



JOHN LOCKE

From the painting at Christ Church, Oxford

AN ESSAY CONCERNING
HUMAN UNDERSTANDING

BY

JOHN LOCKE

*COLLATED AND ANNOTATED, WITH
PROLEGOMENA, BIOGRAPHICAL, CRITICAL, AND HISTORICAL.*

BY

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BOOK II. is bigger than the ordinary sort of those we have been used

 CHAP. to ; and a little horse, such a one as comes not up to the size
 XXVI. of that idea which we have in our minds to belong ordinarily
 to horses ; and that will be a great horse to a Welchman,
 which is but a little one to a Fleming ; they two having,
 from the different breed of their countries, taken several-sized
 ideas to which they compare, and in relation to which they
 denominate their great and their little¹.

Absolute
 Terms
 often stand
 for Rela-
 tions.
 6. So likewise weak and strong are but relative denomina-
 tions of power, compared to some ideas we have at that time
 of greater or less power. Thus, when we say a weak man,
 we mean one that has not so much strength or power to move
 as usually men have, or usually those of his size have ; which
 is a comparing his strength to the idea we have of the usual
 strength of men, or men of such a size. The like when
 we say the creatures are all weak things ; weak there is but
 a relative term, signifying the disproportion there is in the
 power of God and the creatures². And so abundance of
 words, in ordinary speech, stand only for relations (and
 perhaps the greatest part) which at first sight seem to have
 no such signification : v. g. the ship has necessary stores.
Necessary and *stores* are both relative words ; one having
 a relation to the accomplishing the voyage intended, and
 the other to future use. All which relations, how they are
 confined to, and terminate in ideas derived from sensation or
 reflection, is too obvious to need any explication³.

¹ 'Ces remarques,' says Leibniz, 'sont très-bonnes.' 'Space,' like time, is conceived by us relatively to the sensuous objects by which it is measured, and in which it 'terminates.' They form the standard of its quantity, in particular instances.

² We interpret 'power,' like duration and space, as embodied in the effects of which, in each particular example, it is the correlative.

³ Terms which signify relations are 'explained,' according to the analogy of the *Essay*, by that in the data of

sense which manifests and measures their meaning. But if relation involves more than any of its particular manifestations, Locke's account is inadequate. Relation is more than the things or persons or modes related ; on the other hand, an idea of relation presupposes related terms. A sensuous philosophy tends to rest in isolated substances, on which relations are contingently superinduced ; extreme idealism tends to reduce actual reality to a network of empty, colourless relations.

CHAPTER XXVII.

[OF IDENTITY AND DIVERSITY¹.]

[I. ANOTHER occasion the mind often takes of comparing, BOOK II.
 is the very being of things, when, considering *anything as* ---
existing at any determined time and place, we compare it with CHAP.
itself existing at another time, and thereon form the ideas of XXVII.
identity and *diversity*. When we see anything to be in any Wherein
 place in any instant of time, we are sure (be it what it will) Identity
 that it is that very thing, and not another which at that same consists.
 time exists in another place, how like and undistinguishable
 soever it may be in all other respects : and in this consists
identity, when the ideas it is attributed to vary not at all
 from what they were that moment wherein we consider their
 former existence, and to which we compare the present. For
 we never finding, nor conceiving it possible, that two things
 of the same kind should exist in the same place at the same
 time, we rightly conclude, that, whatever exists anywhere at
 any time, excludes all of the same kind, and is there itself
 alone. When therefore we demand whether anything be the
same or no², it refers always to something that existed such

¹ This chapter was added in the second edition, on the suggestion of Molyneux. See Locke's letters to Molyneux, Aug. 23, 1693, and March 8, 1695.

² Cf. Bk. I. ch. iii. §§ 4, 5 on the origin of the idea of identity. The numerical sameness or identity here in view must be distinguished from generic or specific unity, i. e. *similarity*, or the sameness that consists in a community of quality. When several objects are alike, one description will

equally apply to any of them, and hence they are all said to be of the *same* nature or appearance. When we say, 'This table is made of the *same* wood as that other,' we only mean that the material in the one is undistinguishable in quality from that of which the other was constructed. This is the identity of similarity. Numerical sameness, on the contrary, does not necessarily imply outward similarity in the changing phenomena of the same substance.

a time in such a place, which it was certain, at that instant, was the same with itself, and no other. From whence it follows, that one thing cannot have two beginnings of existence, nor two things one beginning; it being impossible for two things of the same kind to be or exist in the same instant, in the very same place; or one and the same thing in different places¹. That, therefore, that had one beginning, is the same thing; and that which had a different beginning in time and place from that, is not the same, but diverse². That which has made the difficulty about this relation has been the little care and attention used in having precise notions of the things to which it is attributed³.

Identity
of Sub-
stances.

2. We have the ideas but of three sorts of substances:
1. *God*. 2. *Finite intelligences*. 3. *Bodies*⁴.

First, *God* is without beginning, eternal, unalterable, and everywhere, and therefore concerning his identity there can be no doubt⁵.

Secondly, *Finite spirits* having had each its determinate time and place of beginning to exist, the relation to that time and place will always determine to each of them its identity, as long as it exists.

Thirdly, The same will hold of every *particle of matter*, to which no addition or subtraction of matter being made, it is the same. For, though these three sorts of substances, as we term them, do not exclude one another out of the same place, yet we cannot conceive but that they must necessarily each

¹ Leibniz refuses to recognise these external relations of time and place as adequate to constitute numerical sameness; and argues for an internal principle of distinction (*principium individuationis*), in virtue of which things and persons are distinguishable in themselves, independently of their times and places. This is adversely criticised by Kant.

² So Hobbes, in *First Grounds of Philosophy*, ch. xi. §§ 1, 2, where he seeks to explain what it is for one thing to differ from another, and in what identity and individuation consist.

³ Accordingly he proceeds to distin-

guish our idea of the relation of identity, as it is found in substances and modes, organisms, men, and persons.

⁴ Cf. ch. xxiii; also Bk. IV. chh. ix, x, xi on the three ultimate substances—the *Ego*, *God*, and the *World*: *God* alone so existing as to need the existence of no other; the other two existing in dependence on *God*. The ultimate relations of the three give rise to the antinomies of Kant.

⁵ It is with regard to *finite* substances—organisms in which body is blended with spirit as in man—that the perplexities in the idea of identity arise which Locke meets in this chapter.

of them exclude any of the same kind out of the same place: or else the notions and names of identity and diversity would be in vain, and there could be no such distinctions of substances, or anything else one from another¹. For example: could two bodies be in the same place at the same time; then those two parcels of matter must be one and the same, take them great or little; nay, all bodies must be one and the same. For, by the same reason that two particles of matter may be in one place, all bodies may be in one place: which, when it can be supposed, takes away the distinction of identity and diversity of one and more, and renders it ridiculous. But it being a contradiction that two or more should be one, identity and diversity are relations and ways of comparing well founded, and of use to the understanding.

3. All other things being but modes or relations ultimately terminated in substances², the identity and diversity of each particular existence of them too will be by the same way determined: only as to things whose existence is in succession, such as are the actions of finite beings, v. g. *motion* and *thought*, both which consist in a continued train of succession, concerning *their* diversity there can be no question: because each perishing the moment it begins, they cannot exist in different times, or in different places, as permanent beings can at different times exist in distant places; and therefore no motion or thought, considered as at different times, can be the same, each part thereof having a different beginning of existence³.

4. From what has been said, it is easy to discover what is so much inquired after, the *principium individuationis*; and that, it is plain, is existence itself; which determines a being of any sort to a particular time and place, incommunicable to

¹ Cf. ch. xxiii. §§ 19-21, as to Locke's meaning, where he supposes spirits to be subject to relations of place, and speaks of *God* as omnipresent.

² Locke thus recognises the *supremacy* of the complex idea of substance among our complex ideas. Modes and relations may be abstracted for separate consideration, as in this Book; but

they are all ultimately referable to, and terminate in, the substances that are (so far) manifested to us in the simple ideas we have of them.

³ Substances are thus distinguished from modes, by their independence and persistence. Hume virtually analyses knowledge and existence into Locke's abstract 'modes' and 'relations.'

