adequate to this, but merely whether it be not inconsistent with it. In the same manner, if in all, whereby he discovered himself immediately to me, nothing repugnant to that conception were to be met with: yet this phenomenon, intuition, immediate revelation, or however such an exhibition may be named, can never evince the existence of a Being.

ness of a judgment here, as well as elsewhere, is nowhere to be sought, but in reason only, whether it be guided in the choice of its positions by insight or mere want and the maxim of its own profitableness. He denominated reason in its latter use the common reason of man; for this has always its own interest first in view, but one must have wandered from the natural track, to forget that, and idly to explore conceptions in an objective view, in order to enlarge one's knowledge merely, whether it be necessary or not.

But as the expression, *Decision of sound reason*, in the question on the carpet is still ambiguous, and may be taken, either, as Mendelssohn himself misunderstood it, to be a judgment from *insight of reason*, or, as the author of the Results seems to take it, a judgment from *inspiration of reason*; it will be necessary to distinguish this source of judgment by another denomination, and none is more apposite to it, than that of *a belief of reason*. Every belief, even the historical, must be rational (for the last test of truth is always reason); but a belief of reason is that which is built upon no other *data*, than what are comprised in pure reason. Belief is however a subjectively sufficient holding-true, but objectively with *consciousness* an insufficient one: it is therefore opposed to knowing (*scire*). On the other hand, when something from objective, though with *consciousness* insufficient, grounds is holden-true, consequently *opined* merely; this *opining* may nevertheless by a gradual completion in the same sort of grounds finally

finally become a *knowing*. Whereas when the grounds of holding-true, according to their species, are not at all objectively valid, the belief can never become a knowing by any use of reason. The historical belief, *exempli gratia*, of the death of a great man, of which several letters give notice, *may become a knowing*, when the magistrate of the place makes mention of it, of his burial, testament etc. Hence it is perfectly consistent, that something historical is held-true from testimony merely, that is, believed, for instance, that there is a city named Rome: and yet he, who never was there, may say, *I know*, and not merely, *I believe*, there exists a Rome. On the other hand, the *pure belief of reason* can never be transformed into a *knowing* by all the natural *data* of reason and of experience, because here the ground of holding-true is subjective merely, namely, a necessary want of reason, (and, as long as we are men, will ever remain) *only to presuppose* the existence of a supreme Being, but not to demonstrate. This want of reason for its *theoretical* use satisfying itself would be nothing else than a pure *hypothesis of reason*, that is, an opinion, that were sufficient, to holding-true from subjective grounds; because another ground can never be expected to *explain* given effects, and yet reason stands in need of a ground of explanation. Whereas the *belief of reason*, which rests upon the want of its use in a *practical* view, may be named a *postulate* of reason; not as if it were an insight, which satisfied to a certainty every logical demand, but because
this

this holding-true (when in man all is but morally well-disposed) according to the degree is inferior to no knowing,* though according to the species it is totally distinct from it.

A pure belief of reason is therefore the way-mark or the compass by which the speculative thinker may orient himself in his excursions of reason in the field of supersensible objects, but it can point out to the man of common yet (morally) sound reason his way, in a theoretical as well as a practical view, fully suitable to the whole end of his destination; and it is this belief of reason, which must form the basis of every other belief, nay, every revelation.

The belief in God, and even the conviction of his existence, can be met with in reason only, can arise but from it, and can be first awaked in us, neither by inspiration, nor by an account given, however great the authority may be. Should an immediate intuition happen to me of such a sort, as nature, as far as I know it, cannot at all yield; a conception of God must however serve as a rule to judge whether this phenomenon agree with all that which is requisite to characterise a divinity. I by no means introspect, how it is possible, that

* To the *firmness* of belief belongs the consciousness of its *immutability*. Now I may be fully certain that nobody can refute the position, **THERE IS A GOD**; for whence will he take this insight? Therefore the belief of reason is not of the same nature with the historical belief, in which it is still possible that proofs to the contrary may be found, and where it must always be in our power to alter our opinion, if our knowledge of things should enlarge itself.

that any one phenomenon should, even but according to the quality, exhibit that, which can be cogitated only, but never intuited; yet so much at least is clear that, in order but to judge whether that, which appears to me, which acts internally or externally on my feeling, be God, I must compare it with my idea of God and prove it accordingly, not whether it be adequate to this, but merely whether it be not inconsistent with it. In the same manner, if in all, whereby he discovered himself immediately to me, nothing repugnant to that conception were to be met with; yet this phenomenon, intuition, immediate revelation, or however such an exhibition may be named, can never evince the existence of a Being, whose conception (if it shall not be insecurely determined, and thereby subjected to the mixture of every possible fancy) requires *infinity* as to greatness for the distinction from all creatures; but to which conception no experience or intuition whatever can be adequate, consequently can never prove unambiguously the existence of such a Being. Nobody can therefore be *first convinced* of the existence of the supreme Being by any one intuition; the belief of reason must precede, and then perhaps certain phenomena or discoveries may give occasion to investigate, whether we are entitled to hold a divinity what either speaks to us, or presents itself to our view, and, according to circumstances, to confirm that belief,

