

of a Divinity—just as it is not the clay but the shape into which it has been moulded that announces the impress of a Designer's hand. The metaphysical argument which we should like to discard from this controversy wants altogether to our mind the character of obviousness. We can afford to give it up. It is truly a dead weight upon the cause. It is like seeking for the indications of an artist's hand in the rude and raw material upon which he operates—when we might behold them at once in the finished work of those exquisite fabrications which hold forth irresistibly the marks of contrivance and so of a contriver.*

16. In combating an argument for a doctrine, we are not therefore combating the doctrine itself. Dr. Clarke has failed, we think in his attempt to demonstrate the non-eternity of matter—but it follows not that because we have attempted to expose this failure, we advocate the eternity of matter. It is well that our belief in the truths of religion does not stand or fall with the success or the failure of any human expounder. We happen to think that on the abstract question of the creation of matter out of nothing, there is a want of clear and decisive manifestation by the light of nature; and that for the establishment of what we hold to be the right and orthodox position upon this question,

* Let us here present the following short and judicious extract from Dr. Fiddes' work entitled "Theologia Speculativa or a Body of Divinity." "But to discover the weakness of any argument in particular which may be brought to prove a fundamental article of religion is not, as some pious men have supposed, to do religion disservice—but only shows it does not stand in need of any artifices and has nothing to fear from a fair ingenuous and free examination."