BOOK II. two beings of the same kind¹. This, though it seems easier
 CHAP. to conceive in simple substances or modes; yet, when re-
 XXVII. flected on, is not more difficult in compound ones², if care
 be taken to what it is applied: v. g. let us suppose an atom,
 i. e. a continued body under one immutable superficies, existing
 in a determined time and place; it is evident, that, considered
 in any instant of its existence, it is in that instant the same
 with itself. For, being at that instant what it is, and nothing
 else, it is the same, and so must continue as long as its
 existence is continued; for so long it will be the same, and
 no other. In like manner, if two or more atoms be joined
 together into the same mass, every one of those atoms will be
 the same, by the foregoing rule: and whilst they exist united
 together, the mass, consisting of the same atoms, must be
 the same mass, or the same body, let the parts be ever so
 differently jumbled. But if one of these atoms be taken
 away, or one new one added, it is no longer the same mass
 or the same body. In the state of living creatures, their
 identity depends not on a mass of the same particles, but on
 something else. For in them the variation of great parcels of
 matter alters not the identity: an oak growing from a plant
 to a great tree, and then lopped, is still the same oak; and
 a colt grown up to a horse, sometimes fat, sometimes lean, is
 all the while the same horse: though, in both these cases,
 there may be a manifest change of the parts; so that truly
 they are not either of them the same masses of matter, though
 they be truly one of them the same oak, and the other the
 same horse. The reason whereof is, that, in these two cases—
 a *mass of matter* and a *living body*—identity is not applied to
 the same thing³.

¹ Molyneux (March 2, 1693) exhorts Locke to 'insist more particularly and at large on the *principium individuationis*. 'Le principe d'individuation revient, dans les individus, au principe de distinction, dont je viens de parler.' (Leibniz.) Individuality must not be confounded with personality.
² 'Compound ones,' e. g. *aggregates* of atoms, as distinguished from the

separate particles. He has material substances in view.

³ The idea we have of our *mental* 'individuality' contained in the consciousness of each *ego* being a *unit*, separated from every other *ego*, with a conscious life that is private, or confined to itself alone, belongs to personality, of which afterwards.

5. We must therefore consider wherein an oak differs from a mass of matter, and that seems to me to be in this, that the one is only the cohesion of particles of matter any how united, the other such a disposition of them as constitutes the parts of an oak; and such an organization of those parts as is fit to receive and distribute nourishment, so as to continue and frame the wood, bark, and leaves, &c., of an oak, in which consists the vegetable life. That being then one plant which has such an organization of parts in one coherent body, partaking of one common life, it continues to be the same plant as long as it partakes of the same life, though that life be communicated to new particles of matter vitally united to the living plant, in a like continued organization conformable to that sort of plants. For this organization, being at any one instant in any one collection of matter, is in that particular concrete distinguished from all other, and *is* that individual life¹, which existing constantly from that moment both forwards and backwards, in the same continuity of insensibly succeeding parts united to the living body of the plant, it has that identity which makes the same plant, and all the parts of it, parts of the same plant, during all the time that they exist united in that continued organization, which is fit to convey that common life to all the parts so united².

6. The case is not so much different in *brutes* but that any one may hence see what makes an animal and continues it the

¹ It is only in a loose sense that the 'organisation,' which is visible, can be identified with the 'life' which is invisible.

² He finds the identity of a 'mass' of unorganised matter in the identity of its aggregated atoms, whereas that of a living organism consists in participation of continuous life on the part of the continuously changing atoms that successively compose the organism. In an organism the fleeting parts are maintained in their organic life by their connection with the whole, while in an inorganic mass the whole is formed and constituted by mere aggregation of the parts. Organisms accordingly

seem to be one and the same, in virtue of an immanent principle of life, so that when the parts are separated from the whole they lose their life. A branch separated from a tree, or a limb from an animal body, dissolves into its chemically and mechanically determined elements, from which the life has departed; whereas the separation of a stone into fragments leaves the qualities of the separated parts unaffected by the change. In an organism the parts are connected for a reason, and their union expresses a principle, that is inexplicable under merely mechanical law.

BOOK II.
 CHAP.
 XXVII.
 Identity of
 Vegetables.

Identity of
 Animals.

BOOK II. same. Something we have like this in machines, and may
 CHAP. serve to illustrate it. For example, what is a watch? It is
 XXVII. plain it is nothing but a fit organization or construction of
 parts to a certain end, which, when a sufficient force is added
 to it, it is capable to attain. If we would suppose this machine
 one continued body, all whose organized parts were repaired,
 increased, or diminished by a constant addition or separation
 of insensible parts, with one common life, we should have
 something very much like the body of an animal¹; with this
 difference, That, in an animal the fitness of the organization,
 and the motion wherein life consists, begin together, the
 motion coming from within; but in machines the force
 coming sensibly from without, is often away when the organ
 is in order, and well fitted to receive it.

The
 Identity
 of Man.

7. This also shows wherein the identity of the same *man*
 consists; viz. in nothing but a participation of the same
 continued life, by constantly fleeting particles of matter, in
 succession vitally united to the same organized body. He that
 shall place the identity of man in anything else, but, like that
 of other animals, in one fitly organized body², taken in any
 one instant, and from thence continued, under one organization
 of life, in several successively fleeting particles of matter united
 to it, will find it hard to make an embryo, one of years, mad
 and sober, the *same* man, by any supposition, that will not
 make it possible for Seth, Ismael, Socrates, Pilate, St. Austin,
 and Cæsar Borgia, to be the same man. For if the identity
 of *soul alone* makes the same *man*; and there be nothing in
 the nature of matter why the same individual spirit may not
 be united to different bodies, it will be possible that those
 men, living in distant ages, and of different tempers, may

¹ A watch, by superficial analogy, and yet essential contrast, is an apt illustration of the difference between inorganic masses, conditioned only by mechanical and chemical laws, and bodies which are one and the same in virtue of their continuous life.

² The identity of a *man*, placed in 'one fitly organized body,' is thus a

physical identity, and is contrasted with the *moral* or *personal* identity considered in the sequel. The identity of a *man* is manifested to the senses, in his visible and tangible organism; identity of a person is manifested to the person himself, primarily in his self-consciousness, and by inferences founded on his organism.

have been the same man: which way of speaking must be from a very strange use of the word man, applied to an idea out of which body and shape are excluded¹. And that way of speaking would agree yet worse with the notions of those philosophers who allow of transmigration, and are of opinion that the souls of men may, for their miscarriages, be detrued into the bodies of beasts, as fit habitations, with organs suited to the satisfaction of their brutal inclinations. But yet I think nobody, could he be sure that the *soul* of Heliogabalus were in one of his hogs, would yet say that hog were a *man* or *Heliogabalus*.

8. It is not therefore unity of substance that comprehends all sorts of identity, or will determine it in every case; but to conceive and judge of it aright, we must consider what idea the word it is applied to stands for: it being one thing to be the same *substance*, another the same *man*, and a third the same *person*, if *person*, *man*, and *substance*, are three names standing for three different ideas;—for such as is the idea belonging to that name, such must be the identity; which, if it had been a little more carefully attended to, would possibly have prevented a great deal of that confusion which often occurs about this matter, with no small seeming difficulties, especially concerning *personal* identity, which therefore we shall in the next place a little consider.

9. An animal is a living organized body; and consequently the same animal, as we have observed, is the same continued *life* communicated to different particles of matter, as they happen successively to be united to that organized living body. And whatever is talked of other definitions, ingenious observation puts it past doubt, that the idea in our minds, of which the sound man in our mouths is the sign, is nothing else but of an animal of such a certain form. Since I think I may be confident, that, whoever should see a creature of his own shape

¹ 'Body and shape,' as well as self-consciousness, being, he assumes, included in the ordinary connotation of 'man,' it is argued that if the consciousness of any man were transferred to the organism of a horse or a dog, so that its body became his body, and

its motions were determined by his volitions, we could not, in propriety of speech, apply the name *man* to the living being thus endowed with a human consciousness, but in 'body and shape,' a horse or a dog.

BOOK II.
 CHAP.
 XXVII.

Idea of
 Identity
 suited to
 the Idea
 it is ap-
 plied to.

Same man.

BOOK II. or make, though it had no more reason all its life than a cat
 CHAP. or a parrot, would call him still a *man*; or whoever should
 XXVII. hear a cat or a parrot discourse, reason, and philosophize,
 would call or think it nothing but a *cat* or a *parrot*; and say,
 the one was a dull irrational man, and the other a very intelli-
 gent rational parrot. [1 A relation we have in an author of
 great note², is sufficient to countenance the supposition of
 a rational parrot. His words are:

A rational
 Parrot.

'I had a mind to know, from Prince Maurice's own mouth,
 the account of a common, but much credited story, that I
 had heard so often from many others, of an old parrot he
 had in Brazil, during his government there, that spoke, and
 asked, and answered common questions, like a reasonable
 creature: so that those of his train there generally concluded
 it to be witchery or possession; and one of his chaplains,
 who lived long afterwards in Holland, would never from
 that time endure a parrot, but said they all had a devil in
 them. I had heard many particulars of this story, and
 assevered by people hard to be discredited, which made me
 ask Prince Maurice what there was of it. He said, with
 his usual plainness and dryness in talk, there was something
 true, but a great deal false of what had been reported. I
 desired to know of him what there was of the first. He told
 me short and coldly, that he had heard of such an old parrot
 when he had been at Brazil; and though he believed nothing
 of it, and it was a good way off, yet he had so much curiosity
 as to send for it: that it was a very great and a very old one;
 and when it came first into the room where the prince was,
 with a great many Dutchmen about him, it said presently,
What a company of white men are here! They asked it, what

¹ What follows within brackets was added in the fourth edition.

