

4. This is very distinctly put; and we think admits of as distinct and decisive a reply. The Atheist does not perceive why a material economy as exemplified in the world might not fall into order of itself, as well as a mental economy as exemplified in God. The precise difference between the two is, that we have had proof, as we shall attempt to show, of a commencement to our present material economy—we have had no such proof of a commencement to the mental economy which may have preceded it. There is room for the question, how came the material system of things into its present order?—because we have reason to believe that it has not subsisted in that order from eternity. There is no such room for the question, why might not the material have fallen into its present order of itself, as well as the mental that is conceived to have gone before it? We have no reason to believe that this mental economy ever was otherwise than it now is. The latter question presumes that the mental did fall into order of itself, or which is the same thing, that the Divinity had a commencement. In the material economy we have the vestiges before our eyes of its having had an origin, or in other words of its being a consequent—and we have furthermore the experience that in every instance which comes under full observation of a similar consequent, that is of a consequent which involved as the mundane order of things does so amply, the adaptation of parts to an end, the antecedent was a purposing mind which desired the end, and devised the means for its accomplishment. We