

HD WIDENER



S CEAP PH

Phil 8657.2



HARVARD
COLLEGE
LIBRARY

Tr
publ

Tr
Has
Feb
ing
Tro
sun
the
of t
of
him
son
wr
the
ed
ab
tic
ne
co
is
ri
e
s
b

NOTICE.

THE series of Treatises, of which the present is one, is published under the following circumstances :

The RIGHT HONOURABLE and REVEREND FRANCIS HENRY, EARL OF BRIDGEWATER, died in the month of February, 1829 ; and by his last Will and Testament, bearing date the 25th of February, 1825, he directed certain Trustees therein named to invest in the public funds the sum of Eight thousand pounds sterling ; this sum, with the accruing dividends thereon, to be held at the disposal of the President, for the time being, of the Royal Society of London, to be paid to the person or persons nominated by him. The Testator further directed, that the person or persons selected by the said President should be appointed to write, print, and publish one thousand copies of a work *On the Power, Wisdom, and Goodness of God, as manifested in the Creation ; illustrating such work by all reasonable arguments, as for instance the variety and formation of God's creatures in the animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms ; the effect of digestion, and thereby of conversion ; the construction of the hand of man, and an infinite variety of other arguments ; as also by discoveries ancient and modern, in arts, sciences, and the whole extent of literature.* He desired, moreover, that the profits arising from the sale of the works so published should be paid to the authors of the works.

The late President of the Royal Society, Davies Gilbert, Esq. requested the assistance of his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury and of the Bishop of London, in determining upon the best mode of carrying into effect the intentions of the Testator. Acting with their advice, and with the concurrence of a nobleman immediately connected with the deceased, Mr. Davies Gilbert appointed the following eight gentlemen to write separate Treatises on the different branches of the subject as here stated :

NOTICE.

THE REV. THOMAS CHALMERS, D. D.

Professor of Divinity in the University of Edinburgh.

ON THE ADAPTATION OF EXTERNAL NATURE TO THE MORAL AND INTELLECTUAL CONSTITUTION OF MAN

JOHN KIDD, M. D, F. R. S.

Regius Professor of Medicine in the University of Oxford.

ON THE ADAPTATION OF EXTERNAL NATURE TO THE PHYSICAL CONDITION OF MAN.

THE REV. WILLIAM WHEWELL, M. A. F. R. S.

Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge.

ON ASTRONOMY AND GENERAL PHYSICS.

SIR CHARLES BELL, K. H. F. R. S.

THE HAND: ITS MECHANISM AND VITAL ENDOWMENTS AS EVINCING DESIGN.

PETER MARK ROGET, M. D.

Fellow of and Secretary to the Royal Society.

ON ANIMAL AND VEGETABLE PHYSIOLOGY.

THE REV. WILLIAM BUCKLAND, D. D. F. R. S.

Canon of Christ Church, and Professor of Geology in the University of Oxford.

ON GEOLOGY AND MINERALOGY.

THE REV. WILLIAM KIRBY, M. A. F. R. S.

ON THE HISTORY, HABITS, AND INSTINCTS OF ANIMALS.

WILLIAM PROUT, M. D. F. R. S.

ON CHEMISTRY, METEOROLOGY, AND THE FUNCTION OF DIGESTION.

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUKE OF SUSSEX, President of the Royal Society, having desired that no unnecessary delay should take place in the publication of the above mentioned treatises, they will appear at short intervals, as they are ready for publication.

Alex^r H. Vinton. 1855.
To Louie

ON THE

1859

POWER, WISDOM,

AND

GOODNESS OF GOD,

AS MANIFESTED IN THE

ADAPTATION OF EXTERNAL NATURE,

TO THE

MORAL AND INTELLECTUAL

CONSTITUTION OF MAN.

UNIVERSITY
LIBRARY

BY THE

REV. THOMAS CHALMERS, D. D.,

PROFESSOR OF DIVINITY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF EDIN-
BURGH.

C
NEW-YORK.

A. SHERMAN, 61 FULTON-STREET.

1834.

~~III 3709~~ Phil 8657.2

1886, Mar. 19,

Gift of

Dr. J. S. Green,
of Boston.

HARVARD COLLEGE LIBRARY

1411
43-140
52

TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE AND RIGHT REVEREND
CHARLES JAMES,
LORD BISHOP OF LONDON.

MY LORD,

YOUR Lordship's personal kindness to myself would alone have inclined me to solicit for this work the honour of your patronage and name.