² Sir William Temple, in his *Memoirs of what passed in Christendom from 1672 to 1679*, p. 66. See Stewart's *Elements*, vol. iii. note H, for remarks on this story, of which he says that 'it must have left a deep impression on the memory of all who have ever read Locke's *Essay*,' adding that 'more than one of his professed admirers

seemed to recollect little else which they had learned from that work than the story of this parrot.' The story is omitted in the French version of the *Essay*. If we met with an animal in outward appearance a parrot, but possessed of all intellectual and moral faculties supposed to be characteristic of man, should we name that animal a *parrot* or a *man*? This is a verbal question of arbitrary definition.

it thought that man was, pointing to the prince. It answered, *Some General or other*. When they brought it close to him, he asked it, *D'où venez-vous?* It answered, *De Marinnan*. The Prince, *À qui estes-vous?* The parrot, *À un Portugais*. The Prince, *Que fais-tu là?* Parrot, *Je garde les poules*. The Prince laughed, and said, *Vous gardez les poules?* The parrot answered, *Oui, moi; et je sçai bien faire*¹; and made the chuck four or five times that people use to make to chickens when they call them. I set down the words of this worthy dialogue in French, just as Prince Maurice said them to me. I asked him in what language the parrot spoke, and he said in Brazilian. I asked whether he understood Brazilian; he said No, but he had taken care to have two interpreters by him, the one a Dutchman that spoke Brazilian, and the other a Brazilian that spoke Dutch; that he asked them separately and privately, and both of them agreed in telling him just the same thing that the parrot had said. I could not but tell this odd story, because it is so much out of the way, and from the first hand, and what may pass for a good one; for I dare say this Prince at least believed himself in all he told me, having ever passed for a very honest and pious man: I leave it to naturalists to reason, and to other men to believe, as they please upon it; however, it is not, perhaps, amiss to relieve or enliven a busy scene sometimes with such digressions. whether to the purpose or no.'

10. I have taken care that the reader should have the Same man.
 story at large in the author's own words, because he seems to me not to have thought it incredible; for it cannot be imagined that so able a man as he, who had sufficiency enough to warrant all the testimonies he gives of himself, should take so much pains, in a place where it had nothing to do, to pin so close, not only a man whom he mentions as his friend, but on a Prince in whom he acknowledges

¹ The parrot was asked, 'Whence come ye?' It replied, 'From Marinnan.' The Prince asked, 'To whom do you belong?' The parrot replied, 'To a Portuguese.' 'What do you there?' asked the Prince. The parrot

answered, 'I look after the chickens.' The Prince laughed, and said, 'You look after the chickens?' The parrot answered, 'Yes, I; and I know well enough how to do it.'

BOOK II. very great honesty and piety, a story which, if he himself
 CHAP. thought incredible, he could not but also think ridiculous¹.
 XXVII. The Prince, it is plain, who vouches this story, and our
 author, who relates it from him, both of them call this talker
 a parrot: and I ask any one else who thinks such a story
 fit to be told, whether, if this parrot, and all of its kind,
 had always talked, as we have a prince's word for it this
 one did,—whether, I say, they would not have passed for
 a race of *rational animals*; but yet, whether, for all that,
 they would have been allowed to be men, and not *parrots*?]
 For I presume it is not the idea of a thinking or rational
 being alone that makes the *idea of a man* in most people's
 sense: but of a body, so and so shaped, joined to it; and if
 that be the idea of a man, the same successive body not
 shifted all at once, must, as well as the same immaterial
 spirit, go to the making of the same man.

Personal
 Identity.

II. This being premised, to find wherein personal identity
 consists, we must consider what *person* stands for;—which,
 I think, is a thinking intelligent being², that has reason and
 reflection, and can consider itself as itself, the same thinking
 thing, in different times and places; which it does only by
 that consciousness³ which is inseparable from thinking, and,

¹ 'That Locke did not give this story of the rational parrot much credit,' says Stewart, 'may be presumed from the cautious scepticism with which he expresses himself—a scepticism greater than might have been expected from that credulity in the admission of extraordinary facts, of which he has given so many proofs in the first Book of his *Essay*, and which seems to have been the chief defect in his intellectual character.' Leibniz describes a dog heard by him to converse with his master in articulate language. Stewart suggests that this phenomenon might probably be explained, 'by supposing the master of the dog to have possessed that peculiar species of imitative power which is called *ventriloquism*.' The spectacle

of a rational parrot, or a rational dog, 'would be,' Stewart adds, 'in an extreme degree offensive and painful; and it is so in some degree merely when presented to the imagination.' But why should one look with 'horror' at an animal differing in shape very widely from ourselves, but possessing similar powers of reason and speech? What is 'offensive' in the idea of the number of rational and responsible agents on this planet being greater than we had supposed?

² '*Being and substance* in this place stand for the same idea.' (Butler.)

³ To the French version the following note on 'consciousness' (*conscience*) is appended: 'Le mot Anglais est *consciousness*, qu'on pourroit exprimer en Latin par celui de *conscientia*, si su-

BOOK II. as it seems to me, essential to it: it being impossible for
 CHAP. any one to perceive without *perceiving* that he does perceive.
 XXVII. When we see, hear, smell, taste, feel, meditate, or will anything,
 we know that we do so. Thus it is always as to our present
 sensations and perceptions: and by this every one is to him-
 self that which he calls *self*:—it not being considered, in this
 case, whether the same self be continued in the same or
 divers substances. For, since consciousness always accom-
 panies thinking, and it is that which makes every one to be
 what he calls *self*¹, and thereby distinguishes himself from all
 other thinking things, in this alone consists personal identity²,
 i.e. the sameness of a rational being: and as far as this
 consciousness can be extended backwards to any past action
 or thought, so far reaches the identity of that person³; it
 is the same self now it was then; and it is by the same self
 with this present one that now reflects on it, that that action
 was done⁴.

matur pro actu illo hominis qui *sibi est* conscius. Et c'est en ce sens que les Latins ont souvent employé ce mot, témoin cet endroit de Cicéron (*Epist. Lib. vi. Epist. 4*). En François nous n'avons à nos avis que les mots de *sentiment* et de *conviction* qui respondent en quelque sorte à cette idée. Mais, en plusieurs endroits de ce chapitre, ils ne peuvent qu'exprimer fort imperfectement la pensée de M. Locke.' The term 'consciousness,' in the sense of apprehension by the *ego* of its operations and other states as its own, came into use in the seventeenth century, among the Cartesians and in Locke, who sometimes confuses direct consciousness with the reflex act in which self is *explicitly* recognised. Although recently in almost as constant use with some psychologists as the term 'idea' is with Locke, 'consciousness,' so often introduced in this chapter, hardly occurs in any other part of the *Essay*. See, however, ch. i. §§ 10-19.

¹ 'Self consciousness,' says Ferrier, 'creates the *ego*'—'a being makes itself I by thinking itself I.' Locke and

Ferrier so far regard the *cogito* as the presupposition of the *sum*, instead of the *sum* as presupposed in the *cogito*; but in the *Essay* the presupposition refers to the order of experience, according to which our idea of continued identity of person is formed.

² That is, any positive idea we have of what identity of person means is that given in memory.

³ Here identity of person is limited to what is remembered—potentially as well as actually (!) 'Wherein,' asks Berkeley, 'consists identity of person? Not in *actual* consciousness; for then I am not the same person I was this day twelvemonth, but only while I think of what I then did. Not in *potential*; for then all persons may be the same, for ought we know.' (*C.P.B. Works*, vol. iv. p. 48r.)

⁴ 'All attempts to define personal identity would but perplex it. Yet there is no difficulty at all in ascertaining the *idea*. For as upon two triangles being compared together, there arises to the mind the idea of *similitude*; or upon twice two and four

10. But it is further inquired, whether it be the same identical substance. This few would think they had reason to doubt of, if these perceptions, with their consciousness, always remained present in the mind, whereby the same thinking thing would be always consciously present, and, as would be thought, evidently the same to itself. But that which seems to make the difficulty is this, that this consciousness being interrupted always by forgetfulness, there being no moment of our lives wherein we have the whole train of all our past actions before our eyes in one view, but even the best memories losing the sight of one part whilst they are viewing another¹; and we sometimes, and that the greatest part of our lives, not reflecting on our past selves, being intent on our present thoughts, and in sound sleep having no thoughts at all, or at least none with that consciousness which remarks our waking thoughts²,—I say, in all these cases, our consciousness being interrupted, and we losing the sight of our past selves, doubts are raised whether we are the same thinking thing, i.e. the same *substance* or no. Which, however reasonable or unreasonable, concerns not *personal* identity at all. The question being what makes the same person; and not whether it be the same identical substance, which always thinks in the same person, which, in this case, matters not at all: different substances, by the same consciousness (where they do partake in it) being united into one person, as well as different bodies by the same life are united into one animal, whose identity is preserved in that change of substances by the unity of one continued life³. For, it being the

the idea of *equality*; so likewise upon comparing the consciousness of oneself in any two moments, there as immediately arises to the mind the idea of *personal identity*. . . . By reflecting on that which is myself now, and that which was myself twenty years ago, I *discern* that they are not two, but one and the same self. (Bp. Butler, *Dissertation on Personal Identity*.) And it is the 'idea,' or 'what makes personal identity to ourselves'

that Locke is concerned with, in this Book, which deals with ideas, not with knowledge.

