

SECTION 8

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Of Liberty and Necessity

PART 1

- 1 IT might reasonably be expected, in questions, which have been canvassed and disputed with great eagerness, since the first origin of science and philosophy, that the meaning of all the terms, at least, should have been agreed upon among the disputants; and our enquiries, in the course of two thousand years, been able to pass from words to the true and real subject of the controversy. For how easy may it seem to give exact definitions of the terms employed in reasoning, and make these definitions, not the mere sound of words, the object of future scrutiny and examination? But if we consider the matter more narrowly, we shall be apt to draw a quite opposite conclusion. From this circumstance alone, that a controversy has been long kept on foot, 10 and remains still undecided, we may presume, that there is some ambiguity in the expression, and that the disputants affix different ideas to the terms employed in the controversy. For as the faculties of the mind are supposed to be naturally alike in every individual; otherwise nothing could be more fruitless than to reason or dispute together; it were impossible, if men affix the same ideas to their terms, that they could so long form different opinions of the same subject; especially when they communicate their views, and each party turn themselves on all sides, in search of arguments, which may give them the victory over their antagonists. It is true; if men attempt the discussion of questions, which lie entirely beyond the reach of human capacity, 20 such as those concerning the origin of worlds, or the æconomy of the intellectual system or region of spirits, they may long beat the air in their fruitless contests, and never arrive at any determinate conclusion. But if the question regard any subject of common life and experience; nothing, one would think, could preserve the dispute so long undecided, but some ambiguous expressions, which keep the antagonists still at a distance, and hinder them from grappling with each other.
- 2 This has been the case in the long disputed question concerning liberty and necessity; and to so remarkable a degree, that, if I be not much mistaken, we shall find, that all mankind, both learned and ignorant, have always been 30 of the same opinion with regard to this subject, and that a few intelligible

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definitions would immediately have put an end to the whole controversy. I own, that this dispute has been so much canvassed on all hands, and has led philosophers into such a labyrinth of obscure sophistry, that it is no wonder, if a sensible reader indulge his ease so far as to turn a deaf ear to the proposal of such a question, from which he can expect neither instruction nor entertainment. But the state of the argument here proposed may, perhaps, serve to renew his attention; as it has more novelty, promises at least some decision of the controversy, and will not much disturb his ease by any intricate or obscure reasoning.

3 I hope, therefore, to make it appear, that all men have ever agreed in the doctrines both of necessity and of liberty, according to any reasonable sense, which can be put on these terms; and that the whole controversy has hitherto turned merely upon words. We shall begin with examining the doctrine of necessity. 10

4 It is universally allowed, that matter, in all its operations, is actuated by a necessary force, and that every natural effect is so precisely determined by the energy of its cause, that no other effect, in such particular circumstances, could possibly have resulted from it. The degree and direction of every motion is, by the laws of nature, prescribed with such exactness, that a living creature may as soon arise from the shock of two bodies, as motion, in any other degree or direction than what is actually produced by it. Would we, therefore, form a just and precise idea of *necessity*, we must consider whence that idea arises, when we apply it to the operation of bodies. SBN 82 20

5 It seems evident, that, if all the scenes of nature were continually shifted in such a manner, that no two events bore any resemblance to each other, but every object was entirely new, without any similitude to whatever had been seen before, we should never, in that case, have attained the least idea of necessity, or of a connexion among these objects. We might say, upon such a supposition, that one object or event has followed another; not that one was produced by the other. The relation of cause and effect must be utterly unknown to mankind. Inference and reasoning concerning the operations of nature would, from that moment, be at an end; and the memory and senses remain the only canals, by which the knowledge of any real existence could possibly have access to the mind. Our idea, therefore, of necessity and causation arises entirely from the uniformity, observable in the operations of nature; where similar objects are constantly conjoined together, and the mind is determined by custom to infer the one from the appearance of the other. These two circumstances form the whole of that necessity, which we ascribe to matter. Beyond the constant *conjunction* of similar objects, and the 30 40

consequent *inference* from one to the other, we have no notion of any necessity, or connexion.

- 6 If it appear, therefore, that all mankind have ever allowed, without any doubt or hesitation, that these two circumstances take place in the voluntary actions of men, and in the operations of the mind; it must follow, that all mankind have ever agreed in the doctrine of necessity, and that they have hitherto disputed, merely for not understanding each other.

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- 7 As to the first circumstance, the constant and regular conjunction of similar events; we may possibly satisfy ourselves by the following considerations. It is universally acknowledged, that there is a great uniformity among the actions of men, in all nations and ages, and that human nature remains still the same, in its principles and operations. The same motives always produce the same actions: The same events follow from the same causes. Ambition, avarice, self-love, vanity, friendship, generosity, public spirit; these passions, mixed in various degrees, and distributed through society, have been, from the beginning of the world, and still are, the source of all the actions and enterprizes, which have ever been observed among mankind. Would you know the sentiments, inclinations, and course of life of the GREEKS and ROMANS? Study well the temper and actions of the FRENCH and ENGLISH: You cannot be much mistaken in transferring to the former *most* of the observations, which you have made with regard to the latter. Mankind are so much the same, in all times and places, that history informs us of nothing new or strange in this particular. Its chief use is only to discover the constant and universal principles of human nature, by showing men in all varieties of circumstances and situations, and furnishing us with materials, from which we may form our observations, and become acquainted with the regular springs of human action and behaviour. These records of wars, intrigues, factions, and revolutions, are so many collections of experiments, by which the politician or moral philosopher fixes the principles of his science; in the same manner as the physician or natural philosopher becomes acquainted with the nature of plants, minerals, and other external objects, by the experiments, which he forms concerning them. Nor are the earth, water, and other elements, examined by ARISTOTLE, and HIPPOCRATES, more like to those, which at present lie under our observation, than the men, described by POLYBIUS and TACITUS, are to those who now govern the world.

