

more proper to determine finally a rational being, than the assurance he has of procuring the approbation and benevolence of his superior, by acting in conformity to his will and orders; and of escaping his indignation, which must infallibly pursue a rebellious creature.

VIII. Let us follow now the thread of the consequences arising from these principles.

If it be true that every rule is of itself obligatory, and that reason is the primitive rule of human actions; it follows, that reason only, independent of the law, is sufficient to impose some obligation on man, and consequently to furnish room for morality and duty, commendation and censure.

There will remain no manner of doubt on this subject, if abstracting for a moment from superiority and law, we examine at first the state of man alone, considered merely as a rational being. Man proposes to himself his own good, that is, the welfare of his body and soul. He searches afterwards for the means of procuring those advantages; and as soon as he has discovered them, he approves of some particular actions, and condemns others; and consequently he approves or condemns himself, according as he acts after a manner conformable or opposite to the dictates of his reason. Does not all this evidently demonstrate, that reason puts a restraint on liberty, and lays us therefore under an obligation of doing or abstaining from particular things?

Let us proceed. Suppose that man in the fore-mentioned state becomes the father of a family, and

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