¹ Cf. ch. x. § 9.

² Cf. ch. i. §§ 10-17.

³ In thus pressing a distinction between identity of *substance* and identity of *person*, he seeks to show that the latter is independent of the former, and that the personality is continuous as far as memory (latent as well as patent?) can go, whatever changes of

same consciousness that makes a man be himself to himself, personal identity depends on that only¹, whether it be annexed solely to one individual substance, or can be continued in a succession of several substances². For as far as any intelligent being *can* repeat the idea of any past action with the same consciousness it had of it at first, and with the same consciousness it has of any present action; so far it is the same personal self. For it is by the consciousness it has of its present thoughts and actions, that it is *self to itself* now, and so will be the same self, as far as the same consciousness can extend to actions past or to come³; and would be by distance of time, or change of substance, no more two persons, than a man be two men by wearing other clothes to-day than he did yesterday, with a long or a short sleep between: the same consciousness uniting those distant

annexed bodily or spiritual substances may take place; especially if (as he elsewhere suggests) the substance of a man is perhaps 'material'—as it may 'have pleased God to make' consciousness one of the qualities or powers of organised matter. All that is essential to the idea of personal identity is, that memory *can* bridge over the apparent interruptions in self-conscious life, whatever substance may be united with that life.

¹ Here 'depends on,' not 'is constituted by,' as in other passages. It is the *terms* which contribute to the relation of personal identity—i. e. self now, and self in the past—in which this relation 'terminates,' that Locke has in view. As to our conviction of the identity of those terms, Butler remarks, 'But though we are certain that we are the same agents, living beings, or substances, now, which we were as far back as our remembrance reaches; yet it is asked whether we may not be deceived in it? And this question may be asked at the end of any demonstration whatever; because it is a question concerning the truth of

perception by memory. And he who can doubt whether *perception by memory* may in this case be depended upon, may doubt also whether *perception by deduction and reasoning* which also include memory, or indeed whether *intuitive perception* can. Here then we can go no further. For it is ridiculous to attempt to prove the truth of those perceptions, whose truth we can no otherwise prove than by other perceptions of exactly the same kind with them, and which there is just the same ground to suspect.' (*Dissertation on Personal Identity*.)

² As in a change from the 'natural body' to a 'spiritual body'—the person, and his accountability for his past conscious experience, remaining unchanged.

³ Making itself the same by its memory of itself, and thus in memory *creating*, and not merely discovering, itself—if the expressions in the text are strictly interpreted; the thinking substance 'contributing to the production' of the successive acts, which acts memory 'unites' in one person. (Cf. p. 415, note 2.)

BOOK II. actions into the same person, whatever substances¹ contributed to their production².

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Personal
Identity in
Change of
Sub-
stance.

11. That this is so, we have some kind of evidence in our very bodies, all whose particles, whilst vitally united to this same thinking conscious self, so that *we feel* when they are touched, and are affected by, and conscious of good or harm that happens to them, are a part of ourselves; i. e. of our thinking conscious self. Thus, the limbs of his body are to every one a part of himself; he sympathizes and is concerned for them. Cut off a hand, and thereby separate it from that consciousness he had of its heat, cold, and other affections, and it is then no longer a part of that which is himself, any more than the remotest part of matter. Thus, we see the *substance* whereof personal self consisted at one time may be varied at another, without the change of personal identity; there being no question about the same person, though the limbs which but now were a part of it, be cut off³.

Person-
ality in
Change of
Sub-
stance.

12. But the question is, Whether if the same substance which thinks be changed, it can be the same person; or, remaining the same, it can be different persons?

And to this I answer: First, This can be no question at all to those who place thought in a purely material animal constitution, void of an immaterial substance. For, whether

¹ 'change of substance,' e. g. by transmigration into another body—'whatever substances'—whatever organised body, or other substance.

² Can the *same personality*—accountability—be 'annexed' to *two or more substances*, which all contribute to the production of the memory by which the personality is constituted?

³ 'Je suis aussi de cette opinion, que la conscience, ou le sentiment du moi, *prouve* une identité morale ou personnelle. Je ne voudrais point dire que l'*identité personnelle* et même le *soi* ne demeurent point en nous, et que je ne suis point le *moi* qui ait été dans le berceau, sous prétexte que je ne me souviens plus de rien de tout ce que j'ai fait alors. Il suffit,

pour trouver l'identité morale par soi-même, qu'il y ait une *moyenne liaison de consociété* d'un état voisin, ou même un peu éloigné à l'autre, quand quelque saut ou intervalle oublié y serait mêlé.' (Leibniz.) When Locke makes personal, i. e. moral identity depend on memory, this may include *potential memory*, in which our whole past conscious experience is possibly retained; and when he suggests the transmigration of one man's memory into the bodies of other men, or even of brutes, this may be taken as an emphatic illustration of the essential dependence of the idea of our personality upon self-consciousness *only*, but not as affirming that this transmigration actually occurs under the present order of things.

their supposition be true or no, it is plain they conceive personal identity preserved in something else than identity of substance; as animal identity is preserved in identity of life, and not of substance¹. And therefore those who place thinking in an immaterial substance only, before they can come to deal with these men, must show why personal identity cannot be preserved in the change of immaterial substances, or variety of particular immaterial substances, as well as animal identity is preserved in the change of material substances, or variety of particular bodies: unless they will say, it is one immaterial spirit that makes the same life in brutes, as it is one immaterial spirit that makes the same person in men; which the Cartesians at least will not admit, for fear of making brutes thinking things too.

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13. But next, as to the first part of the question, Whether, if the same thinking substance (supposing immaterial substances only to think) be changed, it can be the same person? I answer, that cannot be resolved but by those who know what kind of substances they are that do think²; and whether the consciousness of past actions can be transferred from one thinking substance to another³. I grant were the same consciousness the same individual action it could not: but it being a present representation of a past action, why it may not be possible, that that may be represented to the mind to have been which really never was, will remain to be shown. And therefore how far the consciousness of past actions is annexed to any individual agent, so that another

Whether
in Change
of think-
ing Sub-
stances
there can
be one
Person.

¹ The animal organism is continually changing its particles, and this, according to Locke, is change of the 'material substance.' Consciousness that he is the same *person*, cannot be consciousness that he is the same *substance*, to one who makes his body his substance.

² He maintains (ch. xxiii. §§ 5, 15, &c.) that we have as clear (or as obscure) an idea of what spiritual substances are as of material substances.

³ How does Locke thus distinguish the spiritual substance from the self

that is given in consciousness? Is not a person a spiritual substance manifested? Here again he uses words which seem to imply that a substance, material or spiritual, is one thing, and its manifestations of itself another and different thing, by which too the substance is concealed rather than revealed. But is not our idea of personality rather the highest form in which substance can be conceived by us? On this subject see Lotze's *Metaphysics*, Bk. III. ch. i. *passim*, especially the reference to Kant, § 244.

BOOK II. cannot possibly have it, will be hard for us to determine, till
 →→→ we know what kind of action it is that cannot be done with-
 CHAP. out a reflex act of perception accompanying it, and how per-
 XXVII. formed by thinking substances, who cannot think without
 being conscious of it. But that which we call the same
 consciousness, not being the same individual act, why one
 intellectual substance may not have represented to it, as done
 by itself, what *it* never did, and was perhaps done by some
 other agent—why, I say, such a representation may not
 possibly be without reality of matter of fact, as well as
 several representations in dreams are, which yet whilst
 dreaming we take for true—will be difficult to conclude from
 the nature of things¹. And that it never is so, will by us,
 till we have clearer views of the nature of thinking sub-
 stances, be best resolved into the goodness of God; who, as
 far as the happiness or misery of any of his sensible creatures
 is concerned in it, will not, by a fatal error of theirs, transfer
 from one to another that consciousness which draws reward
 or punishment with it². How far this may be an argument
 against those who would place thinking in a system of fleet-
 ing animal spirits, I leave to be considered. But yet, to
 return to the question before us, it must be allowed, that, if
 the same consciousness (which, as has been shown, is quite
 a different thing from the same numerical figure or motion in
 body) can be transferred from one thinking substance to
 another, it will be possible that two thinking substances may
 make but one person. For the same consciousness being
 preserved, whether in the same or different substances, the
 personal identity is preserved³.