But I must further confess the peculiar satisfaction which I feel, in offering it as a tribute and a public acknowledgment of my admiration for an order of men, who, more than all others, have enriched by their labours the moral and theological literature of England.

In the prosecution of that arduous and hitherto almost unattempted theme which the late President of the Royal Society has, by your Lordship's recommendation, assigned to me, I have derived greater aid from the views and reasonings of Bishop Butler, than I have been able to find besides, in the whole range of our existent authorship.

With his powerful aid I commenced the high investigation to which your Lordship has called me. To imagine that I have completed it, would be to forget at once the fulness of the Creation, and the finitude of the Creature. Whatever the department of nature may be which we explore, in

quest of evidence for the perfections of its Author, there is no inquirer, though even of the most transcendent powers, who shall ever attain the satisfaction of having traversed the whole length and breadth of the land. He will have but entered and proceeded a certain way, within the margin of a territory whose riches are inexhaustible.

That your Lordship may long continue, by your zeal, and talents, and lofty erudition, to sustain the honours, and to promote the vital good of our Religious Establishments in this empire, is the fervent desire and prayer of

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obliged

and obedient Servant,

THOMAS CHALMERS.

Edin. May 13, 1833.

CONTENTS.

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.	11
-------------------------------	----

PART I.

ON THE ADAPTATION OF EXTERNAL NATURE TO THE MORAL CONSTITUTION OF MAN.

CHAP. I. On the Supremacy of Conscience	40
II. SECOND GENERAL ARGUMENT. On the Inherent Pleasure of the Virtuous, and Misery of the Vicious Affections	64
III. THIRD GENERAL ARGUMENT. The Power and Operation of Habit	83
IV. On the General Adaptation of External Nature to the Moral Constitution of Man	97
V. On the Special and Subordinate Adaptations of External Nature to the Moral Constitution of Man	113
VI. On those Special Affections which conduce to the Civil and Political Well-being of Society	130
VII. On those Special Affections which conduce to the Economic Well-being of Society	168
VIII. On the Relation in which the Special Affections of our Nature stand to Virtue; and on the Demonstration given forth by it, both to the Character of man and the Character of God	197
IX. Miscellaneous Evidences of Virtuous and Benevolent Design, in the Adaptation of External Nature to the Moral Constitution of Man	207
X. On the Capacities of the World for making a virtuous Species happy; and the Argument deducible from this, both for the Character of God and the Immortality of Man	223

PART II.

ON THE ADAPTATION OF EXTERNAL NATURE TO THE
INTELLECTUAL CONSTITUTION OF MAN.

CHAP. I. Chief Instances of this Adaptation . . .	243
II. On the Connexion between the Intellect and the Emotions	272
III. On the Connexion between the Intellect and the Will	294
IV. On the Defects and the Uses of Natural The- ology.	316

PREFACE.

It is an incongruous thing, when there is any want of conformity between the subject matter of an essay, and its title. The object of this explanatory preface is to show that it is an incongruity into which we have not fallen.

In the first place we were not in fair circumstances for expounding the adaptation of external nature to the mental constitution of man, till we had made manifest in some degree what that constitution is. There is no distinct labourer in that conjunct demonstration of the divine attributes which is now being offered to the world, to whom this essentially preliminary topic had been assigned as the subject of a separate work. It was therefore unavoidable, that, to a certain extent we should undertake it ourselves, else, in proceeding to the construction of our argument, we might have incurred the charge of attempting to rear a superstructure, without a foundation to rest upon.

But in the execution of this introductory part of our subject, we could scarcely have refrained from noticing the indications of divine wisdom and goodness in our mental constitution itself, even though our strictly proper, because our assigned task, was to point out these indications in the adaptation of this constitution to external nature. We could not forget that the general purpose of the work was to exhibit with all possible fulness the argument for the character of the Deity, as grounded on the laws and appearances of nature. But we should have left out a very rich and important track of argument, had we forborne all observation on the evidence for the divine perfections, in the structure and processes of the mind itself, and confined ourselves to

the evidence afforded by the relations which the mind bore to the external world. In the adaptation of external nature to man's physical constitution, there are many beautiful and decisive indications of a God. But prior to these, there is a multitude of distinct indications, both in the human anatomy, and the human physiology, viewed by themselves, and as separate objects of contemplation. And accordingly, in this joint undertaking, there have been specific labourers assigned to each of these departments. But we have not had the advantage of any previous expounder for the anatomy of the mind, or the physiology of the mind; and we felt that to have left unnoticed all the vivid and various inscriptions of a divinity, which might be collected there, would have been to withhold from view some of the best attestations in the whole range and economy of nature, for the wisdom and benevolence of its great architect.

