

modes of thinking, without it; nor is it in a man's power to gainsay this evidence of consciousness, for every effort so to do must establish to his own mind the action itself; and, secondly, our dependent existence is abundantly shewn in every one of our ideas—for each of these, as it is in nature, is, and (as we are at present constituted) must be, very different from what it is for us. We perceive an object, and this is for us a perception; that is, we take for granted the object and the consciousness, and their union; whereas, in nature, all these must be produced and established—the former is the mental act (if I may so distinguish it), the other is the physical and unrevealed being required to produce that act. And, if the reality of any conscious act be admitted, then the groundwork, the elements and formative causes thereof (apart from the conscious act, and rendering this possible), must be allowed; but our ignorance of these causes, is equivalent to our want of power to produce them—hence we know ourselves to be dependent.

Taking these premises for granted, we are enabled, as we have said, to demonstrate the necessary existence of a first cause; although in ignorance of the number, force and kinds of secondary causes. For we certainly know that time and place (which contain all conceivable secondary causes) are by matter and motion, and finite existences bounded; and, overleaping these, we derive the pure conception of a being necessary