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- 8 Should a traveller, returning from a far country, bring us an account of men, wholly different from any, with whom we were ever acquainted; men, who were entirely divested of avarice, ambition, or revenge; who knew no pleasure but friendship, generosity, and public spirit; we should immediately, from these circumstances, detect the falsehood, and prove him a liar, with the

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same certainty as if he had stuffed his narration with stories of centaurs and dragons, miracles and prodigies. And if we would explode any forgery in history, we cannot make use of a more convincing argument, than to prove, that the actions, ascribed to any person, are directly contrary to the course of nature, and that no human motives, in such circumstances, could ever induce him to such a conduct. The veracity of QUINTUS CURTIUS is as much to be suspected, when he describes the supernatural courage of ALEXANDER, by which he was hurried on singly to attack multitudes, as when he describes his supernatural force and activity, by which he was able to resist them. So readily and universally do we acknowledge a uniformity in human motives and actions as well as in the operations of body. 10

9 Hence likewise the benefit of that experience, acquired by long life and a variety of business and company, in order to instruct us in the principles of human nature, and regulate our future conduct, as well as speculation. By means of this guide, we mount up to the knowledge of men's inclinations and motives, from their actions, expressions, and even gestures; and again, descend to the interpretation of their actions from our knowledge of their motives and inclinations. The general observations, treasured up by a course of experience, give us the clue of human nature, and teach us to unravel all its intricacies. Pretexts and appearances no longer deceive us. Public declarations pass for the specious colouring of a cause. And though virtue and honour be allowed their proper weight and authority, that perfect disinterestedness, so often pretended to, is never expected in multitudes and parties; seldom in their leaders; and scarcely even in individuals of any rank or station. But were there no uniformity in human actions, and were every experiment, which we could form of this kind, irregular and anomalous, it were impossible to collect any general observations concerning mankind; and no experience, however accurately digested by reflection, would ever serve to any purpose. Why is the aged husbandman more skilful in his calling than the young beginner, but because there is a certain uniformity in the operation of the sun, rain, and earth, towards the production of vegetables; and experience teaches the old practitioner the rules, by which this operation is governed and directed? 20

10 We must not, however, expect, that this uniformity of human actions should be carried to such a length, as that all men, in the same circumstances, will always act precisely in the same manner, without making any allowance for the diversity of characters, prejudices, and opinions. Such a uniformity in every particular, is found in no part of nature. On the contrary, from observing the variety of conduct in different men, we are enabled to form a greater variety of maxims, which still suppose a degree of uniformity and regularity. 40

- 11 Are the manners of men different in different ages and countries? We learn thence the great force of custom and education, which mould the human mind from its infancy, and form it into a fixed and established character. Is the behaviour and conduct of the one sex very unlike that of the other? It is thence we become acquainted with the different characters, which nature has impressed upon the sexes, and which she preserves with constancy and regularity. Are the actions of the same person much diversified in the different periods of his life, from infancy to old age? This affords room for many general observations concerning the gradual change of our sentiments and inclinations, and the different maxims, which prevail in the different ages of human creatures. Even the characters, which are peculiar to each individual, have a uniformity in their influence; otherwise our acquaintance with the persons, and our observation of their conduct, could never teach us their dispositions, or serve to direct our behaviour with regard to them. SBN 86
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- 12 I grant it possible to find some actions, which seem to have no regular connexion with any known motives, and are exceptions to all the measures of conduct, which have ever been established for the government of men. But if we would willingly know, what judgment should be formed of such irregular and extraordinary actions; we may consider the sentiments, commonly entertained with regard to those irregular events, which appear in the course of nature, and the operations of external objects. All causes are not conjoined to their usual effects, with like uniformity. An artificer, who handles only dead matter, may be disappointed of his aim, as well as the politician, who directs the conduct of sensible and intelligent agents. 20
- 13 The vulgar, who take things according to their first appearance, attribute the uncertainty of events to such an uncertainty in the causes as makes the latter often fail of their usual influence; though they meet with no impediment in their operation. But philosophers, observing, that, almost in every part of nature, there is contained a vast variety of springs and principles, which are hid, by reason of their minuteness or remoteness, find, that it is at least possible the contrariety of events may not proceed from any contingency in the cause, but from the secret operation of contrary causes. This possibility is converted into certainty by farther observation; when they remark, that, upon an exact scrutiny, a contrariety of effects always betrays a contrariety of causes, and proceeds from their mutual opposition. A peasant can give no better reason for the stopping of any clock or watch than to say that it does not commonly go right: But an artist easily perceives, that the same force in the spring or pendulum has always the same influence on the wheels; but fails of its usual effect, perhaps by reason of a grain of dust, which puts a stop to the whole movement. From the observation of several SBN 87
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parallel instances, philosophers form a maxim, that the connexion between all causes and effects is equally necessary, and that its seeming uncertainty in some instances proceeds from the secret opposition of contrary causes.

- 14 Thus for instance, in the human body, when the usual symptoms of health or sickness disappoint our expectation; when medicines operate not with their wonted powers; when irregular events follow from any particular cause; the philosopher and physician are not surprized at the matter, nor are ever tempted to deny, in general, the necessity and uniformity of those principles, by which the animal œconomy is conducted. They know, that a human body is a mighty complicated machine: That many secret powers lurk in it, which are altogether beyond our comprehension: That to us it must often appear very uncertain in its operations: And that therefore the irregular events, which outwardly discover themselves, can be no proof, that the laws of nature are not observed with the greatest regularity in its internal operations and government. 10

- 15 The philosopher, if he be consistent, must apply the same reasoning to the actions and volitions of intelligent agents. The most irregular and unexpected resolutions of men may frequently be accounted for by those, who know every particular circumstance of their character and situation. A person of an obliging disposition gives a peevish answer: But he has the toothake, or has not dined. A stupid fellow discovers an uncommon alacrity in his carriage: But he has met with a sudden piece of good fortune. Or even when an action, as sometimes happens, cannot be particularly accounted for, either by the person himself or by others; we know, in general, that the characters of men are, to a certain degree, inconstant and irregular. This is, in a manner, the constant character of human nature; though it be applicable, in a more particular manner, to some persons, who have no fixed rule for their conduct, but proceed in a continued course of caprice and inconstancy. The internal principles and motives may operate in a uniform manner, notwithstanding these seeming irregularities; in the same manner as the winds, rain, clouds, and other variations of the weather are supposed to be governed by steady principles; though not easily discoverable by human sagacity and enquiry. 20 30

- 16 Thus it appears, not only that the conjunction between motives and voluntary actions is as regular and uniform, as that between the cause and effect in any part of nature; but also that this regular conjunction has been universally acknowledged among mankind, and has never been the subject of dispute, either in philosophy or common life. Now, as it is from past experience, that we draw all inferences concerning the future, and as we conclude, that objects will always be conjoined together, which we find to have always 40

been conjoined; it may seem superfluous to prove, that this experienced uniformity in human actions is a source, whence we draw *inferences* concerning them. But in order to throw the argument into a greater variety of lights, we shall also insist, though briefly, on this latter topic.

