

every edifice built on abstracted ideas is a temple founded on error.

Error bears a much more extended signification in philosophy than in morality : in morals a thing may be false, only because it is misrepresented. Metaphysical falsehood consists not in misrepresentation alone, but in crediting that which has no existence, and even in not being of any mode whatever. It is in this kind of error, of the first order, that the Platonists, the Sceptics, and the Egotists have fallen into, their false suppositions have obscured the natural light of truth, clouded reason, and retarded the advancement of philosophy.

The second principle made use of by Plato, and by most of the speculative philosophers, is a final cause. Nevertheless, to reduce this principle to its just value, a single moment of reflection is only requisite. To say there is light because we have eyes, and sounds because we have ears, or to say that we have ears and eyes because there is light and sound, is it not exactly the same thing? shall we ever discover any thing by this mode of explanation? Is it not evident that final causes are only arbitrary relations and moral abstractions, which should im-

pose