

4. What then we hold to be the first questionable assumption in the reasonings of Dr. Clarke, is that by which he appears to confound a physical with either a logical or mathematical necessity. We feel no difficulty in conceding to him the necessary existence of that which has existed from eternity—and that the necessity for its existence resides in itself and not in any thing apart from itself. That which has been created by something else both came into being, and continues we may also admit to be, in virtue of a power that is without it; and it is to this power exoteric to itself that we have to look for the ground both of its first and its abiding existence. But the thing which has existed for ever must also have some ground on which it continues to be, rather than that it should not be, or go to annihilation; and this ground on which at present it continues to be, must be the same with the ground on which it continued to be at any past moment. But if it never had a beginning this ground or principle of existence must have been from everlasting—the present ground in fact, on which it continues to exist, having abidden with it through the whole of its past eternity as the ground on which it exists at all. But as we are not to look for this ground in the fiat of another—it must be looked for in the necessity of its own nature—it contains within itself the necessity for its own existence.

5. Now what is the inference which Dr. Clarke has drawn from this necessity? The word is applied to speculative truths as well as to substantive things. The truth of a proposition is often neces-