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17 The mutual dependence of men is so great, in all societies, that scarce any human action is entirely compleat in itself, or is performed without some reference to the actions of others, which are requisite to make it answer fully the intention of the agent. The poorest artificer, who labours alone, expects at least the protection of the magistrate, to ensure him the enjoyment of the fruits of his labour. He also expects, that, when he carries his goods to market, and offers them at a reasonable price, he shall find purchasers; and shall be able, by the money he acquires, to engage others to supply him with those commodities, which are requisite for his subsistence. In proportion as men extend their dealings, and render their intercourse with others more complicated, they always comprehend, in their schemes of life, a greater variety of voluntary actions, which they expect, from the proper motives, to co-operate with their own. In all these conclusions, they take their measures from past experience, in the same manner as in their reasonings concerning external objects; and firmly believe, that men, as well as all the elements, are to continue, in their operations, the same, that they have ever found them. A manufacturer reckons upon the labour of his servants, for the execution of any work, as much as upon the tools, which he employs, and would be equally surprized, were his expectations disappointed. In short, this experimental inference and reasoning concerning the actions of others enters so much into human life, that no man, while awake, is ever a moment without employing it. Have we not reason, therefore, to affirm, that all mankind have always agreed in the doctrine of necessity, according to the foregoing definition and explanation of it?

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18 Nor have philosophers ever entertained a different opinion from the people in this particular. For not to mention, that almost every action of their life supposes that opinion; there are even few of the speculative parts of learning, to which it is not essential. What would become of *history*, had we not a dependence on the veracity of the historian, according to the experience, which we have had of mankind? How could *politics* be a science, if laws and forms of government had not a uniform influence upon society? Where would be the foundation of *morals*, if particular characters had no certain or determinate power to produce particular sentiments, and if these sentiments had no constant operation on actions? And with what pretence could we employ our *criticism* upon any poet or polite author, if we could not pronounce the conduct and sentiments of his actors, either natural or unnatural,

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to such characters, and in such circumstances? It seems almost impossible, therefore, to engage, either in science or action of any kind, without acknowledging the doctrine of necessity, and this *inference* from motives to voluntary actions; from characters to conduct.

19 And indeed, when we consider how aptly *natural* and *moral* evidence link together, and form only one chain of argument, we shall make no scruple to allow, that they are of the same nature, and derived from the same principles. A prisoner, who has neither money nor interest, discovers the impossibility of his escape, as well when he considers the obstinacy of the gaoler, as the walls and bars, with which he is surrounded; and, in all attempts for his freedom, chooses rather to work upon the stone and iron of the one, than upon the inflexible nature of the other. The same prisoner, when conducted to the scaffold, foresees his death as certainly from the constancy and fidelity of his guards, as from the operation of the ax or wheel. His mind runs along a certain train of ideas: The refusal of the soldiers to consent to his escape; the action of the executioner; the separation of the head and body; bleeding, convulsive motions, and death. Here is a connected chain of natural causes and voluntary actions; but the mind feels no difference between them, in passing from one link to another: Nor is less certain of the future event than if it were connected with the objects present to the memory or senses, by a train of causes, cemented together by what we are pleased to call a *physical* necessity. The same experienced union has the same effect on the mind, whether the united objects be motives, volition, and actions; or figure and motion. We may change the names of things; but their nature and their operation on the understanding never change.

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20 Were a man, whom I know to be honest and opulent, and with whom I live in intimate friendship, to come into my house, where I am surrounded with my servants, I rest assured, that he is not to stab me before he leaves it, in order to rob me of my silver standish; and I no more suspect this event, than the falling of the house itself, which is new, and solidly built and founded.—*But he may have been seized with a sudden and unknown frenzy.*—So may a sudden earthquake arise, and shake and tumble my house about my ears. I shall therefore change the suppositions. I shall say, that I know with certainty, that he is not to put his hand into the fire, and hold it there, till it be consumed: And this event, I think I can foretel with the same assurance, as that, if he throw himself out at the window, and meet with no obstruction, he will not remain a moment suspended in the air. No suspicion of an unknown frenzy can give the least possibility to the former event, which is so contrary to all the known principles of human nature. A man who at noon leaves his purse full of gold on the pavement at Charing Cross, may as well expect that

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it will fly away like a feather, as that he will find it untouched an hour after. Above one half of human reasonings contain inferences of a similar nature, attended with more or less degrees of certainty, proportioned to our experience of the usual conduct of mankind in such particular situations.

- 21 I have frequently considered, what could possibly be the reason, why all mankind, though they have ever, without hesitation, acknowledged the doctrine of necessity, in their whole practice and reasoning, have yet discovered such a reluctance to acknowledge it in words, and have rather shown a propensity, in all ages, to profess the contrary opinion. The matter, I think, may be accounted for, after the following manner. If we examine the operations of body, and the production of effects from their causes, we shall find, that all our faculties can never carry us farther in our knowledge of this relation, than barely to observe, that particular objects are *constantly conjoined* together, and that the mind is carried, by a *customary transition*, from the appearance of one to the belief of the other. But though this conclusion concerning human ignorance be the result of the strictest scrutiny of this subject, men still entertain a strong propensity to believe, that they penetrate farther into the powers of nature, and perceive something like a necessary connexion between the cause and the effect. When again they turn their reflections towards the operations of their own minds, and *feel* no such connexion of the motive and the action; they are thence apt to suppose, that there is a difference between the effects, which result from material force, and those which arise from thought and intelligence. But being once convinced, that we know nothing farther of causation of any kind, than merely the *constant conjunction* of objects, and the consequent *inference* of the mind from one to another, and finding, that these two circumstances are universally allowed to have place in voluntary actions; we may be more easily led to own the same necessity common to all causes. And though this reasoning may contradict the systems of many philosophers, in ascribing necessity to the determinations of the will, we shall find, upon reflection, that they dissent from it in words only, not in their real sentiment. Necessity, according to the sense, in which it is here taken, has never yet been rejected, nor can ever, I think, be rejected by any philosopher. It may only, perhaps, be pretended, that the mind can perceive, in the operations of matter, some farther connexion between the cause and effect; and a connexion that has not place in the voluntary actions of intelligent beings. Now whether it be so or not, can only appear upon examination; and it is incumbent on these philosophers to make good their assertion, by defining or describing that necessity, and pointing it out to us in the operations of material causes.

