

me it appears an instinct like that which inferior creatures have ; each of them, we see, by the ties of nature, love self best ; that which is a part of self, they love by the same tie or instinct. In them it, in some measure, does the offices of reason, by which, among other things, they watchfully keep, and orderly feed their helpless offspring. Thus natural affection appears to be a branch of self-love, good in the animal race, in us likewise, with proper limitations ; but otherwise is productive of evil, by exciting desires to promote some by means prejudicial to others.

Our blessed Saviour seems to give a check to this irregular fondness in nature, and, at the same time, a precedent for us : “ Who is my mother, and who are my brethren ? ” thereby intimating, that the earthly ties of relationship, are, comparatively, inconsiderable to such, who, thro’ a steady course of obedience, have come to the happy experience of the spirit of God bearing witness with their spirits that they are his children : — “ And he stretched forth his hands towards his disciples, and said, “ Behold my mother, and my brethren : For “ whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven (arrives at the more noble part of true relationship) “ the same “ is my brother, and sister, and mother,” Matt. xii. 48.

This doctrine agrees well with a state truly compleat, where love necessarily operates according