itself was *eternal,* it was palpably absurd to ask us to believe
in a *succession* of beings that was thus infinitely earlier than
any of the beings themselves which composed the succession.
And Bentley, more perversely ingenious still, could assert,
that as each of the individuals in an infinite series must have
consisted of many parts,—that as each man in such a series,
for instance, must have had ten fingers and ten toes,—it was
palpably absurd to ask us to believe in an infinity which thus
comprised many infinities,—ten infinities of fingers, for ex-
ample, and ten infinities of toes.   The infidels had the better
in this part of the argument.   It was surely easy enough to
show against the great preacher, on the one hand, that *time*
in such a question is but a mere word that means simply a
certain limited or definite period which had a beginning,
whereas eternity means an unlimited and undefinable period
which had no beginning ;—that his seeming argument was
no argument, but merely a sort of verbal play on this differ-
ence of signification in the words ;—further, that man could
conceive of an infinite series, whether extended in infinite
space, or subsisting in infinite time, just as well as he could
conceive of any other infinity, and in the same way ;—and
that the only mode of disproving the possibility of such a
series would be to show, what of course cannot be shown,
that in conceiving of it in the progressive mode in which, ac-
cording to Locke, man can alone conceive of the infinite or
the eternal, there would be a point reached at which it would
be impossible for him to go on adding millions on millions to
the previous sum.   The symbolic " *ad infinitum*" could be
made as adequately representative in the case of an infinite
series of men or animals in unlimited time, as of an infinite
series of feet or inches in unlimited space, or of an infinite
series of hours or minutes in the past eternity.   And as for
Bentley, on the other hand, he ought surely to have known
that all infinities are not equal, seeing that Newton had ex-