If then the right to speak *first* belonging to reason in matters, which concern super-

sensible objects, as the existence of God and the world to come, be impugned; a wide gate is opened to all sorts of fanaticism, superstition, nay, even atheism. And yet every thing in the dispute between Jacobi and Mendelssohn seems to aim at this overthrow, I do not well know, whether merely the *insight of reason*, and of *knowing* (by opiniative strength in speculation), or even of the *belief of reason*, and on the contrary aims at the establishment of another belief, which every one may form at pleasure. One would almost conclude the latter, when he sees display'd Spinoza's conception of God, as the only one harmonizing with all principles of reason,* and yet
rejectable

* It is not to be comprehended how these men of letters could find aid to Spinozism in the *Critic of pure Reason*. The *Critic* entirely clips the wings of dogmatism with regard to the cognition of supersensible objects, and Spinozism is in this so dogmatical that it vies with the mathematician even in respect of the strictness of demonstration. The *Critic* proves, That the table of the pure conceptions of understanding must contain all the materials of pure thinking; Spinozism speaks of thoughts, which think themselves even, and also of an accident, which at the same time exists of itself as subject: a conception, which is not at all to be found in the human understanding and is not possible to be framed by it. The *Critic* shows, that it by no means suffices for maintaining the possibility of a being conceived by one's self, that there is nothing contradictory in its conception (though it is then by all means allowed in case of necessity to suppose this possibility); but Spinozism pretends to perspect the impossibility of a being, whose idea consists of only pure conceptions of understanding, from which are separated all the conditions of the sensitive faculty, and wherein a contradiction can never be met with, and is not able to support this boundless pretension by any thing. For this very reason does Spinozism lead directly to fanaticism. Whereas there is no sure mean of extirpating all fanaticism, but that determination of the bounds of the faculty of pure reason. — In like manner another man of letters finds in
the

rejectable. For though it is perfectly consonant to reason to grant, That speculative reason is not able to perspect, the possibility even of a Being, such as we must conceive God; it cannot be consistent with any belief or with any holding-true of an existence, that reason can perspect the very *impossibility* of an object, and yet cognise from other sources its actuality.

Men of abilities and of enlarged sentiments! I honour your talents and love your feeling for humanity. But have ye well reflected on what ye are doing, and on what may be the tendency of your attacks on reason. No doubt ye are willing that the *liberty of thinking* shall be maintained unvexed; for without this there were soon an end of your free soarings of genius. Let us see what must naturally be the consequence of this liberty of thought, if such a procedure, as ye are beginning, should prevail.

The liberty of thinking is *first* opposed to the *civil coaction*. It is said, The liberty of *speaking*, or of *writing*, may indeed be taken from us by the chief power, but the

Cc 2

liberty

the Critic of pure Reason a *Scepticism*; though the very design of that work is, to establish something certain and determinate *a priori* with regard to the compass of our cognition. As also a *dialectic* in the critical investigations; which is however employed in resolving and destroying for ever the unavoidable *dialectic*, with which pure reason exercised every-where dogmatically entangles and insnares itself. The new Platonists, who named themselves *Eclectics*, because they know how to find their own chimeras every-where in older authors, when they had previously imputed such to them, proceeded directly in the same manner; thus nothing new happens under the sun.

liberty of *thinking*, by no means. But, how much and with what justness would we think, if we did not think in a manner, in a community with others, to whom we communicate our thoughts, and who communicate theirs to us! Therefore it may well be said, that that external power, which robs men of the liberty of *communicating* their thoughts publicly, deprives them likewise of the liberty of *thinking*, the only jewel that, notwithstanding all the civil burdens, remains to us, and by which only counsel can be procured against all the evils of this situation.

Secondly, the liberty of thinking is taken in the signification too, that the *coaction of conscience* is opposed to it; where without any external power citizens in matters of religion set themselves up as guardians of others, and, instead of arguments, know, by means of prescribed formulæ of faith accompanied with anxious fear of *the danger of a proper investigation*, to banish by an early impression on the minds every trial of reason.

Thirdly, liberty in thinking signifies also the subjection of reason to no other laws, than *those it gives itself*; and its opposite is the maxim of a *lawless use* of reason (in order thereby, as genius fancies, to see farther, than under the restriction by laws). The consequence of which is naturally this, that, if reason will not be subjected to the law, which it gives itself, it must bend under the yoke of laws, which another gives it; for without some one law or other, nothing at all, not even the greatest nonsense, can play its part long.
Therefore

Therefore the *explained* lawlessness in thinking (an exemption from the limitations by reason) is this, That liberty of thinking is thereby lost at last, and, as it is not the fault of misfortune, but of true presumptuousness, in the proper sense of the word, *trifled away*.