¹ In other words, we cannot be deceived in our presentative, but we may in our representative experience.

² Under the natural order of things, which we are obliged to accept in faith, the identity apparent to the person who feels himself the same, with its implied moral responsibility, is intransferable in fact.

³ 'According to Mr. Locke, we may always be sure that we are the same

persons, that is, the same accountable agents or beings, now which we were as far back as our remembrance reaches: or as far as a perfectly just and good God will cause it to reach.' (Peronet's *Vindication of Locke*, p. 21.) The last clause suggests a conscious revival of the latent stores of memory, which may include all the past experience of the person.

14. As to the second part of the question, Whether the same immaterial substance remaining, there may be two distinct persons; which question seems to me to be built on this,—Whether the same immaterial being, being conscious of the action of its past duration, may be wholly stripped of all the consciousness of its past existence, and lose it beyond the power of ever retrieving it again¹: and so as it were beginning a new account from a new period, have a consciousness that *cannot* reach beyond this new state. All those who hold pre-existence are evidently of this mind; since they allow the soul to have no remaining consciousness of what it did in that pre-existent state, either wholly separate from body, or informing any other body; and if they should not, it is plain experience would be against them². So that personal identity, reaching no further than consciousness³ reaches, a pre-existent spirit not having continued so many ages in a state of silence, must needs make different persons. Suppose a Christian Platonist or a Pythagorean should, upon God's having ended all his works of creation the seventh day, think his soul hath existed ever since; and should imagine it has revolved in several human bodies; as I once met with one, who was persuaded his had been the *soul* of Socrates (how reasonably I will not dispute; this I know, that in the post he filled, which was no inconsiderable one, he passed for a very rational man, and the press has shown that he wanted not parts or learning;)—would any one say, that he, being not conscious of any of Socrates's actions or thoughts, could be the same *person* with Socrates⁴? Let any one reflect upon himself, and conclude that he has in himself an immaterial spirit, which is that which thinks in him, and, in the constant

¹ There being in that case not only no actual, but no potential memory of a past conscious life.

² Hardly so, if the Platonic interpretation of the universal ideas of reason, as reminiscence of what we were conscious of, in a pre-existing state, is taken literally, as rendered in Wordsworth's 'Ode on Intimations of Immortality.'

³ 'Consciousness,' i. e. memory, including its latent possibilities.

⁴ But what if the conscious experience of Socrates, is all the while *latent* in him, and capable of being recollected by him, as on the thread of *his* consciousness? When the recollection occurs, Locke would say, he finds himself the same person who then went under that name. Locke, is satirised in Martinus Scriblerus for his paradoxical illustrations of the idea of personal identity.

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 →→→
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 Whether,
 the same
 immaterial
 Substance
 remaining,
 there can
 be two
 Persons.

change of his body keeps him the same: and is that which he calls *himself*: let him also suppose it to be the same soul that was in Nestor or Thersites, at the siege of Troy, (for souls being, as far as we know anything of them, in their nature indifferent to any parcel of matter, the supposition has no apparent absurdity in it,) which it may have been, as well as it is now the soul of any other man: but he now having no consciousness of any of the actions either of Nestor or Thersites, does or can he conceive himself the same person with either of them? Can he be concerned in either of their actions? attribute them to himself, or think them his own, more than the actions of any other men that ever existed? So that this consciousness, not reaching to any of the actions of either of those men, he is no more one *self* with either of them than if the soul or immaterial spirit that now informs him had been created, and began to exist, when it began to inform his present body; though it were never so true, that the same *spirit* that informed Nestor's or Thersites' body were numerically the same that now informs his¹. For this would no more make him the same person with Nestor, than if some of the particles of matter that were once a part of Nestor were now a part of this man; the same immaterial substance, without the same consciousness, no more making the same person, by being united to any body, than the same particle of matter, without consciousness, united to any body, makes the same person. But let him once find himself conscious of any of the actions of Nestor, he then finds himself the same person with Nestor.

The body, as well as the soul, 15. And thus may we be able, without any difficulty, to conceive the same person at the resurrection², though in a

¹ That is, he cannot have the *idea* of himself now, as one and the same with either of them; being unable, by memory, to connect his present consciousness with theirs. The supposed identity of 'spiritual substance' does not carry with it the idea of personal responsibility for the actions of Nestor, or of Thersites, unless he also finds himself conscious of their actions as

having been once his own. But is memory the only means for testing or discovering one's personal identity?

² One of Stillingfleet's charges against the *Essay* was, that its doctrine regarding personality and personal identity was inconsistent with the Christian doctrine of the resurrection of the body. For sameness of person, in Locke's account of our idea of

body not exactly in make or parts the same which he had here,—the same consciousness going along with the soul that inhabits it. But yet the soul alone, in the change of bodies, would scarce to any one but to him that makes the soul the man, be enough to make the same man. For should the soul of a prince, carrying with it the consciousness of the prince's past life, enter and inform the body of a cobbler, as soon as deserted by his own soul, every one sees he would be the same *person* with the prince, accountable only for the prince's actions: but who would say it was the same *man*? The body too goes to the making the man, and would, I guess, to everybody determine the man in this case, wherein the soul, with all its princely thoughts about it, would not make another man: but he would be the same cobbler to every one besides himself¹. I know that, in the ordinary way of speaking, the same person, and the same man, stand for one and the same thing. And indeed every one will always have a liberty to speak as he pleases, and to apply what articulate sounds to what ideas he thinks fit, and change them as often as he pleases. But yet, when we will inquire what makes the same *spirit*, *man*, or *person*, we must fix the ideas of spirit, man, or person in our minds; and having resolved with ourselves what we mean by them, it will not be hard to determine, in either of them, or the like, when it is the same, and when not².

personal identity, is indifferent to sameness of body. 'My idea of personal identity,' Locke replies, 'makes the same body not to be necessary to making the same person, either here or after death; and even in this life the particles of the bodies of the same persons change every moment, and there is thus no such identity in the *body* as in the *person*.' Moreover, while the resurrection of the dead is revealed in scripture, we find 'no such express words there as that the body shall rise, or the resurrection of the body; and though I do not question that the dead shall be raised with bodies, as matter of revelation, I think

it our duty to keep close to the words of the scripture.' (Cf. Bk. IV. ch. xviii. § 7.) The question of the identity of the risen body, with any or all the ever fluctuating bodies with which the person has been connected in this life, is irrelevant to Christianity.

¹ Because sameness of person is directly revealed only to the person, or spiritual substance, whose identity is in question; but to all others only indirectly, by those visible signs from which we infer the existence and continued identity of other men.

² 'No identity (other than perfect likeness) in any individuals besides

16. But though the same immaterial substance or soul does not alone, wherever it be, and in whatsoever state, make the same man; yet it is plain, consciousness, as far as ever it can be extended—should it be to ages past—unites existences and actions very remote in time into the same person, as well as it does the existences and actions of the immediately preceding moment: so that whatever¹ has the consciousness of present and past actions, is the same person to whom they both belong. Had I the same consciousness that I saw the ark and Noah's flood, as that I saw an overflowing of the Thames last winter, or as that I write now, I could no more doubt that I who write this now, that saw the Thames overflowed last winter, and that viewed the flood at the general deluge, was the same self,—place that self in what substance you please—than that I who write this am the same myself now whilst I write (whether I consist of all the same substance, material or immaterial, or no) that I was yesterday. For as to this point of being the same self, it matters not whether this present self be made up of the same or other substances—I being as much concerned, and as justly accountable² for any action that was done a thousand years since, appropriated to me now by this self-consciousness, as I am for what I did the last moment.

Self de-
pends on

17. *Self* is that conscious thinking thing,—whatever sub-

persons,' says Berkeley (*C. P. B.* p. 486); but by 'person' he means spiritual substance, and not merely (as Locke) a consciousness that is (actually or potentially) aware of its own past, and can more or less anticipate its future.

¹ 'whatever.' Does this mean, whatever *being* or *substance*—as that on which the 'consciousness' depends? 'One should really think it self-evident,' says Bishop Butler, 'that consciousness of personal identity presupposes, and therefore cannot constitute, personal identity, any more than knowledge in any other case can constitute the reality which it presupposes.' But the presented facts in

which the presuppositions of reason are primarily embodied are, throughout the *Essay*, always apt to throw in the background the metaphysical presuppositions which they imply. Concrete examples supersede their principles. Locke prefers the practical consideration of particular facts given in consciousness to elaboration of abstract theories about their 'substance.'

