system would decay and be dissolved long before it could serve the purposes of nature, were therenot methods contrived, with admirable wisdom, for repairing the waste occasioned by perpetual friction. The body is furnished with different fluids, which continually circulate through it in proper channels, and leave in their way what is neces­sary to repair the solids. These again are supplied by food ***ab extra;*** and to the whole processes of digestion, circulation, and nutrition, the air we breathe is absolutely necessary. But as the air is a very heterogeneous fluid, and subject to violent and sudden changes, it is obvious that these changes must affect the blood, and by consequence the whole frame of the human body. The air, in­deed, in process of time consumes even marble itself ; and, there­fore, we cannot wonder that as it is in one state the parent of health, it should in another be the source of disease to such crea­tures as man and other terrestrial animals. Nor could these conse­quences be avoided without introducing others much more deplor­able. The world is governed by general laws, without which there could be among men neither arts nor sciences ; and though laws different from those by which the system is at present governed might, perhaps, have been established, there is not the smallest rea­son to imagine that they could on the whole have been better, or attended with fewer inconveniences. As long as we have material and solid bodies capable of motion, liable to resistance from other solid bodies, supported by food, subject to the agency of the air, and divi­sible, they must necessarily be liable to pain, disease, corruption, and death, and that, too, by the very influence of those laws which preserve the order and harmony of the universe. Thus gravitation is a general law so good and so necessary, that were it for a moment suspended, the world would instantly fall to pieces ; and yet, by means of this law, the man must inevitably be crushed to death on whom a tower shall chance to tumble. Again, the attraction of cohesion is a general law, without which it does not appear that any corporeal system could possibly exist : it is by this law, too, or a modification of it, that the glands and lacteals of the human body extract from the blood such particles as are necessary to nourish the solids ; and yet it is by means of the very same modification of the very same law that a man is liable to be poisoned.

Although the human body could not have been preserved from dangers and dissolution, but by introducing evils greater on the whole than those to which it is now liable, why, it has sometimes been asked, is every disorder to which it is subject attended with sickness or with pain ? and why is such a horror of death implanted in our breasts, seeing that, by the laws of nature, death is inevitable? We answer. That sickness, pain, and the dread of death, serve the very best purposes. Could a man be put to death, or have his limbs broken without feeling pain, the human race bad long ago been extinct. Felt we no uneasiness in a fever, we should be in­sensible of the disease, and die before we suspected our health to be impaired. The horror which generally accompanies our reflections on death tends to make us more careful of life, and prevents us from quitting this world rashly, when our affairs prosper not ac­cording to our wishes. It is likewise an indication that our exis­tence does not terminate in this world ; for our dread is seldom ex­cited by the prospect of the pain which we may suffer when dying, but by our anxiety concerning what we may be doomed to suffer Or enjoy in the next stage of our existence ; and this anxiety tends more, perhaps, than any thing else to make us live while we are here in such a manner as to ensure our happiness hereafter.

iv. *Righteousness.* In our views of the Divine benevo­lence, we must not forget that it is not such a fond affec­tion as often obtains that name among men. All human affections and passions originate in our dependence and wants ; and it has been doubted whether any of them be at first disinterested : but he to whom existence is es­sential cannot be dependent ; he who is the Author of every thing can feel no want. The Divine benevo­lence, therefore, must be wholly disinterested, and, of course, free from those partialities originating in self-love, which are alloys in the most sublime of human virtues. The most benevolent man on earth, though he wishes the hap­piness of every fellow-creature, has still, from the ties of blood, the endearments of friendship, or, perhaps, from a regard to his own interest, some particular favourites whom, on a competition with others, he would certainly prefer. But the equal Lord of all can have no particular favourites. His benevolence is therefore coincident with justice ; or, that which is called *divine justice,* is only benevolence ex­erting itself in a particular manner for the propagation of general felicity. When God prescribes laws for regulat­ing the conduct of his intelligent creatures, it is not be­cause he can reap any benefit from their obedience to those laws, but because such obedience is necessary to their own happiness ; and when he punishes the transgressor, it is not because, in his nature, there is any disposition to which the prospect of such punishment can afford gratification, but because, in the government of free agents, punishment is necessary to reform the criminal, and to intimidate others from committing the like crimes. Compare Ps. vii. 10-18. Rom. ii. 5, 6. 2 Tim. iv. 8. Rev. xix. 2, &c.—Intimately connected with the *righteousness* of God is his *holiness,* for we cannot but infer that he, who so earnestly desires and carefully enjoins the moral excellence of his creatures, is himself the grand pattern of all moral beauty. Compare Math V. 45—48. Eph.iv. 24. 1 Pet. i. 16. 2 Pet. i. 4. 1 John i. 5, &c.

v. *Immutability and Veracity.* He who is perfectly wise and holy must be unchangeable, for *change* can character­ise the conduct only of beings whose faculties do not ex­clude the possibility of error, or whose will is liable to be influenced by unworthy motives. Hence the Scriptures ascribe to God the attribute of immutability as to his pur­poses, decrees, and judgments ; compare Exod. iii. 14—17 ;

vi. 2—8. Deut. vii. 8—11. Ps. xxxiii. 9—11. Matt. iii. 6. Rom. xi. 29. Heb. vi. 17, 18. James i. 17, &c. Closely connected with this is the divine Veracity ; for he who never changes can never, by any subsequent word or deed, con­tradict what he has already said ; compare Numb, xxiii. 19. Ps. xxxiii. 4. Isa. xlvi. 9, 10. Rom. iii. 3—5. 2 Cor. i. 18— 20. Tit. i. 2, &c.

***Obs.*** See Zanchii ***De Nαturα Dei*** *sive* ***Divinis Attributis*** lib. V. Charnock on the Divine Attr butes.

Sect. VI.—*Of the Reverence due to the Deity.*

From the short view that we have taken of the divine perfections, it is evidently our duty to reverence, in our minds, the self-existent Being to whom they belong. This is, indeed, not only a duty, but a duty of which no man who contemplates these perfections, and believes them to be real, can possibly avoid the performance. He who thinks irre­verently of the Author of nature, can never have consider­ed seriously the power, the wisdom, and the goodness display­ed in his works; for whoever has a clear notion of these must be convinced, that he who performed them has no imperfection ; that his power can accomplish every thing which involves not a contradiction ; that his knowledge is intuitive, and free from the possibility of error ; and that his goodness extends to all without partiality and without any alloy of selfish design. This conviction must make every man, on whose mind it is impressed, ready to prostrate himself in the dust before the Author of his being ; who, though infinitely exalted above him, is the source of all his enjoyments, constantly watches over him with paternal care, and protects him from num­berless dangers. The sense of so many benefits must ex­cite in his mind a sense of the liveliest gratitude to him from whom they are received, and an ardent wish for their con­tinuance.

While silent gratitude and devotion thus glow in the breast of the contemplative man, he will be careful not to form even a mental image of that all-perfect Being to whom they are directed. He knows that God is not material ; that he exists in a manner altogether incomprehensible ; that to frame an image of him would be to assign limits to what is infinite ; and that to attempt to form a positive con­ception of him would be impiously to compare himself with his Maker.

The man who has any tolerable notion of the perfections of the Supreme Being will never speak lightly of him, or make use of his name except on great and solemn occa­sions. He knows that the terms of all languages are inade­quate and improper, when applied directly to him who has