- 22 It would seem, indeed, that men begin at the wrong end of this question 40

concerning liberty and necessity, when they enter upon it by examining the faculties of the soul, the influence of the understanding, and the operations of the will. Let them first discuss a more simple question, namely, the operations of body and of brute unintelligent matter; and try whether they can there form any idea of causation and necessity, except that of a constant conjunction of objects, and subsequent inference of the mind from one to another. If these circumstances form, in reality, the whole of that necessity, which we conceive in matter, and if these circumstances be also universally acknowledged to take place in the operations of the mind, the dispute is at an end; at least, must be owned to be thenceforth merely verbal. But as long as we will rashly suppose, that we have some farther idea of necessity and causation in the operations of external objects; at the same time, that we can find nothing farther, in the voluntary actions of the mind; there is no possibility of bringing the question to any determinate issue, while we proceed upon so erroneous a supposition. The only method of undeceiving us, is, to mount up higher; to examine the narrow extent of science when applied to material causes; and to convince ourselves, that all we know of them, is, the constant conjunction and inference above-mentioned. We may, perhaps, find, that it is with difficulty we are induced to fix such narrow limits to human understanding: But we can afterwards find no difficulty, when we come to apply this doctrine to the actions of the will. For as it is evident, that these have a regular conjunction with motives and circumstances and characters, and as we always draw inferences from one to the other, we must be obliged to acknowledge in words, that necessity, which we have already avowed, in every deliberation of our lives, and in every step of our conduct and behaviour.¹⁸

¹⁸ The prevalence of the doctrine of liberty may be accounted for, from another cause, *viz.* a false sensation or seeming experience which we have, or may have, of liberty or indifference, in many of our actions. The necessity of any action, whether of matter or of mind, is not, properly speaking, a quality in the agent, but in any thinking or intelligent being, who may consider the action; and it consists chiefly in the determination of his thoughts to infer the existence of that action from some preceding objects; as liberty, when opposed to necessity, is nothing but the want of that determination, and a certain looseness or indifference, which we feel, in passing, or not passing, from the idea of one object to that of any succeeding one. Now we may observe, that, though, in *reflecting* on human actions, we seldom feel such a looseness or indifference, but are commonly able to infer them with considerable certainty from their motives, and from the dispositions of the agent; yet it frequently happens, that, in *performing* the actions themselves, we are sensible of something like it: And as all resembling objects are readily taken for each other, this has been employed as a demonstrative and even intuitive proof of human liberty. We feel, that our actions are subject to our will, on most occasions; and imagine we feel, that the will itself is subject to nothing, because, when by a denial of it we are provoked to try, we feel, that it moves easily every way, and produces an image of itself, (or a *Velleity*, as it is called in the schools) even on that side, on which it did not settle. This image, or faint motion, we persuade ourselves, could, at that time, have been compleated into the

- 23 But to proceed in this reconciling project with regard to the question of liberty and necessity; the most contentious question, of metaphysics, the most contentious science; it will not require many words to prove, that all mankind have ever agreed in the doctrine of liberty as well as in that of necessity, and that the whole dispute, in this respect also, has been hitherto merely verbal. For what is meant by *liberty*, when applied to voluntary actions? We cannot surely mean, that actions have so little connexion with motives, inclinations, and circumstances, that one does not follow with a certain degree of uniformity from the other, and that one affords no inference by which we can conclude the existence of the other. For these are plain and acknowledged matters of fact. By *liberty*, then, we can only mean *a power of acting or not acting, according to the determinations of the will*; that is, if we choose to remain at rest, we may; if we choose to move, we also may. Now this hypothetical liberty is universally allowed to belong to every one, who is not a prisoner and in chains. Here then is no subject of dispute. 10
- 24 Whatever definition we may give of *liberty*, we should be careful to observe two requisite circumstances; *first*, that it be consistent with plain matter of fact; *secondly*, that it be consistent with itself. If we observe these circumstances, and render our definition intelligible, I am persuaded that all mankind will be found of one opinion with regard to it. 20
- 25 It is universally allowed, that nothing exists without a cause of its existence, and that *chance*, when strictly examined, is a mere negative word, and means not any real power, which has, any where, a being in nature. But it is pretended, that some causes are necessary, some not necessary. Here then is the advantage of definitions. Let any one *define* a cause, without comprehending, as a part of the definition, a *necessary connexion* with its effect; and let him show distinctly the origin of the idea, expressed by the definition; and I shall readily give up the whole controversy. But if the foregoing explication of the matter be received, this must be absolutely impracticable. Had not objects a regular conjunction with each other, we should never have entertained any notion of cause and effect; and this regular conjunction produces that inference of the understanding, which is the only connexion, that we can have any comprehension of. Whoever attempts a definition of *cause*, exclusive of these circumstances, will be obliged, either to employ unintelligible 30

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thing itself; because, should that be denied, we find, upon a second trial, that, at present, it can. We consider not, that the fantastical desire of showing liberty, is here the motive of our actions. And it seems certain, that, however we may imagine we feel a liberty within ourselves, a spectator can commonly infer our actions from our motives and character; and even where he cannot, he concludes in general, that he might, were he perfectly acquainted with every circumstance of our situation and temper, and the most secret springs of our complexion and disposition. Now this is the very essence of necessity, according to the foregoing doctrine. 20

terms, or such as are synonymous to the term, which he endeavours to define.¹⁹ And if the definition above-mentioned be admitted; liberty, when opposed to necessity, not to constraint, is the same thing with chance; which is universally allowed to have no existence.

PART 2

- 26 There is no method of reasoning more common, and yet none more blame-
able, than, in philosophical disputes, to endeavour the refutation of any
hypothesis, by a pretence of its dangerous consequences to religion and
morality. When any opinion leads to absurdities, it is certainly false; but it is
not certain that an opinion is false, because it is of dangerous consequence.
Such topics, therefore, ought entirely to be forborne; as serving nothing 10
to the discovery of truth, but only to make the person of an antagonist
odious. This I observe in general, without pretending to draw any advantage
from it. I frankly submit to an examination of this kind, and shall venture to
affirm, that the doctrines, both of necessity and of liberty, as above explained,
are not only consistent with morality, but are absolutely essential to its
support.
- 27 *Necessity* may be defined two ways, conformably to the two definitions of
cause, of which it makes an essential part. It consists either in *the constant*
conjunction of like objects, or in *the inference of the understanding from one object*
to another. Now necessity, in both these senses, (which, indeed, are, at 20
bottom, the same) has universally, though tacitly, in the schools, in the pulpit,
and in common life, been allowed to belong to the will of man; and no one has
ever pretended to deny, that we can draw inferences concerning human
actions, and that those inferences are founded on the experienced union of
like actions, with like motives, inclinations, and circumstances. The only par- 25
ticular, in which any one can differ, is, that either, perhaps, he will refuse to
give the name of *necessity* to this property of human actions: But as long as
the meaning is understood, I hope the word can do no harm: Or that he will
maintain it possible to discover something farther in the operations of matter.
But this, it must be acknowledged, can be of no consequence to morality or 30
religion, whatever it may be to natural philosophy or metaphysics. We may