² 'Accountability' is with Locke a criterion of personality. We are 'persons' only in respect to what is necessary for this. Person is a 'forensic term.' (Cf. § 26.) It does not mean a man, or any other living agent, merely as such, but only an ego that actually (or potentially?) appropriates

stance made up of, (whether spiritual or material, simple or compounded, it matters not)—which is sensible or conscious of pleasure and pain, capable of happiness or misery, and so is concerned for itself, as far as that consciousness extends¹. Thus every one finds that, whilst comprehended under that consciousness, the little finger is as much a part of himself as what is most so. Upon separation of this little finger, should this consciousness go along with the little finger, and leave the rest of the body, it is evident the little finger would be the person, the same person; and self then would have nothing to do with the rest of the body. As in this case it is the consciousness that goes along with the substance, when one part is separate² from another, which makes the same person, and constitutes this inseparable self: so it is in reference to substances remote in time. That with which the consciousness of this present thinking thing *can* join itself, makes the same person, and is one self with it, and with nothing else; and so attributes to itself, and owns all the actions of that thing³, as its own, as far as that consciousness reaches, and no further; as every one who reflects will perceive⁴.

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Con-
scious-
ness, not
on Sub-
stance.

18. In this personal identity is founded all the right and justice of reward and punishment; happiness and misery being that for which every one is concerned for *himself*, and not mattering what becomes of any *substance*, not joined to, or affected with that consciousness. For, as it is evident in the instance I gave but now, if the consciousness went along with the little finger when it was cut off, that⁵ would be the

Persons,
not Sub-
stances,
the
Objects of
Reward
and
Punish-
ment.

past actions. No being that is not capable of recognising his own past answers this description. So that a madman, though he is living and a man, is not, in Locke's forensic sense, a person. For he cannot be justly punished for what the sane man did. Therefore more is necessary to the idea of a person than to the idea of a man; and that, Locke argues, is intelligent recognition of a past as his own past.

¹ What is this but a definition of a *spiritual substance*?

² 'separate,' i. e. in place.

³ 'that thing,' i. e. that substance, whether material or spiritual.

⁴ Facts alleged by physiologists in evidence of inherited memory, through which, under abnormal conditions, a person becomes conscious of acts and thoughts of an ancestor, as his own, are, so far, in analogy with the suggestion that, in a sense, all men may constitute one person.

⁵ 'that,' i. e. that finger-consciousness. Appropriation of organ is with

BOOK II. same self which was concerned for the whole body yesterday, as making part of itself, whose actions then it cannot but admit as its own now. Though, if the same body should still live, and immediately from the separation of the little finger have its own peculiar consciousness, whereof the little finger knew nothing, it would not at all be concerned for it, as a part of itself, or could own any of its actions, or have any of them imputed to him.

Which shows wherein Personal identity consists.

19. This may show us wherein personal identity consists: not in the identity of substance, but, as I have said, in the identity of consciousness, wherein if Socrates and the present mayor of Queinborough agree, they are the same person: if the same Socrates¹ waking and sleeping do not partake of the same consciousness, Socrates waking and sleeping is not the same person. And to punish Socrates waking for what sleeping Socrates thought, and waking Socrates was never conscious of, would be no more of right², than to punish one twin for what his brother-twin did, whereof he knew nothing, because their outsides were so like, that they could not be distinguished; for such twins have been seen.

Absolute oblivion separates what is thus forgotten from the person, but not from the man.

20. But yet possibly it will still be objected,—Suppose I wholly lose the memory of some parts of my life, beyond a possibility of retrieving them, so that perhaps I shall never be conscious of them again; yet am I not the same person that did those actions, had those thoughts that I once was conscious of, though I have now forgot them? To which I answer, that we must here take notice what the word *I* is applied to; which, in this case, is the *man* only. And the same man being presumed to be the same person, *I* is easily here supposed to stand also for the same person. But if it

Locke determined by consciousness. But consciousness, Leibniz remarks, is not the only means of determining the identity of a person. It can be proved, sufficiently for practical purposes, by certain external appearances, which sufficiently signify that the person continues to be the same, as in questions of personal identity in courts of justice.

¹ 'same Socrates,' i.e. the same bodily appearance which signifies the *man* Socrates.

² Because, although outwardly Socrates, he is not really Socrates, either man or person, if the apparent Socrates has ceased to partake of the same 'consciousness.' Disease sometimes deprives persons of consciousness of their identity.

BOOK II. be possible for the same man to have distinct incommunicable consciousness at different times¹, it is past doubt the same man would at different times make different persons; which, we see, is the sense of mankind in the solemnest declaration of their opinions, human laws not punishing the mad man for the sober man's actions, nor the sober man for what the mad man did,—thereby making them two persons: which is somewhat explained by our way of speaking in English when we say such an one is 'not himself,' or is 'beside himself'; in which phrases it is insinuated, as if those who now, or at least first used them, thought that self was changed; the self-same person was no longer in that man.

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21. But yet it is hard to conceive that Socrates, the same individual man, should be two persons. To help us a little in this, we must consider what is meant by Socrates, or the same individual *man*.

Difference between Identity of Man and of Person.

First, it must be either the same individual, immaterial, thinking substance; in short, the same numerical soul, and nothing else.

Secondly, or the same animal, without any regard to an immaterial soul.

Thirdly, or the same immaterial spirit united to the same animal.

Now, take which of these suppositions you please, it is impossible to make personal identity to consist in anything but consciousness; or reach any further than that does.

For, by the first of them, it must be allowed possible that a man born of different women, and in distant times, may be the same man². A way of speaking which, whoever admits, must allow it possible for the same man to be two distinct persons, as any two that have lived in different ages without the knowledge of one another's thoughts.

By the second and third, Socrates, in this life and after it, cannot be the same man any way, but by the same consciousness³; and so making human identity to consist in the same

¹ For curious cases of double, and of alternate personality, see James's *Psychology*, vol. i. pp. 379-92.

stance might conceivably be joined to the different organisms.

² Because the same thinking sub-

³ Because the animal organism is changed.

BOOK II. thing wherein we place personal identity, there will be no
 →→→ difficulty to allow the same man to be the same person. But
 CHAP. then they who place human identity in consciousness only,
 XXVII. and not in something else, must consider how they will make
 the infant Socrates the same man with Socrates after the
 resurrection¹. But whatsoever to some men makes a man,
 and consequently the same individual man, wherein perhaps
 few are agreed, personal identity can by us be placed in
 nothing but consciousness, (which is that alone which makes
 what we call *self*;) without involving us in great absurdities².

22. But is not a man drunk and sober the same person?
 why else is he punished for the fact he commits when

¹ This sentence may have suggested the following by Sir James Mackintosh:—'When the mind is purified from gross notions, it is evident that belief in a future state can no longer rest on the merely selfish idea of preserving its own individuality. When we make a further progress, it becomes indifferent whether the *same* individuals who now inhabit the universe, or others who do not yet exist, are to reach that superior degree of virtue and happiness of which human nature seems to be capable. The object of desire is, the quantity of virtue and happiness, not the identical beings who are to act and enjoy. Even those who distinctly believe in the continued existence (after death) of their fellow men are unable to pursue their opinion through its consequences. The dissimilarity between Socrates at his death, and Socrates in a future state, ten thousand years after death, is so very great, that to call these two beings by the same name is rather consequence of the imperfection of language than of exact views in philosophy. There is no practical identity. The Socrates of Elysium can feel no interest in recollecting what befel the Socrates at Athens. He is infinitely more removed from his former state than Newton was in this world from his infancy.' (*Life*, vol. ii. p. 120.) But

is this so, if the thread of self-consciousness is still maintained, and perhaps with the potential memory transformed into an actual consciousness in which all past experience is revived?

² According to Locke, our idea of the identity of a *man* includes participation in the same life by constantly changing particles of matter. Our idea of the identity of a *person*, on the other hand, is *independent of particles of matter, organised or unorganised*; and involves only a conception of the self-conscious being or person as the same, *as far back as memory extends*, and without implying that connection with the same material or other substance is also continued. The same person might thus be incarnated in succession in a series of bodies. Locke's curious speculations on identity of person may have suggested to Jonathan Edwards his paradoxical vindication of the responsibility of all men for Adam's sin, on the ground that *personality is a consciousness arbitrarily sustained, by divine will, in a constant creation, so that all men, by divine appointment might make one person, all thus, in a revived consciousness, participating in the act by which mankind rebelled against God.* (See Edwards on *Original Sin*.) (Cf. p. 415, note 2.

drunk, though he be never afterwards conscious of it? Just as much the same person as a man that walks, and does other things in his sleep, is the same person, and is answerable for any mischief he shall do in it. Human laws punish both, with a justice suitable to *their* way of knowledge;—because, in these cases, they cannot distinguish certainly what is real, what counterfeit: and so the ignorance in drunkenness or sleep is not admitted as a plea. [¹For, though punishment be annexed to personality, and personality to consciousness, and the drunkard perhaps be not conscious of what he did, yet human judicatures justly punish him; because the fact is proved against him, but want of consciousness cannot be proved for him².] But in the Great Day, wherein the secrets of all hearts shall be laid open, it may be reasonable

¹ Added in fourth edition.