The course of things is pretty nearly this: In the first place *genius*, as it has run out the clew by which it formerly directed reason, is very much pleased with its daring soar. It soon bewitches others by decisions of authority and great expectations, and seems now to have placed itself upon a throne, which slow unwieldy reason graced so ill; though it always continues to speak the language of reason. The then adopted maxim of the invalidity of a chief legislative reason we denominate, common FANATICISM of men; but the minions of bountiful nature, *illumines*. As however a confusion of tongues must soon happen even among these, since every one, as reason only can command with validity for everybody, follows at present his own inspiration; so there must arise at last from internal inspirations by testimonies of facts externally proved, from traditions, which were chosen in the beginning by one's self, in process of time *obtruded* records, in a word, the total subjection of reason to *facts*, that is, SUPERSTITION, because this may be reduced to a *legal form* at least and thereby to a state of rest.

But as human reason still aspires to liberty; its first use, of a long disaccustomed liberty, when it once breaks the fetters, must degene-

rate into abuse and audacious confidence in the independence of its faculty on all limitation, in a persuasion of the sole dominion of speculative reason, which supposes nothing, but what can be justified by *objective* grounds and dogmatical conviction, but boldly denies every thing else. The maxim of the independence of reason on its *own want* (renunciation of the belief of reason) is named UNBELIEF: not a historical unbelief; for one cannot at all conceive it as designed, therefore not as capable of imputation (because every one must believe, just as much as a mathematical demonstration, a fact that is sufficiently verified); but an *unbelief of reason*, a dangerous state of the human mind, which first deprives the moral laws of all the power of *springs* on the heart, and in process of time, even devests them of every authority, and gives occasion to the cast of mind, which is termed FREE-THINKING, that is, the principle, To acknowledge no duty whatever. Here now the magistrate interferes; in order that civil affairs may not fall into the greatest disorder; and, as the promptest and yet most energetic mean is directly the best for him, he totally annuls the liberty of thinking, and subjects it, like other trades, to the laws of the land. And thus *liberty in thinking*, when it is resolved to proceed independently on laws of reason, ultimately destroys itself.

Friends of the human species and of that which is the most sacred to it! Assume what appears to you the worthiest of belief after the most careful and most sincere trial, whether
it

it be facts, or whether it be grounds of reason; but do not dispute reason out of that, which it makes the chief good on earth, namely, the prerogative of being the last test of truth.* Else ye will be unworthy of this liberty, will certainly lose it too, and besides, will bring this misfortune on the innocent part of mankind, who had otherwise been well-minded enough to use their liberty *legally*, and thereby conformably to the end of the public good!

* *Thinking for one's self* is to seek the chief touchstone of truth in one's self (*id est*, in one's own reason); and the maxim, to think for one's self at all times, is ENLIGHTENING. Thereto belongs not just so much, as those may imagine who take *knowledge* to be enlightening; as it is rather a negative principle in the use of one's cognoscitive faculty, and he, who is very rich in knowledge, is often the least enlightened in the use of it. To exercise one's own reason, means nothing more, than, relatively to every thing which one is to suppose, to question one's self, Whether it be feasible to constitute a universal principle of the use of one's reason the ground, why one supposes something, or also the rule, that follows from that, which one supposes? Every one may make this trial with himself; and immediately on this proof he will see superstition and fanaticism disappear, though he has by no means the knowledge to refute either of them from objective grounds. For he uses the maxim of the self-maintenance of reason merely. To found enlightening in *single subjects* by education is therefore very easy; one has nothing to do, but to begin early to accustom young understandings to this reflection. But to enlighten an *age*, is very wearisome; for there are many external hinderances, which partly interdict and partly render more difficult that mode of education.

AN IDEA
OF AN
UNIVERSAL HISTORY
IN A
COSMOPOLITICAL VIEW.

AN IDEA
OF AN
UNIVERSAL HISTORY
IN A
COSMOPOLITICAL VIEW.*

Whatever be the conception of the *liberty of the will*, which one forms in a metaphysical view; its *phenomena*, human actions, are determined, just as well as every other event natural, according to universal laws of nature. It is to be hoped that the history, which is occupied about the narrative of these phenomena, however deeply concealed their causes may be, when it contemplates the play of the liberty of the human will *in the main*, will discover a regular course of it; and in such a manner, that that, which is obviously implicated and irregular in single subjects, will be cognised in the whole species as a continually progressive, though slow, unfolding of its original predispositions. Thus marriages, and the births and deaths arising from them,

* A passage among the short notices of the twelfth number of the *Literary Gazette of Gotha* of this year (1784) which was no doubt taken from my conversation with a man of science, on his travels, extorted from me this exposition, without which that passage would have no meaning possible to be comprehended.