¹⁹ Thus, if a cause be defined, *that which produces any thing*; it is easy to observe, that *producing* is synonymous to *causing*. In like manner, if a cause be defined, *that by which any thing exists*; this is liable to the same objection. For what is meant by these words, *by which*? Had it been said, that a cause is *that after which any thing constantly exists*; we should have understood the terms. For this is, indeed, all we know of the matter. And this constancy forms the very essence of necessity, nor have we any other idea of it. SBN 96

here be mistaken in asserting, that there is no idea of any other necessity or connexion in the actions of body: But surely we ascribe nothing to the actions of the mind, but what every one does, and must readily allow of. We change no circumstance in the received orthodox system with regard to the will, but only in that with regard to material objects and causes. Nothing therefore can be more innocent, at least, than this doctrine.

28 All laws being founded on rewards and punishments, it is supposed as a fundamental principle, that these motives have a regular and uniform influence on the mind, and both produce the good and prevent the evil actions. We may give to this influence what name we please; but as it is usually conjoined with the action, it must be esteemed a *cause*, and be looked upon as an instance of that necessity, which we would here establish.

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29 The only proper object of hatred or vengeance, is a person or creature, endowed with thought and consciousness; and when any criminal or injurious actions excite that passion, it is only by their relation to the person, or connexion with him. Actions are, by their very nature, temporary and perishing; and where they proceed not from some *cause* in the character and disposition of the person who performed them, they can neither redound to his honour, if good; nor infamy, if evil. The actions themselves may be blameable; they may be contrary to all the rules of morality and religion: But the person is not answerable for them; and as they proceeded from nothing in him, that is durable and constant, and leave nothing of that nature behind them, it is impossible he can, upon their account, become the object of punishment or vengeance. According to the principle, therefore, which denies necessity, and consequently causes, a man is as pure and untainted, after having committed the most horrid crime, as at the first moment of his birth, nor is his character any wise concerned in his actions; since they are not derived from it, and the wickedness of the one can never be used as a proof of the depravity of the other.

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30 Men are not blamed for such actions, as they perform ignorantly and casually, whatever may be the consequences. Why? but because the principles of these actions are only momentary, and terminate in them alone. Men are less blamed for such actions as they perform hastily and unpremeditatedly, than for such as proceed from deliberation. For what reason? but because a hasty temper, though a constant cause or principle in the mind, operates only by intervals, and infects not the whole character. Again, repentance wipes off every crime, if attended with a reformation of life and manners. How is this to be accounted for? but by asserting, that actions render a person criminal, merely as they are proofs of criminal principles in the mind; and when, by an

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alteration of these principles, they cease to be just proofs, they likewise cease to be criminal. But, except upon the doctrine of necessity, they never were just proofs, and consequently never were criminal.

31 It will be equally easy to prove, and from the same arguments, that *liberty*, according to that definition above-mentioned, in which all men agree, is also essential to morality, and that no human actions, where it is wanting, are susceptible of any moral qualities, or can be the objects either of approbation or dislike. For as actions are objects of our moral sentiment, so far only as they are indications of the internal character, passions, and affections; it is impossible that they can give rise either to praise or blame, where they proceed not from these principles, but are derived altogether from external violence. 10

32 I pretend not to have obviated or removed all objections to this theory, with regard to necessity and liberty. I can foresee other objections, derived from topics, which have not here been treated of. It may be said, for instance, that, if voluntary actions be subjected to the same laws of necessity with the operations of matter, there is a continued chain of necessary causes, pre-ordained and pre-determined, reaching from the original cause of all, to every single volition of every human creature. No contingency any where in the universe; no indifference; no liberty. While we act, we are, at the same time, acted upon. 20 The ultimate Author of all our volitions is the Creator of the world, who first bestowed motion on this immense machine, and placed all beings in that particular position, whence every subsequent event, by an inevitable necessity, must result. Human actions, therefore, either can have no moral turpitude at all, as proceeding from so good a cause; or if they have any turpitude, they must involve our Creator in the same guilt, while he is acknowledged to be their ultimate cause and author. For as a man, who fired a mine, is answerable for all the consequences, whether the train he employed be long or short; so wherever a continued chain of necessary causes is fixed, that Being, either finite or infinite, who produces the first, is likewise the author of all the rest, and must both bear the blame and acquire the praise, which belong to them. 30 Our clear and unalterable ideas of morality establish this rule, upon unquestionable reasons, when we examine the consequences of any human action; and these reasons must still have greater force, when applied to the volitions and intentions of a Being, infinitely wise and powerful. Ignorance or impotence may be pleaded for so limited a creature as man; but those imperfections have no place in our Creator. He foresaw, he ordained, he intended all those actions of men, which we so rashly pronounce criminal. And we must therefore conclude, either that they are not criminal, or that the Deity, not

man, is accountable for them. But as either of these positions is absurd and impious, it follows, that the doctrine, from which they are deduced, cannot possibly be true, as being liable to all the same objections. An absurd consequence, if necessary, proves the original doctrine to be absurd; in the same manner as criminal actions render criminal the original cause, if the connexion between them be necessary and inevitable.

33 This objection consists of two parts, which we shall examine separately; *first*, that, if human actions can be traced up, by a necessary chain, to the Deity, they can never be criminal; on account of the infinite perfection of that Being, from whom they are derived, and who can intend nothing but what is altogether good and laudable. Or, *secondly*, if they be criminal, we must retract the attribute of perfection, which we ascribe to the Deity, and must acknowledge him to be the ultimate author of guilt and moral turpitude in all his creatures.