² 'A man may be punished for any crime which he committed when drunk, *whereof he is not conscious.*' Locke allows, in reply to an objection of Molyneux to the statement in the text, that if a man may be justly punished for a crime committed when he was drunk, his theory of personal identity fails. 'You doubt whether my answer be full in the case of the drunkard. To try whether it be or no, we must consider what I am there doing. As I remember (for I have not that chapter here by me) I am there showing that *punishment* is annexed to *personality*, and *personality* to *consciousness*: how then can a drunkard be punished for what he did whereof he is not conscious? To this I answer: human judicatures justly punish him, because the *fact* is proved against him; but *want of consciousness* cannot be proved for him. This you think not sufficient, but would have me add the common reason,—that drunkenness being a crime, one crime cannot be alleged in excuse for another. This reason, how good soever, cannot I think be used by me, as not reaching my case; for what has this to do with consciousness?

Nay, it is an argument against me; for if a man may be punished for any crime which he committed when drunk, whereof he is allowed not to be conscious, it overturns my hypothesis' (19th Jan. 1694). In reply to this, Molyneux asks (Feb. 17, 1694), 'How it comes to pass that want of consciousness cannot be proved for a drunkard, as well as for a frantic? One methinks is as manifest as the other: if drunkenness may be counterfeit, so may a frenzy. Wherefore to me it seems that the law has made a difference in these two cases, on this account, viz. that drunkenness is commonly incurred voluntarily and premeditatedly; whereas a frenzy is commonly without our consent, or impossible to be prevented.' In the end, Locke replies (May 26, 1694):—'I agree with you that drunkenness, being a voluntary defect, want of consciousness ought not to be presumed in favour of the drunkard. But frenzy, being involuntary and a misfortune, not a fault, has a right to that excuse, which certainly is a just one, where it is truly a frenzy. And all that lies upon human justice is, to distinguish carefully between what is real, and what counterfeit in the case.'

BOOK II. to think, no one shall be made to answer for what he knows
 CHAP. nothing of; but shall receive his doom, his conscience accusing
 XXVII. or excusing him¹.

Con- 23. Nothing but consciousness can unite remote existences
 sci- into the same person: the identity of substance will not do
 alone it; for whatever substance there is, however framed, without
 unites consciousness there is no person: and a carcass may be a
 remote person, as well as any sort of substance be so, without
 existences consciousness.
 into one Person.

Could we suppose two distinct incommunicable consci-
 ences acting the same body, the one constantly by day, the
 other by night; and, on the other side, the same consci-
 ousness, acting by intervals, two distinct bodies: I ask, in the
 first case, whether the day and the night—man would not be
 two as distinct persons as Socrates and Plato? And whether,
 in the second case, there would not be one person in two dis-
 tinct bodies, as much as one man is the same in two dis-
 tinct clothings? Nor is it at all material to say, that this
 same, and this distinct consciousness, in the cases above
 mentioned, is owing to the same and distinct immaterial
 substances, bringing it with them to those bodies; which,
 whether true or no, alters not the case: since it is evident
 the personal identity would equally be determined by the
 consciousness, whether that consciousness were annexed to
 some individual immaterial substance or no. For, granting
 that the thinking substance in man must be necessarily sup-
 posed immaterial, it is evident that immaterial thinking thing
 may sometimes part with its past consciousness, and be re-
 stored to it again: as appears in the forgetfulness men often
 have of their past actions; and the mind many times recovers
 the memory of a past consciousness, which it had lost for
 twenty years together. Make these intervals of memory and
 forgetfulness to take their turns regularly by day and night,
 and you have two persons with the same immaterial spirit,

¹ His accountability depending upon
 the possibility of awakening his latent
 memory of all that he was ever
 conscious of; which is thus capable
 of being brought out of latency, so as

to become, as suggested by Coleridge,
 the Book of Judgment, 'in the mys-
 terious hieroglyphics of which every
 idle word is recorded.'

BOOK II. as much as in the former instance two persons with the same
 CHAP. body. So that self is not determined by identity or diversity
 XXVII. of substance, which it cannot be sure of¹, but only by iden-
 tity of consciousness.

24. Indeed it may conceive the substance whereof it is
 now made up to have existed formerly, united in the same
 conscious being: but, consciousness removed, that substance
 is no more itself, or makes no more a part of it, than any
 other substance; as is evident in the instance we have already
 given of a limb cut off, of whose heat, or cold, or other affec-
 tions, having no longer any consciousness, it is no more of
 a man's self than any other matter of the universe. In like
 manner it will be in reference to any immaterial substance,
 which is void of that consciousness whereby I am myself to
 myself: [² if there be any part of its existence which] I cannot
 upon recollection join with that present consciousness whereby
 I am now myself, it is, in that part of its existence, no more
myself than any other immaterial being. For, whatsoever
 any substance has thought or done, which I cannot recollect,
 and by my consciousness make my own thought and action,
 it will no more belong to me, whether a part of me³ thought
 or did it, than if it had been thought or done by any other
 immaterial being anywhere existing.

25. I agree, the more probable opinion is, that this con-
 sciousness is annexed to, and the affection of, one individual
 immaterial substance⁴.

But let men, according to their diverse hypotheses, resolve
 of that as they please. This every intelligent being, sensible of
 happiness or misery, must grant—that there is something that

BOOK II. Not the
 CHAP. substance
 XXVII. with
 which the
 conscious-
 ness
 may be
 united.

Conscious-
 ness unites
 substances,
 material or
 spiritual,
 with the
 same per-
 sonality.

¹ Locke cannot mean, by this hu-
 morous illustration, to suggest the
 probability of a double personality in
 the same body being ever exemplified
 in fact, which would be a 'fatal error'
 (§ 13), God thereby putting our reason
 to confusion.

² 'so that,' in second edition.

³ I. e. my substance.

⁴ Is it only 'probable' that in 'con-
 sciousness' the spiritual substance is

manifesting itself to itself? Berkeley,
 on the other hand, sees in 'persons' the
only substances—personality and sub-
 stantiality being identified. 'Nothing
 properly but persons, i. e. conscious
 things, do exist. All other things are
 not so much (independent?) existences
 as modes of the existence of persons.'
 (C. P. B. p. 469.) In this philosophy
 personality and its identity is the
 ultimate basis of all actual existence.

BOOK II. is *himself*, that he is concerned for, and would have happy; that this self has existed in a continued duration more than one instant, and therefore it is possible may exist, as it has done, months and years to come, without any certain bounds to be set to its duration; and may be the same self, by the same consciousness continued on for the future. And thus, by this consciousness he finds himself to be the same self which did such and such an action some years since, by which he comes to be happy or miserable now. In all which account of self, the same numerical *substance* is not considered as making the same self; but the same continued *consciousness*, in which several substances may have been united, and again separated from it, which, whilst they continued in a vital union with that wherein this consciousness then resided, made a part of that same self. Thus any part of our bodies, vitally united to that which is conscious in us, makes a part of ourselves: but upon separation from the vital union by which that consciousness is communicated, that which a moment since was part of ourselves, is now no more so than a part of another man's self is a part of me: and it is not impossible but in a little time may become a real part of another person. And so we have the same numerical substance become a part of two different persons; and the same person preserved under the change of various substances. Could we suppose any spirit¹ wholly stripped of all its memory or consciousness of past actions², as we find our minds always are of a great part of ours, and sometimes of them all³; the union or separation of such a spiritual substance would make no variation of personal identity, any more than that of any particle of matter does. Any substance vitally united to the present thinking being is a part of that very same self which now is; anything united to it by a consciousness of former actions, makes also a part of the same self, which is the same both then and now.

Person a forensic Term.

26. *Person*, as I take it, is the name for this self. Wherever a man finds what he calls himself, there, I think, another

¹ Spirit, i. e. spiritual substance.

patent nor latent in memory.

² So that its past actions were all incapable of being recollected—neither

³ For a time, e. g. in sleep.

may say is the same person¹. It is a forensic term, appropriating actions and their merit; and so belongs only to intelligent agents, capable of a law, and happiness, and misery. This personality extends itself beyond present existence to what is past, only by consciousness,—whereby it becomes concerned and accountable; owns and imputes to itself past actions, just upon the same ground and for the same reason as it does the present². All which is founded in a concern for happiness, the unavoidable concomitant of consciousness; that which is conscious of pleasure and pain, desiring that that self that is conscious should be happy. And therefore whatever past actions it cannot reconcile or *appropriate* to that present self by consciousness, it can be no more concerned in than if they had never been done: and to receive pleasure or pain, i. e. reward or punishment, on the account of any such action, is all one as to be made happy or miserable

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¹ Throughout this discussion, what Locke means by 'person' must be kept in view. If person means the living agent, or the man, then appropriation of past actions by present consciousness is not necessary to sameness of personality; since they are the same living agents, whether conscious or not of past and present actions. But a 'person' with Locke means an agent who is *accountable for past actions*. Although present 'appropriation' by consciousness of past actions is not implied in a living agent, it is necessary, according to the *Essay*, to our being persons, i. e. the proper objects of reward or punishment on account of them. If a man is not justly responsible for a past act, he is not the *person* by whom it was done, although he is the *man* or *living agent* through whom it was done; as no man can justly be punished for an action that cannot be brought home to his consciousness and conscience, as in a Book of Judgment. We are thus responsible only for voluntary actions which can by consciousness be appro-

priated to ourselves; consciousness uniting the most distant actions in one and the same personality. Consciousness that I am the same *person* cannot, Locke would say, be consciousness that I am the same *substance*, to any one who makes his body his substance. In short, we need not, he implies, for determining personality, embarrass ourselves with subtle questions about 'substances': they are irrelevant to the practical certainty that we are the same accountable agents, as far back as our remembrance of actions *as ours* can be made to reach, by a just and good God. Cf. § II.

