

The Apostacy of Man demonstrated from the existence
of natural Evils in the present age.

The time is now come, when an individual attempt
to vindicate any opinion, which meets with general appro-
bation, & which is pleasing to the feelings of his auditors
unanimously, almost any thing will serve for solid
argument. But not so when contending with their
Judgments, he has to overcome their pre-conceived inclina-
tions or false notions.

The opinion or rather the Truth, now under consider-
ation, however unpleasant, is one, ~~into~~ the evidence of
which are so great & so conclusive that they hardly join
for absolute belief. We allude to the Doctrine of man's
apostacy. A Doctrine which is not only universally
taught throughout the whole of Rev; but is believed
with almost equal certainty, & demonstrated to
those who affect to disbelieve in the Divine au-
thenticity of the sacred Scriptures by argu-
ments drawn from two other amazing Books,
viz, the World & Man, which are held by
all, who will take the trouble of investigation.
Almost regardless of Rev. there for, many
safely trusted to Reason. That upon which ev-
ery disbeliever boasts himself. That of which ev-
ery speculative mind is proud. The cause
of which we are called by some to lay down.
But the first place it may be said to lay
down a few preliminary observations as a
foundation of subsequent arguments.

With few exceptions ² all nations, Pagans
Jews, Mahometans & Christians, jointly and
harmoniously consent to the existence of some
^{undisputed} Superintending; who created upholds and
governs all things. Now if we admit it be
granted that there is a Self-existent God &
that there is but One (as from the Nature
& fitness of things it must) it cannot but
be admitted that he is infinite Wisdom &
& Power & of course in Holiness, Happiness
& Goodness. These attributes are absolute-
ly requisite to the very idea of a Self-exis-
tant Being. And if ~~consider~~ ^{be considered} this Supreme
Being the Author of this vast universe, it cer-
tainly follows, that infinite Wisdom Holiness
& goodness being united to draw the original
plan would adopt such a plan as would be entire-
ly free both from moral defilement or Nat. Evil.
Neither could unlimited Power fail in the least
of executing what the other Divine Attributes
might design. Hence we are compelled to say with
the Sacred Historian that Order, beauty, harmo-
ny & happiness, were deeply inscribed upon all the
works of Creation & more especially upon man
the head & master piece of ^{sublimity} created Excellence.
For like produces like & every effect is symmetrical to

its cause). Now if the present condition & character
of the moral world viewed in the light of that
of the Nat. be contrasted with that state of purity
& excellence in which it cannot but be conceived
that man was placed in his original forma-
tion: And if also the Supreme Excellence, purity & Good-
ness of the God of Nature & Providence be born in
mind, it undoubtedly may be inferred that Reason
corroborates Rev. in affirming that a revolt has ta-
ken place on the part of man from his Maker.
Upon the above position, which, it is to be believed
is ^{admitted} granted by all, arguments may be induced; 1st
With respect to man's residence.

Do not the remaining traces of beauty, which appear
in variegated landscapes, Romantic prospects, & in
ten thousand things which daily arrest our attention, in-
dicate to us that this Earth, with all of its pro-
ductions, must have been extremely beautiful, when
it first issued from the hand of its great original
Or on that blist morn, when it's said that the morning
stars sang together & all the sons of God shouted
for joy. But amidst all of its remaining ornaments
are there not Equal, if not greater Evidences to
favour the belief, that a curse also rests upon it &
consequently upon its man its inhabitant. Look
at the frightful aspects of stupendous precipices
subterraneous caverns & dangerous waters. Look

at the infertile ^{plains marshy} deserts, & many & wide extend-
ed Empires of Ravenous ^{beasts}. View the in-
temperate Zones. For whilst the inhabitants of
the northern Climes, appear to be almost entire-
ly excluded from beholding the light & feel-
ing the cheering influence of Day, being ^{as it were} shrouded
in darkness & surrounded with lakes of ice
& hills of snow; those of the Southern endure
with intolerable pain the almost insupportable
heat of the vertical sun. We are indeed fa-
voured with a milder climate; but even here
how irregular are the seasons; how often are
we hurried to complaint of inclement weather
either of intense heat or cold; or of the
quick success of their pernicious changes from
one to the other.