them, seem, as the free will of men has so great an influence on them, to be subjected to no rule, according to which their number can be previously determined by reckoning; and yet the yearly tables of them in great nations evince, that they happen just as much according to constant laws of nature, as the so inconstant rains, whose happening cannot be previously determined singly, but which on the whole do not fail to maintain the growth of plants, the run of rivers, and other dispositions of nature in a uniform uninterrupted course. Individuals and even whole nations little think, that, while they, every one to his own mind and the one often contrary to the other, prosecute their own purposes, they go on unobserved, as if guided by a clew, in the design of nature that is even unknown to them, and labour at its furtherance, which design, were it known, would signify very little to them.

As men, on the whole, do not proceed in their pursuits conformably to instinct merely, like animals, and yet not according to a concerted plan, like rational citizens of the world; it seems that no history of them agreeable to a plan (as of the bees and beavers) is possible. One cannot forbear a certain indignation at seeing their actions represented on the great theatre of the world; and, notwithstanding the wisdom of individuals appearing now and then, at finding at last every thing in the gross composed of madness, of childish vanity, and frequently of childish wickedness and the rage of destruction: so that one is finally at a loss
what

what sort of a conception one ought to form of our species, so conceited of its preference. There is here no expedient for the philosopher, but, as he cannot at all presuppose in men and in their actions, in gross, any rational proper *design*, that of endeavouring to discover a *design of nature* in this nonsensical course of human affairs; from which a history of creatures, who proceed without a proper plan, is nevertheless possible according to a determinate plan of nature. — Let us see whether we shall succeed in finding a clue to such a history; and we shall then leave it to nature, to produce the man, who is able to compose it afterwards. She thus produced a KEPLER, who subjected in an unexpected manner to precise laws the eccentric orbs of the planets; and a NEWTON, who explained these laws from an universal natural cause.

POSITION THE FIRST.

All the natural predispositions of a creature are destined, one time or other, to be developed completely and conformably-to-end. This is confirmed in all animals, as well by the external, as by the internal or dissecting, observation. An organ, that shall not be used, an arrangement, which does not attain its end, is a contradiction in the teleological Natural Philosophy. For, if we depart from that principle, we have no longer a nature acting legally, but a nature acting to no end: and comfortless chance steps into the place of the clew of reason.

POSITION

POSITION THE SECOND.

In man (as the only rational creature upon earth) those predispositions of nature, which tend to the use of his reason, must be completely developed in the species only, but not in the individual. Reason in a creature is a faculty, to extend both the rules and the designs of the use of all its powers far beyond the instinct of nature, and knows no bounds to its projects. It acts itself however not conformiably to instinct, but requires essays, exercise and instruction, in order to proceed by little and little from one degree of insight to another. Hence a man would need to live to an extreme old age, to learn how he ought to make a complete use of all his natural predispositions; or, if nature has made his lifetime but short (as is actually the case), she requires perhaps an infinite series of generations, of which the one hands down their enlightening to the other, in order to force at last its germe in our species to that degree of developement, which is completely suitable to her design. And this point of time must, in idea at least, be the aim of his exertions, as otherwise the predispositions of nature must for the most part be considered as in vain or to no end; which would annul all practical principles, and thereby render nature, whose wisdom must serve for a principle in the judgment of all other dispositions, suspected in man as nothing but a childish play.

POSITION

POSITION THE THIRD.

Nature has willed, that man shall unfold out of himself entirely every thing that surpasses the mechanical order of his animal existence, and partake no other felicity, or perfection, than what he has procured for himself, free from instinct, by his own reason. Nature does nothing superfluously, and is not lavish in the use of means to their ends. As she gave man reason and liberty of the will built thereupon; that was a clear proof of her design with regard to his establishment. He must not be guided by instinct, or provided with and instructed by knowledge communicated by the creation; he must rather develope every thing out of himself. The discovery of his food, of his clothing, of his external security and defence (to which she gave him neither the horns of the buli, nor the paws of the lion, nor the teeth of the dog, but merely hands), all the pleasures that can render life agreeable, his very insight and prudence, and even the good quality of his will, must be his own work entirely. She seems here in her greatest parsimony to have pleased herself, and to have measured her animal establishment so frugally, so exactly to the greatest want of an inceptive existence, as if she had a mind, That man, if he once raised himself by his own exertions from the greatest rudeness to the greatest abilities, internal perfection of the cast of mind, and thereby to felicity (as much as it is possible upon earth), should have the sole merit of it, and to thank himself only; as if she had disposed of every thing,

thing, more with a view to his rational *self-estimation*, than to a wellbeing. For in this course of human affairs there is a host of troubles and difficulties ready to assail mankind. But it seems not to have been the aim of nature, that he should live well; but, that he should exert himself to the utmost of his powers, in order by his conduct to render himself worthy of life and of wellbeing. It always remains amazing, that the earlier generations seem to execute their toilsome business but on account of the later, in order, as it were, to prepare a scaffold, by which these may still raise the building, to which nature has given the plan; and that, only the latest generations will have the good fortune to inhabit the edifice, at which a long series of their progenitors have laboured (though not intentionally), without being able to participate the good fortune, which they prepared. But, this enigma notwithstanding, it is at the same time necessary, when once it is supposed, that a species of animals shall have reason, and, as a class of rational beings, who all die, but whose species is immortal, attain a completeness of the unfolding of their predispositions.