² The character of the self in former times and places, as it appears in the memory, is thereby appropriated, i. e. *personified*. The name 'person' (*persona*) was given originally to the mask worn by actors, through the mouthplace of which the voice sent forth its sounds (*personuif*); then to the mask itself; to the wearer of it, the actor; to the character acted; and at last to any assumed character.

BOOK II. in its first being¹, without any demerit at all. For, supposing
 CHAP. a *man* punished now for what he had done in another life,
 XXVII. whereof he could be made to have no consciousness at all, what difference is there between that punishment and being *created* miserable²? And therefore, conformable to this, the apostle tells us, that, at the great day, when every one shall 'receive according to his doings, the secrets of all hearts shall be laid open.' The sentence shall be justified by the consciousness all persons shall have, that *they themselves*, in what bodies soever they appear, or what substances soever that consciousness adheres to, are the *same* that committed those actions, and deserve that punishment for them³.

Suppositions that look are strange pardonable in our ignorance.

27. I am apt enough to think I have, in treating of this subject, made some suppositions that will look strange to some readers, and possibly they are so in themselves⁴. But yet, I think they are such as are pardonable, in this ignorance we are in of the nature of that thinking thing that is in us, and which we look on as *ourselves*⁵. Did we know what it

¹ 'first being,' i. e. inasmuch as he could not *personify*, or appropriate them to himself, as *formerly* his.

² The past consciousness having been finally or for ever obliterated. This implies that his own consciousness in memory is the only means by which he could in reason be satisfied that the action was his.

³ See § 18, in which it is implied that a murderer for example is not accountable for a murder of which his organism was the instrument, if a consciousness of it, as his own past act, *cannot* be awakened in him! It follows (unless conscious experience is ultimately indelible) that any man who has forgotten that he committed a murder, did not *personally* commit it. Who, in that case, was the murderer?

⁴ They called forth a host of critics, Sergeant, Stillingfleet, Lee, Clarke in controversy with Collins, Butler, and Reid, with Vincent Perronet and others in defence. The main objection is thus

put by Butler:—'One should think it self-evident that consciousness *presupposes*, and cannot *constitute* personal identity.' But Locke, it must be remembered, defines personality from the forensic point of view. He also views its identity as manifested in consciousness, and not in the mystery of its ultimate constitution, the *conscious manifestations* concealing rather than revealing the *substance* on which they depend.

⁵ Cf. Bk. IV. ch. ix.—On our certainty of 'our own existence.' We are apt to take for granted that the idea man can form of his own personality, and that of God, is more adequate to the reality than consists with the necessary limitations of our knowledge. That the personality of men *somewhat* rests on the personality of God is the language of religion, according to which God is all, and man can do nothing that is *good* without God.

was; or how it was tied to a certain system of fleeting animal spirits; or whether it could or could not perform its operations of thinking and memory out of a body organized as ours is; and whether it has pleased God that no one such spirit shall ever be united to any but one such body, upon the right constitution of whose organs its memory should depend; we might see the absurdity of some of those suppositions I have made. But taking, as we ordinarily now do (in the dark concerning these matters,) the soul of a man for an immaterial substance, independent from matter, and indifferent alike to it all; there can, from the nature of things, be no absurdity at all to suppose that the same *soul* may at different times be united to different *bodies*, and with them make up for that time one *man*: as well as we suppose a part of a sheep's body yesterday should be a part of a man's body to-morrow, and in that union make a vital part of Melibœus himself, as well as it did of his ram¹.

28. To conclude: Whatever substance begins to exist, it must, during its existence, necessarily be the same: whatever compositions of substances begin to exist, during the union of those substances, the concrete must be the same: whatsoever mode begins to exist, during its existence it is the same: and so if the composition be of distinct substances and different modes², the same rule holds. Whereby it will appear, that the difficulty or obscurity that has been about this matter rather rises from the names ill-used, than from any obscurity in things themselves. For whatever makes the specific idea to which the name is applied, if that idea be steadily kept to, the distinction of anything into the same and divers will easily be conceived, and there can arise no doubt about it.

29. For, supposing a rational spirit be the idea of a *man*³, Continuance of

¹ In all this the connection between the soul, or the self-conscious person, and the body is assumed to be accidental or contingent; so that the loss of the body by death or otherwise, is irrelevant to the immortality of the soul, or to that continued *appropriation* by consciousness of past experience on which responsibility or

personality depends.

² As in man, supposed to comprehend spiritual and also material substance—soul and body.

³ That is, if we exclude the body, as an accident and not of the essence of man, and mean by 'man' only the soul or 'rational spirit.'

BOOK II. it is easy to know what is the same man, viz. the same spirit—

CHAP. whether separate or in a body—will be the *same man*. Sup-
XXVII. posing a rational spirit vitally united to a body of a certain

that which we have made to be our complex idea of man makes the same man.

conformation of parts to make a man¹; whilst that rational spirit, with that vital conformation of parts, though continued in a fleeting successive body, remains, it will be the *same man*.

But if to any one the idea of a man be but the vital union of parts in a certain shape; as long as that vital union and shape remain in a concrete, no otherwise the same but by a continued succession of fleeting particles, it will be the *same man*.

For, whatever be the composition whereof the complex idea is made, whenever existence makes it one particular thing under any denomination², *the same existence continued* preserves it the *same* individual under the same denomination³.

¹ And this is what Locke means by 'a man.'

² The nominalism of Locke, who is apt to make questions of this sort questions about the meaning of words only, appears in all this.

³ In the foregoing argument, Locke emphatically distinguishes the person from the man, and from the bodily substance. Should we not rather say that it is in his personality and personal agency that *man* finds what is deepest and truest in himself; and, by analogy, in the constitution of the universe? Locke, working from sensation upward, makes his Book of Ideas culminate in the complex idea of our concrete continuous personality, and in the moral relations to which persons ought to conform,—in this and the following chapter. Transcendental philosophy, from Descartes to Hegel, working from thought downward, ends by making abstract self-con-

sciousness the key to the mysteries of existence.

By implication Locke appears to make the idea of our personal existence a simple idea of reflection, which gives its meaning to the personal pronoun 'I,' in the 'perception' that I am. (Cf. Bk. IV. ch. ix.) The idea of our *continuous* personality, or personal identity, is a complex idea of relation between *myself now* and *myself in the past*, which 'terminates,' and is made concrete in actual consciousnesses, past and present. The identity of myself now with myself in the past; and my separateness from all that is not myself, in a private consciousness in which no other finite person can mingle, afford the unique experience of the spirit as distinguished from the mere animal in man. This experience of identical personal life and moral agency is thus the occasion of the most significant ideas in the human mind.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

OF OTHER RELATIONS.

I. BESIDES the before-mentioned occasions of time¹, place, and causality of comparing or referring things one to another, there are, as I have said, infinite others, some whereof I shall mention.

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XXVIII.

Ideas of Proportional relations.

First, The first I shall name is some one simple idea, which, being capable of parts or degrees, affords an occasion of comparing the subjects wherein it is to one another, in respect of that simple idea, v. g. whiter, sweeter, equal, more, &c. These relations depending on the equality and excess of the same simple idea, in several subjects, may be called, if one will, *proportional*; and that these are only conversant about those simple ideas received from sensation or reflection² is so evident that nothing need be said to evince it.

2. Secondly, Another occasion of comparing things together, or considering one thing, so as to include in that consideration some other thing³, is the circumstances of their origin or beginning; which being not afterwards to be altered, make the relations depending thereon as lasting as the subjects to which they belong, v. g. father and son, brothers, cousins-germans, &c., which have their relations by one community of blood, wherein they partake in several degrees: countrymen, i. e. those who were born in the same country or tract

Natural relation.

¹ Our idea of 'personal identity' is with Locke our idea of a relation which arises under difference of time.

² That is, the abstract relation can be embodied or made concrete only in phenomena of which we

become aware through sensation or reflection.

³ An 'idea of relation' thus means a complex idea of one thing, regarded as including some idea of another thing; or of itself at another time or place.