Again Whence arise so frequently the confu-
sion & uproar of the Elements, which were made
for the use & convenience of man. At one time
floods of water break over their appointed bound-
aries, inundate the adjacent plains, sweep ^{away} & de-
stroy ^{all} the fruits of rural labour, & even in some instan-
ces cause the affrighted inhabitants themselves to
yield to their irresistible power. Whilst in other
places the heavens above may be as bright & the
earth beneath scoured with intolerable darts.
At another time, perhaps in the dead watch

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of night, whilst all things appear to be si-
lent & peaceful, fire breaks out & with one
incredible conflagration reduces a whole
city to ashes. At one time a most profound
calm is, in, a very few moments converted in
to a roaring tempest or boisterous hevi-
come. The trees of the forest groan under the
mighty scourge; The smooth surface of the
Ocean is put into agitation; the trading
ship & the Man of war are (with all their
anchors & ballast driven before the fu-
rious blast & their fragments mingled &
blended with the frightful billows. &
as if the scene were not yet raised to its
utmost pitch of horror, the God of Nature
speaks with the majestic voice of thunder
& the awful artillery of heaven & accom-
panies his ^{admonition} ~~words~~ with equally fearful
flashes of lightning which strike conster-
nation into the breast of man, & arouse
his slumbering conscience to proclaim that
Justice & vengeance belong unto God.
Nor do the fearful scourges of our globe stop here
At another time, the earth herself as though it
were not enough that our atmosphere be corrup-
ted with pestilential vapours, calls upon the uni-
ted powers of the other elements, to scourge terrify
& destroy her wretched inhabitants. By Earth the quick

detaching enormous rocks from the tops of lofty mountains & hurling them to the lower vale with such amazing velocity & momentum that nothing within ^{their} reach escapes the fatal pressure.

By intempestuously producing hideous chasms in the bosom of the earth. & by Volcanoes emitting torrents of boiling minerals, & inundating the surrounding countries with continual eruptions of fiery lavas. These horrid scenes may amuse our fancy, who have never witnessed ^{them} when held up to our view by the Poet or Philosopher.

But to experience their reality, as myriads have done must be beyond expression alarming.

Now does not Reason say, viewing this picture of the Nat. world (which certainly has not been drawn with tines two black) that the God of nature & Providence, being a God of order & goodness, never could establish & continue such fearful disorder of the Nat. world, consistent with his Justice but to punish those of the Moral.

But consider man as an inhabitant of this wretched world. To pass over the helplessness & misery of infancy, the dangerous folly of childhood & youth, & not even to mention many things of an obscene nature, which in the Sufferment of the man of Reason &

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reflection furnish ~~very~~ great & weighty arguments in favour of the point in hand, view him in the most perfect state of nature; arrived to years of maturity, in full possession of all his faculties & powers. What evidences of Apostasy does he betray by his amazeing, & ~~but~~ ignorance. Ignorance of his great Original: Ignorance of himself & of surroundings; even things with which he is most intimately blended? Notwithstanding all the improvements which have been made in arts & science, (which go to show the superiority of human capacity over that of the brute creation; yet have not the latter in many things great advantage of sagacity over the former. Only to mention for instance the regulation & government of the appetite. For whilst other animals are taught by instinct to single out the particular food suited to the nourishment of their natures. Man, who boasts of his superior wisdom partakes of almost every thing which is pleasing to the palate; whether it tends to support & strengthen, or to weaken the constitution; & is only taught to abstain from that which is injurious or destructive to his nature; by long experience of evil effects produced upon himself & off. or by fatal effects produced upon others.

By a parity of reasoning might the weakness of
all the faculties of the mind be shown. But their ~~im-~~
^{defects} perfection in degree might be overlooked were they
all to act in their proper place; that which by
no means is the case. For the whole mental system
appears to be made up of contradictions. How fre-
quently is it the case that the will de-thrones the
Judgment & sways the Sceptre over all the in-
feriour powers. And not uncommonly the af-
fections, which should always be kept in view
of the former two, take the command & compel
the others to follow. To say that the faculties
of the mind were formed in their present weak
& imperfect state would it not be offering vio-
lence to our Reason; nay rather an insult to
the God of Reason Himself.