POSITION THE FOURTH.

The mean, which nature uses to bring about the developement of all her predispositions, is their antagonism in society, so far as it is at last the cause of a legal order. I here understand by antagonism the unsociable sociableness of

of men; that is, their propensity to enter into society, which is however combined with a thorough resistance, that constantly threatens to dissolve this society. The predisposition to this manifestly lies in human nature. Man has an inclination to associate with his fellow creatures; because he feels himself in such a state more than a man; that is, he feels the developement of his predispositions of nature. But he has a great propensity also to dissociate (or isolate) himself; because he finds in himself at the same time the unsociable property, to wish to direct every thing according to his own mind; and, as he knows that he is inclined on his part to resistance against others, expects every-where resistance. It is this resistance, which awakens all the powers of man, makes him overcome his propensity to laziness, and, stimulated by either ambition, thirst after governing, or avarice, to procure himself a rank among his fellows, whom he can neither abide, nor quit. There are now taken the first true steps from rudeness to culture which properly consists in the social value of man; there is every talent unfolded by degrees, taste formed, and even by continued enlightening the beginning made to a foundation of a cast of mind, which in time may transform the coarse predisposition of nature to moral distinction into determinate practical principles and so a *pathologically* exacted agreement to a society; ultimately into a *moral* whole. Without those, in themselves indeed not just amicable, properties of unsociableness, from which arises

the resistance that every one must necessarily meet with in his selfish pretensions, all talents would; in an arcadian shepherd's life, in perfect concord, contentment and mutual love, remain for ever concealed in their germes: men, good like the flocks they tend, would scarcely procure to their existence a greater value, than have these their household animals; they, as rational nature, would not fill the void of the creation with regard to their end. Thanks be to nature for the incompatibility, for the envious emulating vanity, for the insatiable appetite to acquire, or even to rule! Without them, all the excellent natural predispositions in mankind would slumber to all eternity without being developed. Man wills concord; but nature knows better what is good for his species: she wills discord. He wills to live commodiously and contentedly; but nature wills that he shall quit the state of laziness and of inactive contentment, plunge himself into labour and difficulties, in order to find out means to extricate himself out of them with dexterity. The natural springs thereto, the sources of unsociableness and of thorough resistance, from which so many evils arise, but which incite to a new exertion of the powers, consequently to a greater unfolding of the predispositions of nature, sufficiently betray the direction of a wise Creator; and not the hand of a wicked spirit, who has either bungled in his glorious arrangement, or enviously spoiled it.

POSITION

POSITION THE FIFTH.

The greatest problem for the human species, to the solution of which nature compels it, is the establishment of a universal civil society administering law. As but in society, and indeed in that which has the greatest liberty, therefore a thorough antagonism of its members, and yet the exactest determination and security of the bounds of this liberty, in order that it may be consistent with the liberty of others, — as but in society can be accomplished the chief design of nature in humanity, namely, the developement of all her predispositions, she wills that men shall procure this themselves, as well as all the ends of their destination; so must a society, in which is met with *liberty under external laws* in the greatest possible degree conjoined with irresistible power, that is, a perfectly *just civil constitution*, be the highest problem of nature, for the human species; because nature, only by means of its solution and the founding of that, can accomplish her other designs with our species: To enter into this state of coercion necessity compels men, otherwise so much captivated with licentious liberty; and indeed the greatest necessity of any, namely, that which men occasion to themselves, whose inclinations cause that they cannot exist long beside one another in a state of savage liberty. But in such an enclosure, as is a civil union, the very same inclinations have afterwards the best effect: as trees in a forest, by endeavouring to deprive one another of air and sun, force one another

to seek both above themselves, and thereby grow tall and straight; whereas those, which are at liberty and separated from one another, shoot out their boughs and branches at pleasure and grow crooked. All culture and art that adorn humanity, the most beautiful social order, are fruits of unsociableness, which is necessitated by itself, to discipline itself, and so, by extorted art, completely to unfold the germe of nature.

POSITION THE SIXTH.

