

IV. The existence of God, that is, of a first, intelligent, and self-existent being, on whom all things depend as on their first cause, and who depends himself on no one; the existence, I say, of such a being is one of those truths that shew themselves to us, at the first glance. We have only to attend to the evident and sensible proofs, that accost us, as it were, from all parts.

Of the existence of God.

The chain and subordination of causes among themselves, which necessarily requires we should fix on a first cause; the necessity of acknowledging a first mover; the admirable structure and order of the universe; are all so many demonstrations of the existence of God, within the reach of every capacity. Let us unfold them in a few words.

V. 1. We behold an infinite number of things, which form all together the assemblage we call the universe. Something therefore must have always existed. For were we to suppose a time in which there was absolutely nothing, 'tis evident that nothing could have ever existed; because whatsoever has a beginning, must have a cause of its existence; since nothing can produce nothing. It must be therefore acknowledged that there is some eternal being, who exists necessarily and of himself; for he can be indebted to no one else for his origin; and it implies a contradiction that such a being does not exist.

First proof. The necessity of a self-existent and intelligent being.

Moreover, this eternal being, who necessarily and of himself subsists, is endued with reason and understanding. For to pursue the same manner of arguing, were we to suppose a time in which there was nothing