

ceive it either not to be or to be in any respect otherwise than it now is." He proceeds all along on the assumption that there is no necessity in the substantive existence of things, unless the denial of that existence involves a logical contradiction in terms. Nay, if without such contradiction we can imagine any variation in the modes or forms of matter from those which obtain actually, this is enough with him to expel from matter the property of self-existence. Ere we can award to matter this property, "it must," he says, "be a contradiction in terms to suppose more or fewer stars, more or fewer planets, or to suppose their size, figure, or motion, different from what it now is, or to suppose more or fewer plants and animals upon the earth, or the present ones of different shape and bigness from what they now are." At this rate, it will be observed, if we can imagine only five planets and without any such contradiction as that three and four make five—this of itself is proof that the actual state of the planetary system, or the actual state of matter whereof this system is a part, is not a necessary state, and so matter is not necessarily self-existent. In like manner the motion of matter is held not to be necessary because it is no contradiction in terms to suppose any matter to be at rest. Thus throughout, our powers or possibilities of conception within, are with him the measures or grounds of inference as to the realities of Being without. He denies the necessary existence of matter, merely because we can conceive it not to exist; and the necessity of motion, because we can conceive of other direc-