Again the external evils which beset man are
almost innumerable. Only to mention a few of
the most common. What various poisons exist
in minerals, ^{productions} & in the animal & vegetable tribes:
which by lurking under an appearance of use-ful-
ness & innocence are the sources of unknown mischief
in the world. How many animals are armed with
envenomed weapons, & ever stand ready to vent their
subtle ^{poison} upon man. And how great a part of the
mineral & vegetable productions, which are arrayed in
external beauty & grandeur have concealed with

in their constituent particles the pernicious power
of extracting the very quint-essence of the curse.
Only call to mind the many thousands who
have died of the bite of the Serpent & the
various individuals, even of your own ac-
quaintance who have been silently called
away, by some poison or other being either
instantaneously or gradually infused into their
systems & incorporated with their blood.

But although some may escape the fatal ef-
fects of poison, Who escapes the curse of labour
& toil? We are so situated & united with each
other & surrounding objects, that we are necessarily
compelled to exercise both bodily powers & men-
tal faculties, for the maintenance of our natu-
ral lives & the defence of our persons & prop-
erty. How expressive is comprehensive is the
Sentance "In the sweat of thy face shalt
thou eat bread." Equally applicable to the
studious son of Learning, who trims the mid-
night lamp & to the husbandman who actually
ploughs the soil. To the King & to the Peasant.
To the Corrupt & Epicure as well as to the af-
rican slave; & to all other intermediate ranks
of men. Now would the All-wise Ruler of
the world, who by a word could satisfy all
the wants of all his Creatures, deal thus
with inoffensive & loyal subjects? He certainly would not.

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+ But notwithstanding the extent & severity of this curse
of toil & vexation; yet how greatly will it ^{appear} be aug-
mented when viewed in conjunction with other evils

¶ Whence arise the anarchy of Empires & Revolutions
of Kingdoms. Were the several parts of the Globe
made up of inhabitants from the distant Planets; it
might not then be so surprising to witness sharp
contests between the constituent Tribes. But when
we recollect that they all sprang from the same Com-
mon Father, that they are Brethren, what must
be the language of reason, when we see united
bands of men with the most horrid cruelty shedding
the same blood that runs through their own veins.
Mankind allied to each other both by Nature &
Reason, possess more cunning to destroy each other
lives than all the ferocious beasts of the Forest.

The Lion & the Tiger may prey upon other species
yet seldom devour their own.

¶ Again consider the calamities of individuals. How
inconceivably wretched be the condition of those
who are deprived only of one of their senses. For instance
the Blind the deaf & the Dumb. Who are left to grope
their way in the blaze of noon as in mid-night dark-
ness: To lie upon the very brink of Danger inatten-
tive to the louder calls of admonition. & who are

destitute of the power **11** Deprived of the enjoyment
of social intercourse. (As to this life) is not the con-
dition of many brute beasts preferable to theirs
+ add to this the miseries of pain & sickness of
which every individual who has ever lived has
more or less experienced. How many tears have
been shed by the afflicted & groans have been
extorted from the breasts of the afflicted & how
many tears have been shed by loving friends
Collect the former, a tempest would insure
Unite the latter it swell into an Ocean.
But the last & greatest of nat. evils is Death.
That which common to all the sons of men,
& that to which all others are but a prelude.
Deat how terrible is the very thought! It needs
but to be mentioned. Is it not enough to over-
balance the enjoyments of life even with the
conceited moralist. But how much more intel-
ligible must it be to experience its fangs (
where the sting is not extracted) Is it not
to drink the very dregs of the bitter cup of
human woe. It was this, in conjunction with
other calamitous scenes of life that made the modern
& celebrated Apostle of the Dis-taste world
cry out that he would he had never been

born. And it is this that ¹²captivates the feelings
more or less of every man.

Were the effects of Polit. & moral evils only ex-
perienced in certain climates & under certain
governments. Arguments drawn from these
sources might have but little weight. But
they are not confined to Turkish dominions, the
sandy deserts of Arabia nor to the rocky
mountains of the West; Turn your eyes which
way you will, you meet with conclusive proofs
of Opprobrium. You see grief & pain in every
breast, that fruits of the fall in every land & the
havoc of the curse among all nations.

We now appeal to the common sense & candid
Judgment of our auditors, & ask (after viewing
as an inhabitant of a wretched world, left in
dangerous ignorance, surrounded with sin-
nerable evils & lastly wrested by death)
how it can be possible for streams so impure
to issue from the fount of all excellen & puri-
ty, & if it be not for opprobrium that man is
thus cursed, for what can it be. The propo-
sition is evident. Hæc conditione nati sumus