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34 The answer to the first objection seems obvious and convincing. There are many philosophers, who, after an exact scrutiny of all the phænomena of nature, conclude, that the WHOLE, considered as one system, is, in every period of its existence, ordered with perfect benevolence; and that the utmost possible happiness will, in the end, result to all created beings, without any mixture of positive or absolute ill and misery. Every physical ill, say they, makes an essential part of this benevolent system, and could not possibly be removed, even by the Deity himself, considered as a wise agent, without giving entrance to greater ill, or excluding greater good, which will result from it. From this theory, some philosophers, and the ancient STOICS among the rest, derived a topic of consolation under all afflictions, while they taught their pupils, that those ills, under which they laboured, were, in reality, goods to the universe; and that to an enlarged view, which could comprehend the whole system of nature, every event became an object of joy and exultation. But though this topic be specious and sublime, it was soon found in practice weak and ineffectual. You would surely more irritate, than appease a man, lying under the racking pains of the gout, by preaching up to him the rectitude of those general laws, which produced the malignant humours in his body, and led them through the proper canals, to the sinews and nerves, where they now excite such acute torments. These enlarged views may, for a moment, please the imagination of a speculative man, who is placed in ease and security; but neither can they dwell with constancy on his mind, even though undisturbed by the emotions of pain or passion; much less can they maintain their ground, when attacked by such powerful antagonists. The affections take a narrower and more natural survey of their object; and by an œconomy, more suitable to the infirmity of human minds, regard alone the

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beings around us, and are actuated by such events as appear good or ill to the private system.

35 The case is the same with *moral* as with *physical* ill. It cannot reasonably be supposed, that those remote considerations, which are found of so little efficacy with regard to one, will have a more powerful influence with regard to the other. The mind of man is so formed by nature, that, upon the appearance of certain characters, dispositions, and actions, it immediately feels the sentiment of approbation or blame; nor are there any emotions more essential to its frame and constitution. The characters, which engage our approbation, are chiefly such as contribute to the peace and security of human society; 10 as the characters, which excite blame, are chiefly such as tend to public detriment and disturbance: Whence it may reasonably be presumed, that the moral sentiments arise, either mediately or immediately, from a reflection on these opposite interests. What though philosophical meditations establish a different opinion or conjecture; that every thing is right with regard to the WHOLE, and that the qualities, which disturb society, are, in the main, as beneficial, and are as suitable to the primary intention of nature, as those which more directly promote its happiness and welfare? Are such remote and uncertain speculations able to counterbalance the sentiments, which arise from the natural and immediate view of the objects? A man, who is robbed of a considerable sum; does he find his vexation for the loss any wise diminished 20 by these sublime reflections? Why then should his moral resentment against the crime be supposed incompatible with them? Or why should not the acknowledgment of a real distinction between vice and virtue be reconcilable to all speculative systems of philosophy, as well as that of a real distinction between personal beauty and deformity? Both these distinctions are founded in the natural sentiments of the human mind: And these sentiments are not to be controuled or altered by any philosophical theory or speculation whatsoever. SBN 103

36 The *second* objection admits not of so easy and satisfactory an answer; nor is it possible to explain distinctly, how the Deity can be the mediate cause of all the actions of men, without being the author of sin and moral turpitude. These are mysteries, which mere natural and unassisted reason is very unfit to handle; and whatever system she embraces, she must find herself involved in inextricable difficulties, and even contradictions, at every step which she takes with regard to such subjects. To reconcile the indifference and contingency of human actions with prescience; or to defend absolute decrees, and yet free the Deity from being the author of sin, has been found hitherto to exceed all the power of philosophy. Happy, if she be thence sensible of her temerity, when she pries into these sublime mysteries; and leaving a scene so 40

full of obscurities and perplexities, return, with suitable modesty, to her true and proper province, the examination of common life; where she will find difficulties enow to employ her enquiries, without launching into so boundless an ocean of doubt, uncertainty, and contradiction!

SECTION 8

OF LIBERTY AND NECESSITY] *THN* 2.3.1–2 treats this subject under the identical heading, ‘Of liberty and necessity’. This title is identical to a treatise on the subject by Hobbes.

62.28 **long disputed question]** Hume uses this exact expression and provides a similar analysis in *THN* 2.3.1.1–2. Numerous ancient and medieval writers discussed the problem of liberty. Landmark modern writers include Hobbes, John Bramhall (1594–1663; English prelate in Ireland), Descartes,^B Spinoza, Leibniz,^B Locke,^B Collins, and Clarke.^B The discussions in Hobbes, Bramhall, and Collins appear to be especially pertinent to Hume’s analysis.

62.31 **same opinion]** See ann. 63.13 and 71.9. Compare Locke,^B *Essay* 3.10.22, 3.11.7: ‘they think all the same’ and ‘Disputes . . . [being] meerly Verbal’.

63.13 **merely upon words]** See ann. n. 18 and the passages from Locke^B in the previous annotation. Bramhall said that his debates with Hobbes could be interpreted as involving a sense of the term ‘necessity’ that ‘no man ever denied or doubted of’, but he thought that, in fact, the disagreement was about the true nature of liberty and necessity (*Defence of True Liberty*, 4 ff.).

63.15 **universally allowed, that matter]** Hume is referring to the mechanistic systems of the Cartesians and Newtonians, which are discussed in ann. n. 16 and n. 17. Brief statements of the system Hume most admired can be found in Newton,^B preface to the first edition of *Mathematical Principles*, and *Opticks* 3.1. Compare the associated statement at *THN* 2.3.1.3.

64.1 **no notion of any necessity, or connexion]** Compare *THN* 2.3.1.4 and the annotations throughout Section 7 above.

64.12 **same motives always produce the same actions]** Compare the similar themes in *THN* 2.3.1.4, 10–17; 2.3.2.2, 4; 3.2.1.2–11. Hobbes and Collins held comparable views about necessity in human action.

64.19 **GREEKS . . . ROMANS . . . FRENCH and ENGLISH]** Compare Hume's discussions of this subject in 'A Dialogue' appended to *EPM* and 'Of National Characters'.

64.33 **ARISTOTLE^B . . . HIPPOCRATES^B]** Aristotle drew on his predecessors while rebuking the early Milesians for relying too heavily on *material* causes, including the basic elements of earth, air, water, fire, and the like (*Metaphysics* 1, 3–5, especially 983^b7–984^a11, 986^b25–987^a19; *Physics* 187^a12–188^a17; see also his account of the four causes, as discussed in ann. 5.21). In the Hippocratic work *Nature of Man* 1, a report appears on air, fire, water, and earth.

64.35 **POLYBIUS^B and TACITUS^B]** Polybius and Tacitus are principal classical sources for Hume. Both try to move beyond the narration of particular events to what is general or universal in human history. Both connect motives with actions, sometimes to explain and sometimes to praise or blame. For reflections on historical writing and appeals to human nature, see Polybius, *Histories* 1.1, 4, 14; 4.8; 8.2, 8; 9.22–3; 16.28; Tacitus, *Annals* 3.55, 65; 6.6, 22.

