

to our convictions, in the strength of those appropriate evidences which it is the province of this science to unfold—certain it is, that we can take no direct cognizance of Him by our faculties whether of external or internal observation.

2. And while the spirituality of His nature places Him beyond the reach of our direct cognizance, there are certain other essential properties of His nature which place Him beyond the reach of our possible comprehension. Let me instance the past eternity of the Godhead. One might figure a futurity that never ceases to flow, and which has no termination; but who can climb his ascending way among the obscurities of that infinite which is behind him? Who can travel in thought along the track of generations gone by, till he has overtaken the eternity which lies in that direction? Who can look across the millions of ages which have elapsed, and from an ulterior post of observation look again to another and another succession of centuries; and at each further extremity in this series of retrospects, stretch backward his regards on an antiquity as remote and indefinite as ever? Could we by any number of successive strides over these mighty intervals, at length reach the fountain-head of duration, our spirits might be at rest. But to think of duration as having no fountain-head; to think of time with no beginning; to uplift the imagination along the heights of an antiquity which hath positively no summit; to soar these upward steeps till dizzied by the altitude we can keep no longer on the wing; for the mind to make these repeated flights from one pinnacle to another, and instead