This problem is at once the most difficult, and that which will be solved the latest by the human species. The difficulty, which even the mere idea of this problem lays open, is this, Man is an animal, who, when he lives among others of his own species, stands in need of a master. For he certainly will abuse his liberty with regard to others of his like; and, though he, as a rational creature, wishes for a law, which sets limits to the liberty of all; his selfish animal inclination misleads him to except himself, where he can. He therefore requires a master, who controls his proper will, and compels him to obey a universally valid will, whereby every one can be free. But whence does he take this master? Nowhere but from among the human species. But he is equally an animal, who likewise stands in need of a master. Let man go about it in any way he pleases, it is not possible to be conceived, how he can procure himself a head of public justice, who is himself just: whether he seeks him in one person only, or in a society of many persons

persons chosen for the purpose. For every one of them will always make a bad use of his liberty, when there is nobody superior to him, who exercises authority over him according to laws. But the chief head must be just *of himself*, and yet a *man*. Hence this is the most difficult of all problems; nay, its perfect solution is impossible; out of such crossgrained crooked wood, as man is made of, nothing can be timbered quite straight. Only the approximation to this idea is imposed on us by nature.* That it is that, which will be effectuated the latest, follows from this, that hereto are requisite right conceptions of the nature of a possible constitution, great experience and skill acquired by great knowledge of mankind, and more than all those, a good will prepared for their adoption; but three such points as these are very difficult to be united, and, when it happens, it is but very late, after many fruitless essays.

POSITION THE SEVENTH.

The problem of the establishment of a perfect civil constitution is dependent on the problem of a legal external relation of states, and cannot be solved without the latter. What boots it to labour at a legal civil constitution

D d 3

among

* The part, which men play, is therefore very artificial. What the situation and the nature of the inhabitants of other planets may be, we know not; but when we execute well this commission, with which nature has charged us, we may have reason to hope and to flatter ourselves, that we will bear no mean rank among our neighbours in the stupendous fabric of the universe. Perhaps every individual of these may fully attain his destination in his life. But it is otherwise with us; only the species can hope for this.

among single men, that is, at the order of a commonwealth? That unsociableness, which necessitated men to this, is the cause that every commonwealth in the external relation, that is, as a state relative to states, stands in unbridled liberty, and by consequence the one must expect from the other the very same evils, which afflicted individuals and compelled them to put themselves into a legal civil state. Nature has then used the incompatibility of men, even of great societies and of bodies politic, this sort of creatures, as a mean, in order to find out in their unavoidable antagonism a state of quiet and security; that is, she urges on, by wars, by the overstrained and never ceasing preparation for them, by the distress, which every state must ultimately feel internally, even during peace, at first to imperfect attempts, but at last, after many devastations, overthrows, and even through the exhausting of their internal power, to that, which reason could have told them without so many sad experiments, namely, To forsake the lawless state of savages, and to enter into a league of nations; where every one, even the smallest state may expect its security and rights, not from its own potency, or its own juridical judgment, but only from this great confederation of nations (*Foedus Amphictionum*), from a united potency, and from the decision according to laws of the united will. However fanatical this idea seems to be, and which was indeed derided as such in an *Abbé de St. Pierre*, or a *Rousseau* (perhaps, because they believed its execution too near); it is the inevitable

evitable mode of deliverance from the distress, into which men precipitate one another, which must compel states to the very same resolution (let them agree to it with ever so much reluctance), to which the savage was just as unwillingly compelled, to wit, To give up his brutal liberty, and to seek quiet and security in a legal constitution. — All wars are consequently so many efforts (not indeed in the design of men, but yet in the design of nature), to bring to pass new relations among states; and by the destroying, or at least by the crumbling of all, to form new bodies, but which cannot maintain themselves, either as states in themselves or beside one another, and therefore must suffer new revolutions; till one day, partly by the best possible order of the civil constitution internally, and partly by a common agreement and legislation externally, a state is finally established, which, similar to a civil commonwealth, can support itself like an *automaton*.

Whether it is to be expected from an *epi-
curean* concurrence of efficient causes, that states, like the particles of matter, by their fortuitous concussion try all sorts of figures, till at last *by accident* a figure succeeds which can maintain itself in its form (a change, which will scarcely ever come to pass); or whether one ought rather to suppose, that nature here pursues a regular course, to lead our species insensibly from the lowest step of animality to the highest step of humanity, and that by proper art though forced upon men, and to develope in this seeming wild order

