in what reſpects the ancient method of philoſophizing was falſe or uſeleſs : and after determining these two points, he was qualified to deſcribe the way by which the ſtudy of philosophy could be ſucceſsfully purſued without deviating into hypotheſis and error. Luther found out the errors of the church of Rome by compa­ring their doctrines with the Scriptures. But had this compariſon never been made, the reformation could ne­ver have taken place. Without ſelf-knowledge, or without that knowledge of our character which is de­rived from a compariſon of our principles and conduct with a perfect ſtandard of morality, we can never form plans and reſolutions, or make any exertion to abandon the vicious habits which we have contracted, and ſtrengthen thoſe virtuous principles in which we are deficient.

As much may be learned from the errors of thoſe who have been in ſimilar ſituations with ourſelves ; ſo many uſeſul cautions may be obtained from our own errors ; and he that will remember theſe, will ſeldom be twice guilty of the ſame vice.

it was evidently the intention of Providence that man ſhould be guided chiefly by experience. It is by the obſervations which we make on what we see paſſing around us, or from what we ſuffer in our own perſon, that we form maxims for the conduct of life. The more minutely therefore we attend to our principles, and the more maxims we form, we ſhall be the better fitted to attain moral perfection.

With reſpect to our underſtanding, to mark the errors which we have fallen into, either by its natural defects or by negligence, is alſo of great importance ; for the greateſt genius and moſt profound ſcholar are liable to theſe errors, and often commit them as well as the weak and illiterate. But by obſerving them, and tracing them to their cauſes, they at length acquire an habitual accuracy. It is true, that men of feeble minds can never by knowing their own defects exalt themſelves to the rank of genius ; but ſuch knowledge will enable them to improve their underſtandings, and ſo to appre­ciate their own powers, as ſeldom to attempt what is beyond their ſtrength. They may thus become uſeful members of ſociety ; and though they will not probably be admired for their abilities, they will yet eſcape the ri­dicule which is poured upon vanity.

It is difficult to lay down preciſe rules for the acqui­sition of this ſelf-knowledge, becauſe almoſt every man is blinded by a fallacy peculiar to himſelf. But when one has got rid of that partiality which ariſes from ſelf- love, he may eaſily form a juſt eſtimate of his moral im­provements, by comparing the general courſe of his con­duct with the ſtandard of his duty ; and if he has any doubt of the extent of his intellectual attainments, he will moſt readily diſcover the truth by comparing them with the attainments of others who have been moſt ſucceſsful in the ſame pursuits. Should vanity ariſe in his mind from ſuch a compariſon, let him then compare the extent of his knowledge with what is yet to be known, and he will then be in little danger of thinking of him­ſelf more highly than he ought to think. See Preju­dice and *SELF-Partiality.*

*SELF-Love,* is that inſtinctive principle which impels every animal, rational and irrational, to preſerve its life and promote its own happineſs. It is very generally con­founded with ſelfishness ; but we think that the one propenſity is distinct from the other. Every man loves him­

ſelf ; but every man is not ſelfiſh. The ſelfiſh man graſps at all *immediate* advantages, regardleſs of the consequences which his conduct may have upon his neigh­bour. Self-love only prompts him who is actuated by it to procure to himſelf the greateſt poſſible ſum of happineſs during the whole of his exiſtence. In this purſuit the rational ſelf-lover will often forego a preſent enjoyment to obtain a greater and more permanent one in reverſion ; and he will as often ſubmit to a preſent pain to avoid a greater hereafter. Self-love, as diſtinguiſhed from ſelfiſhneſs, always comprehends the whole of a man’s exiſtence, and in that extended ſenſe of the phraſe, we heſitate not to ſay that every man is a ſelf- lover ; for, with eternity in his view, it is ſurely not poſſible for the moſt diſintereſted of the human race not to prefer himſelf to all other men, if their future and everlaſting intereſts could come into competition. This indeed they never can do ; for though the introduction of evil into the world, and the different ranks which it makes neceſſary in ſociety, put it in the power of a man to raiſe himſelf, in the preſent ſtate, by the depreſſion of his neighbour, or by the practice of injuſtice, yet in the purſuit of a prize which is to be gained only by soberneſs, righteouſneſs, and piety, there can be no rivalſhip among the different competitors. The ſucceſs of one is no injury to another ; and therefore, in this ſenſe of the phraſe, ſelf-love is not only lawful, but abſolutely unavoidable. It has been a queſtion in morals, whe­ther it be not likewiſe the incentive to every action, however virtuous or apparently diſintereſted ?

Thoſe who maintain the affirmative side of this que­ſtion ſay, that the proſpect of immediate pleaſure, or the dread of immediate pain, is the only apparent mo­tive to action in the minds of infants, and indeed of all who look not before them, and infer the future from the past. They own, that when a boy has had ſome experience, and is capable of making comparisons, he will often decline an immediate enjoyment which he has formerly found productive of future evil more than equivalent to all its good ; but in doing ſo they think, and they think juſtly, that he is ſtill actuated by the principle of ſelf-love, purſuing the greateſt good of which he knows himſelf to be capable. After experi­encing that truth, equity, and benevolence in all his dealings is the readieſt, and indeed the only certain, me­thod of ſecuring to himſelf the kindneſs and good offi­ces of his fellow-creatures, and much more when he has learned that they will recommend him to the Supreme Being, upon whom depends his exiſtence and all his enjoyments, they admit that he will practice truth, equity, and benevolence; but ſtill, from the ſame prin­ciple, purſuing his own ultimate happineſs as the ob­ject which he has always in view. The proſpect of this great object will make him feel an exquiſite pleaſure in the performance of the actions which he conceives as neceſſary to its attainment, till at laſt, without attend­ing in each inſtance to their conſequences, he will, by the great aſſociating principle which has been explained elsewhere (ſee Metaphysics, part 1st, chap, 1.) feel a refined enjoyment in the actions themſelves, and per­form them, as occaſions offer, without deliberation or reflection. Such, they think, is the origin of benevo­lence itlelf, and indeed of every virtue.

Thoſe who take the other side of the queſtion, can hardly deny that ſelf-love thus modified may prompt to