

certainty, since they determine beforehand and are never deceived, must have within them a principle of knowledge greatly superior to man, must have a soul far more penetrative and acute, a consequence, which, I presume, is equally repugnant to religion and to reason.

By an intelligence similar to that of man it is impossible that brutes can have any certain knowledge of futurity, since in that respect, his ideas are always imperfect, and full of doubt. Then why, on such slight grounds, invest them with a quality so sublime? Why, without necessity degrade the human species? Is it not unreasonable to attribute their source to mechanical laws, established, like all the other laws of Nature, by the will of the Creator? The certainty with which brutes are supposed to act, and be determined, might alone convince us, that every thing they do is merely mechanical. The essential characteristics of reason are, doubt, deliberation, and comparison; but motions and actions, which announce nothing but decision and certainty, exhibit at once a proof of mechanism and stupidity.

Previous, however, to the full admission of these asserted facts, which seem to lessen those