quite regularly those original predispositions; or whether one rather wills, that from all these actions and reactions of men in the gross absolutely nothing, or at least nothing good, shall be produced, that every thing will remain as it has hitherto been, and that it cannot therefore be foretold, whether the discord, so natural to our species, will not at last prove for us a hell of evils, prepared in a state ever so cultivated, as it will perhaps annihilate this state and all former progressions in culture by barbarous devastation (a fate, which cannot be answered for under the government of blind chance, with which lawless liberty is in fact identical, if one does not secretly ascribe to it a guidance of nature connected with wisdom!)? That terminates pretty nearly in the question, Whether it be rational to suppose *conformity-to-end* of the disposition of nature in the parts, and yet on the whole *disconformity-to-end*? That which the state of savages *disconformable-to-end* did, by suppressing all the predispositions of nature in our species, and finally by the evils into which it plunged it, necessitated it to quit this state and to enter into a civil constitution, in which all those germies can be unfolded; the barbarous liberty of states already founded does likewise, by employing all the powers of the commonwealth in arming against one another, by the havock occasioned by war, and still more however by the necessity to hold themselves in constant readiness for it; the full development of the predispositions of nature is impeded in its progress, but on the other hand the

the evils, which arise therefrom, necessitate our species to the resistance, in itself salutary, of many states contiguous to one another, which springs from their liberty, to find out a law of equilibrium, and a united power, that gives it weight, consequently to introduce a cosmopolitical situation of the public security of state; which must not be without all *danger*, in order that the powers of humanity may not fall asleep, but yet not without a principle of *equality* of their reciprocal *action* and *reaction*, that they may not destroy one another. Before this last step is taken (namely, the alliance of states), therefore nearly at the period, when they are but half cultivated, human nature suffers the greatest evils, under the deceitful appearance of external prosperity; and Rousseau was not so much in the wrong, to prefer the state of savages, when this last step, which our species has still to ascend, is omitted. We are *cultivated* in the highest degree by art and science. We are *civilised*, to a troublesome degree, in all sorts of social politeness and decorum. But there is yet a great deal wanting to us to be holden *moralised*. For the idea of morality belongs to culture still; but the use of this idea, which extends but to what is similar to morals in the love of honour and in the external decorum, constitutes civilizing merely. So long however as states employ all their strength on their vain and violent projects of aggrandizement, and thus incessantly clog the slow endeavour of the internal formation of the cast of mind of their citizens and even

withdraw every support and assistance from them in this design, nothing of this sort is to be expected; because a long internal elaboration of every commonwealth is requisite to the formation and cultivation of its citizens. But all good, that is not grafted upon a morally good mind, is nothing but mere appearance and glittering misery. The human species, in all probability, will remain in this state, till it shall, in the manner I have mentioned, have extricated itself from the chaotic situation of its relations of state.

POSITION THE EIGHTH.

*The history of the human species in the gross may be considered as the execution of a hidden plan of nature, in order to bring about an internal perfect constitution of state, and, to this end, an external one too, as the only state, in which she can fully unfold all her predispositions in humanity. This position is a consequent of the foregoing. One sees that philosophy likewise may have its *chiliasm*; but such a one, as may be very instrumental to the bringing to pass of its idea, though but very remotely, and which is therefore nothing less than fanatical. The question now is, Whether experience can discover any thing of such a course of the design of nature. I say, *very little*; for this circular course seems to require so long a time to be finished, that, from the small part, which humanity has accomplished in this view, the figure of its orbit and the relation of the parts to the whole can*

be

be determined with just as little certitude, as from all observations of the heavens till now the course, which our sun together with his whole army of satellites takes in the great system of fixed stars; though, from the universal ground of the systematical arrangement of the structure of the world, and from what little has been observed, with certainty enough to conclude the actuality of such a circular course. But human nature will have it so, not to be indifferent, even with regard to the most distant epochs, which may concern our species, when they can be expected but with certitude. Especially in our case it can happen the less, as it appears that we can, by our own rational preparation, bring about quicker this so joyous period for our posterity. For which reason, even the faint traces of its approximation are to us very important. At present states stand in so artificial a relation to one another, that neither can remit in the internal culture, without losing in potency and in influence relative to the others; therefore, if not the progress, at least the preservation of this end of nature, is pretty well secured, even by their ambitious views. Besides, civil liberty cannot just now be easily injured, without feeling the disadvantage of it in all trades, but chiefly in commerce, and thereby the diminution of the powers of the state in the external relation. But this liberty gradually extends farther. When the citizen is prevented from seeking his welfare in every manner agreeable to himself, that is consistent with the liberty of others; the briskness of
the

the thorough traffic is impeded, and herewith the powers of the whole. Hence the personal restriction in actions is more and more removed, the universal liberty of religion allowed; and thus is produced by degrees, together with fancies and chimeras, *enlightening*, as a great good, which must rescue the human species, even from the selfish project of aggrandizement of its rulers, if they but understand their own interest. Enlightening, however, and together with it a certain cordial part, which the enlightened man cannot avoid taking in the good, that he perfectly comprehends, must gradually ascend to the thrones, and have influence on their principles of government. Though our governours of the world have no money left for public institutions of education, and in general for what concerns the public welfare, because every thing is destined to the future war; they would find their own advantage in not impeding at least the proper, though feeble and slow, endeavours of their nation in this point. Finally, war itself will be by degrees not only a so artificial, in the issue on both sides a so uncertain, and, by the subsequent misfortunes, which the state feels in a load of debt continually augmenting (a modern invention), whose interest even becomes immense, a so dangerous enterprise, and the influence, which every concussion of state in our part of the world, so closely concatenated by its commerce, has on all other states, so sensible; that these, urged by their own danger, though without legal authority, offer themselves as umpires,
and