65.6 **QUINTUS CURTIUS^B . . . ALEXANDER^B]** Quintus Curtius Rufus often discusses the courage of Alexander the Great (4th c. BC). An act of courage so elevated as to seem supernatural is described in *History of Alexander* 9.5, where Alexander is depicted as battling single-handedly and successfully against overwhelming odds.

65.10 **uniformity in human motives and actions]** Bramhall denies this thesis in his debate with Hobbes (*Defence of True Liberty*, 166–9, 206–7), arguing instead that 'Motives determine not naturally but morally' and without necessitation. Bramhall argued that *voluntary* acts require a model based on deliberation rather than movement.

65.40 **uniformity and regularity]** A similar argument is found in Collins, *Human Liberty*, 44 ff. See also *THN* 2.3.1.11.

66.2 **custom and education]** See ann. 113.1.

66.25 **vulgar . . . first appearance]** On the 'vulgar', see also *EHU* 7.21, 9.5, 10.21, 10.34. In *THN* 1.3.12.5–6 and 1.4.2.36 (and elsewhere) Hume portrays the vulgar as unphilosophical and unreflective persons who judge by first appearances, but he notes that we all fall into this class in some judgements.

66.30 **hid, by reason of their minuteness]** This thesis, using the language of 'minuteness', is found in Collins, *Human Liberty*, 48–9. See also Locke,^B *Essay* 4.3.24–9.

67.1 **connexion between all causes and effects is equally necessary]** See the nearly identical treatment in *THN* 1.3.12.5. See also *THN* 1.3.12.25, 2.3.1.12–16; *Abstract* 32.

67.5 **medicines operate not with their wonted powers]** See Hume's examples at 6.4 of rhubarb as an inconsistent purge and opium as an inconsistent narcotic.

67.9 **animal œconomy]** 'Œconomy' is the organization or internal constitution of the major subdivisions in nature. Most books on animal economy available in the 18th century were on the human economy. Chambers defined *Animal Œconomy* as 'the first branch of the theory of medicine; or that which explains the parts of the human body, their structure and use; the nature and causes of life and health, and the effects or phænomena arising from them' (*Cyclopædia*, 'œconomy'). See assorted essays by Scottish physician and anatomist James Keill (1673–1719) and by James Jurin, in Keill, *Essays on Several Parts of the Animal Œconomy*.

67.16 **same reasoning]** Compare *THN* 2.3.1.2: 'same maxims'.

68.34 **politics be a science]** See Hume's essay 'That Politics may be Reduced to a Science'.

69.5 **natural and moral evidence]** Natural evidence is based on the constant conjunction of objects or events in nature. Moral evidence is based on the constant conjunction of motives and acts. (See, further, ann. 84.10.) Inferences are made from each type of evidence to support factual claims; evidence in each case rests on constant conjunctions. Hume provides a nearly identical passage in *THN* 2.3.1.17; cf. also 2.3.1.15–16. Hume's use of the natural–moral distinction contrasts with that of Bramhall noted in ann. 65.10.

69.14 **wheel]** circular instrument of torture on which a person is stretched until disjointed. According to English traveller Thomas Coryate (c.1577–1617), 'wheeling' was used only for murderers (*Coryats Crudities*, 388).

69.21 **physical necessity]** On the distinction between physical and moral necessity, see *THN* 1.3.14.33, 2.3.1.17; see also the explication in Anthony Collins, *Human Liberty*, pp. iii, 110–12; and Chambers, *Cyclopædia*, 'necessity'. Unlike Collins, Bramhall, and others, Hume appears to find the distinction between physical and moral necessity to be without adequate grounds. This distinction derives from the Scholastics and has been explicated in several ways. A *physical necessity* is present when a person lacks all power to act (because of a physical impotence) or power to prevent something from occurring. A *moral necessity* is present when a person is either determined by reason, the senses, or desire; in some usages, the agent has the power to act, but a great difficulty (such as habituation or a strong desire) stands in the way of the person's ability to act or to prevent something from occurring. It was generally agreed that physical necessity precludes liberty, but it was controversial whether a person governed only by moral necessity is free.

69.40 **Charing Cross]** Charing Cross, a heavily travelled area of London, is sometimes described as the centre of the city because distances from London are commonly measured from this location (as Locke^B assumes, *Essay* 2.26.5). Edward I (1239–1307) erected a cross on this site in 1290 after the death of his queen. The

cross was razed in 1647 and the present equestrian statue featuring Charles I was erected in 1676.

70.9 profess the contrary opinion] Compare *THN* 2.3.2.1–5 for an explanation of ‘the prevalence of the doctrine of liberty’—of, that is, an alleged liberty of indifference consistent with necessity.

70.29 systems of many philosophers] Collins discusses this thesis and various philosophers whose systems contradict it in *Human Liberty*, 36–40, 50–2, 74–5. Collins often mentions Epicureans. Prominent figures known to Hume who professed a liberty-based view that denied necessity (whether or not in Hume’s sense) included King, *Essay on the Origin of Evil* 5.1 (especially 5.1.3.16–19); and Bramhall, *Defence of True Liberty*, 11, 13, 228 ff. Both insist that the will is a true and undetermined cause.

70.30 determinations of the will] Hume here brings the will into the analysis of liberty (compare also *EHU* 7.26 and 8.23–7 for prior references to the will). In *THN* 2.3 (‘Of the will and direct passions’, in which Hume’s section ‘Of liberty and necessity’ appears), the will plays a major role; see 2.3.1.2 for a description of the will as an impression rather than as a faculty.

n. 18 prevalence of the doctrine of liberty] This identical expression occurs at *THN* 2.3.2.1, with reasons listed for the prevalence.

n. 18 liberty or indifference] Compare the use of these notions in *THN* 2.3.1.3, 2.3.2.1–2; and *Abstract* 31. See Watts’s explanation of the ‘liberty of indifference’ as the ‘power to choose or refuse, to choose one thing or another among several things which are proposed, without any inward or outward restraint, force, or constraining bias or influence’. (See similarly Chambers, *Cyclopædia*, ‘liberty’.) Watts declared this freedom ‘inconsistent with all necessity’ as well as with all doctrines of internal causal determination of the will (‘An Essay on the Freedom of the Will in God and in Creatures’ 1.4–5, in *Works*, vol. 6). For a view resembling Hume’s, see Collins, *Discourse*, pp. 18–19, 67–75.

n. 18 Velleity] A velleity is a pure wishing, desiring, or inclination unaccompanied by any attempt to obtain what is fancied. In other words, a mental act occurs without a corresponding act of implementation. Velleity is to be contrasted with both resolve and volition. For 17th- and 18th-century usage of the term, see Cheyne on the innate power of the will in *An Essay on Regimen* (315), Abraham Tucker’s contrast between volition and velleity in *The Light of Nature Pursued* 1 (28–9); Hobbes on the ‘new word’ ‘velleity’ (*Human Nature* 9.1); and Locke’s treatment of ‘bare Velleity’ as the lowest degree of desire, which carries one no further than a ‘faint wish’ for something (*Essay* 2.20.6).