and thus prepare every thing at a distance for a future great body politic, of which former ages can produce no example. These bodies politic subsist at present but in a very rough sketch, yet a feeling begins to be excited in all the members, every one of whom is interested in the support of the whole; and this gives hope, that at last, after many transformations, will be accomplished that, which nature lays as the chief design, an universal *cosmopolitical state*, as the womb, in which all the original predispositions of the human species will be developed.

POSITION THE NINTH.

A philosophical essay to compose the universal history of the world according to a plan of nature, which aims at the perfect civil union in the human species, must then be considered as possible, and even favourable to this design of nature. It is indeed a strange, and in appearance, absurd undertaking to think of composing a *history*, according to an idea, how the course of the world must proceed, if it shall be suitable to certain rational ends; it seems that, in such a view, nothing but a *romance* could be produced. But if it may be supposed, That nature, even in the play of human liberty, does not proceed without a plan and a final design, this idea may by all means become useful, and, though we are too shortsighted to penetrate the mysterious mechanism of her work, serve us as a clew to exhibit as a *system*, at least in the gross, an
aggregate

aggregate of human actions otherwise without a plan. For, when one begins with the *Grecian history*, as that, whereby every other older or contemporary history has been preserved for us, must at least be credited; * when one traces its influence on both the formation and the deformation of the body politic of the *Roman nation*, which swallowed up the *Grecian states*, and the influence of the latter on the *Barbarians*, who destroyed it, to our own times; but superadds also *episodically* the political history of other nations, whose knowledge was gradually handed down to us by these enlightened nations: a regular course of the amendment of the constitution of state in our quarter of the globe will be discovered (which perhaps will one day or other give laws to all the others). By regarding but the civil constitution and its laws, and the relation of state, so far as both served, for a time, by the good which they contained, to raise and to illustrate nations (and with them arts and sciences), but by the imperfections, which adhered to them, to subvert them again, yet so, that there always remained a germin of enlightening,

* Only a *learned public*, which has continued uninterruptedly from its beginning to us, can confirm ancient history. Beyond that all is *terra incognita*; and the history of the nations, who lived without that, can be begun but from the time, when they entered into it. This happened to the Jewish nation at the time of the Ptolomies, by the Greek translation of the Bible, without which one would give little credit to their accounts. Thence (when this beginning has first been sufficiently found out) may be followed upwards their narrations. And so with all other nations. The first leaf of THUCYDIDES (says Hume) is the only beginning of all true history.

enlightening which, more unfolded by every revolution, prepared a following step of melioration still higher: a clew will, I believe, be discovered, which may serve not merely to the explanation of the so confused play of human affairs, or to the political art of foretelling future alterations of state (an advantage, which has accrued from the history of men, though it was considered as an incoherent effect of an irregular liberty!); but a consolatory prospect in futurity will be opened (which cannot, without presupposing a plan of nature, be hoped for with reason), in which the human race is represented in a later period, how it has elevated itself by its own exertions to the state, in which all the germes, that nature laid in it, can be fully unfolded and its destination here upon earth fulfilled. Such a *justification of nature*, or rather of *Providence*, is no insignificant motive to chuse a peculiar point of view of the contemplation of the world. For what does it avail to praise and to recommend the excellence and the wisdom of the creation in the irrational kingdom of nature; if the part of the great theatre of Supreme Wisdom, which comprises the end of all this, — the history of the human species — shall remain a continual objection against it, the sight of which forces us to turn our eyes away from it with indignation, and, while we despair of ever meeting therein with a finished rational design, brings us to that pass, to hope for it but in another world?

That I had a mind by this idea of a history of the world, which in some degree has a
clew

clew *à priori*, to supplant the elaboration of the history *empirically* compiled merely; were a misconstruction of my intention; it is but a thought of what a philosophical head (who must have a great knowledge of history) might try from another point of view. Besides, the circumstantiality otherwise laudable, with which the history of our times is at present composed, must naturally suggest to every body the difficulty that our late posterity will have to comprehend the load of history, which we shall transmit to them after a few centuries. No doubt they will estimate that of the most ancient times, of which the records may have long since been lost to them, but from the point of view of what interests them, namely, that which nations and governments have either performed or spoiled in a cosmopolitical view. But to have regard to this, and to the ambition of the heads of states, as well as of their ministers, in order to point out to them the only mean, that can deliver down to future ages their honourable and glorious memories, may be still a *small* motive to attempt such a philosophical history.

THE END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