71.9 dispute . . . merely verbal] See ann. 63.13 (‘merely upon words’). On disputes as merely verbal, see *EPM* n. 64; Appx. 4.1 and Appx. 4.2; *NHR* 7.1; *THN* 1.4.6.21, 3.3.4.1; *Dialogues* 12.8. Hume is perhaps influenced by Locke:^B ‘The

greatest part of the Disputes in the World', he says, may be 'meerly Verbal' (*Essay* 3.11.7). See also Watts's suggestion that much in this controversy involves 'disputes about words' ('An Essay on the Freedom of Will in God and in Creatures' 1.5 (*Works*, 6: 244–5)).

72.11 **By liberty]** Compare *THN* 2.3.1.18. See the similar account in Hobbes, *Leviathan* 21.1–4; and *Questions concerning Liberty, Necessity, and Chance* 4 (*Works*, 5: 56–65), 16 (*ibid.* 5: 224–8)—as well as the critique in Bramhall, *Defence of True Liberty*, 210–11, 226–7. See also the predecessor accounts in Locke,^B *Essay* 2.21.8, 21; Collins, *Human Liberty*, pp. ii, 11, 14–18; and Chambers, *Cyclopædia*, 'freedom' and 'liberty'.

72.22 **chance . . . a mere negative word]** See ann. 6.1 above; see also *THN* 2.3.1.18.

73.7 **dangerous consequences to religion]** See *THN* 2.3.2.3. It was standard fare in the 17th and 18th centuries to denounce philosophers because of the presumed dangerousness of their systems to religion and morality. See, for example, German philosopher and political writer Samuel von Pufendorf (1632–94), *Law of Nature* 3.4.4. Those taken to be atheists—Hobbes, for example—were common targets. See Bramhall's reservations centred on the necessitarians' apparent elimination of categories such as praise, blame, punishment, and sin (*Defence of True Liberty*, 14–15, 60–1, 76–9); and Hobbes's reaction in *An Answer to Dr. Bramhall*, Epistle to the Reader (*Works*, 4: 282). Hume was apparently accused of holding dangerous views in an essay by Edinburgh University principal William Wishart (1692–1753) that motivated the writing of *A Letter from a Gentleman* (see pars. 19, 36 ff. in this work and the Introduction to this volume).

73.17 **defined two ways . . . two definitions of cause]** The reference is to the two definitions of 'cause' presented at *EHU* 7.29. Hume appeals to these two definitions to support two definitions of 'necessity' in *THN* 2.3.2.4.

74.4 **received orthodox system]** The reference is to traditional views that the will is itself free of prior causal determination and that human choices create new causal chains. See Descartes,^B *Principles of Philosophy* 1.39–42 (1: 205–6); Watts, 'Whether Liberty Can Be Ascribed to the Will?' and 'An Essay on the Freedom of Will in God and in Creatures' 2–3 (*Works*, 5: 620; 6: 247 ff.); and Bramhall and King, as discussed at ann. 70.29. Interpretation of some of these philosophers as 'orthodox' in the relevant sense has been challenged; for example, the texts of Descartes (for whom the will acts freely) have yielded strikingly different interpretations.

74.7 **laws being founded on rewards and punishments]** Compare similar ideas in Locke,^B *Essay* 2.28.6; and Collins, *Human Liberty*, 91–9.

74.30 **Men are not blamed]** Compare the longer, but almost identical, passage in *THN* 2.3.2.7.

75.20 **no indifference; no liberty]** For such objections, see Cheyne, *Philosophical Principles of Natural Religion* 2.13; and Watts, 'An Essay on the Freedom of the Will in God and in Creatures' 1.4 (*Works*, vol. 6).

75.30 **author of all the rest**] The account of a chain of necessary causes may be premised on an interpretation of Malebranche,^B *Search after Truth* 2.1.4.3; 6.2.3, 9; Elucidation 15. With some reconstruction, the view could be attributed to Cordemoy, *Six discours sur la distinction & l'union du corps & de l'ame*, 'Discours 4—De la première cause du mouvement' (*Œuvres*, 136, 139, 142–4). See also *EHU* 8.36; *THN* 1.4.5.31 (with a footnote reference to 'Malebranche and other Cartesians'); and the related ideas about the volitions of a deity in *Dialogues* 11, especially 11.7 ff.

76.16 **many philosophers . . . perfect benevolence**] This is possibly another reference to Leibniz^B (and, according to Hume, King; see ann. 44.29) on the best of all possible worlds. However, it is more likely a reference to the figures noted immediately below (under 'ancient Stoics').

76.24 **some philosophers, and the ancient Stoics**] Several modern philosophers embraced such Stoic attitudes, among them Flemish classicist Justus Lipsius (1547–1606); see *De constantia* or *Of Constancie* 1.13–15, 18–20. The expression 'constancy on his mind' later in this paragraph could be an allusion to Lipsius, whom Hume mentions elsewhere. Although ancient Stoics and other philosophers cannot here be identified with confidence, Seneca's theory and language in 'De providentia' 3.1 and 5.7–8 (in *Moral Essays*) resemble Hume's formulation to a striking degree. See also Marcus Aurelius,^B *Meditations* 10.5–6.

76.32 **humours**] A humour is a fluid or semi-fluid substance in the body. According to ancient teachings, four humours (blood, yellow bile, black bile, and phlegm) govern the body and determine its characteristics. The earliest of the ancient writings may have been Hippocratic; one source for the humoral theory is *The Nature of Man*, a work mentioned in ann. 64.33.

77.31 **Deity . . . author of sin**] This is a recurrent topic in Hobbes, *Questions concerning Liberty, Necessity, and Chance* 11–12, 15. The issue is also raised in a cryptic manner in Berkeley,^B *Dialogues* 3.

77.33 **These are mysteries**] Compare *NHR* 11.3, 15.13. This concluding paragraph could be a bridge to Hume's discussion in Section 11 of the limits of theology and philosophy.