But to construct a natural theology on any subject, it is not necessary to make of that subject a full scientific exposition. The one is as distinct from the other, as the study of final is from the study of efficient causes—the former often lying patent to observation, while the latter may be still involved in deepest obscurity. It were a manifest injury to our cause, it were to bedim the native lustre of its evidences—did we enter with it among the recondite places of the mental philosophy, and there enwrap it in the ambiguity of questions yet unresolved, in the mist of controversies yet unsettled. Often, though not always, the argument for a God in some phenomenon of nature depends upon its reality, and not upon its analysis, or the physical mode of its organization—on the undoubted truth that so it is, and not on the undetermined, perhaps interminable question of how it is. We should not have shrunk from the obscurer investigation, had it been at all necessary. But that is no reason why time must be consumed on matters which are at once

obscure and irrelevant. It is all the more fortunate that we are not too long detained from an entry on our proper task, among the depths or the difficulties of any preliminary disquisition which comes before it—and that the main strength of the argument which our mental constitution, taken by itself, furnishes to the cause of theism, lies not in those subtilities which are apprehended only by few, but in certain broad and palpable generalities which are recognized by all men.

But there is another explanation which we deem it necessary to make, in order fully to reconcile the actual topics of our essay, with the designation which has been prefixed to it.

If by external nature be meant all that is external to mind, then the proper subject of our argument is the adaptation of the material to the mental world. But if by external nature be meant all that is external to one individual mind, then would the subject be very greatly extended; for beside the reciprocal influence between that individual mind, and all sensible and material things, we should consider the reciprocal influence between it and all other minds. By this contraction of the idea from the mental world to but one individual member of it; and this proportional extension in the idea of external nature from the material creation to the whole of that living, as well as inanimate creation, by which any single man is surrounded; we are introduced not merely to the action and reaction which obtain between mind and matter; but which is far more prolific of evidence for a Deity, to the action and reaction which obtain between mind and mind. We thus find access to a much larger territory, which should otherwise be left unexplored—and have the opportunity of tracing the marks of a divine intelligence in the mechanism of human society, and in the frame-work of the social and economical systems to which

men are conducted, when they adhere to that light, and follow the impulse of those affections which God has bestowed on them.

But in the progress of our argument, we come at length to be engaged with the adaptations of external nature, even in the most strict and limited sense of the term. In the origin and rights of property, as well as in the various economic interests of society, we behold the purest exemplification of that adjustment which obtains between the material system of things and man's moral nature—and when we proceed to treat of his intellectual constitution, it will be found that the harmonies between the material and the mental worlds are still more numerous, and more palpably indicative of that wisdom which originated both, and conformed them with exquisite and profound skill to each other.

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

GENERAL AND PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS.

1. **EXTERNAL** nature, when spoken of in contradistinction to mind, suggests chiefly, if not solely, the idea of the material universe. Even though restricted to this limited and proper sense of the term, we should still behold the proofs of beneficent design in the fitnesses of the one to the other; but far more abundantly and decisively, it must be confessed, in the adaptation of external nature to the physical, than in its adaptation to the moral and intellectual constitution of man. For fully developing our peculiar argument, an enlargement of the meaning commonly affixed to external nature seems indispensable,—an enlargement that we should not have ventured on, if in so doing we crossed the legitimate boundaries of our own assigned subject; and that, for the mere purpose of multiplying our topics, or possessing ourselves of a wider field of authorship. But the truth is, that we did confine our notice to the relations which obtain between the world of mind and the world of matter, we should be doing injustice to our own theme, by spoiling it of greatly more than half its riches—beside leaving unoccupied certain fertile tracts of evidence, which, if not entered upon in our division of the general work, must, as is obvious from the nature of the respective tasks, be altogether omitted in the conjunct demonstration that is now being offered to the public, of the Goodness and Wisdom of the Deity.

2. It is true that, with even but one solitary human mind in midst of the material creation, certain relations could be traced between them that would indicate both skill and a benevolent purpose on the part of Him who constructed the frame-work of nature, and placed this single occupier within its confines. And, notwithstanding this limitation, there would still be preserved to us certain striking adaptations in the external system of things to the intellectual, and some too, though fewer and less noticeable, to the moral constitution of man. But, born as man obviously is for the companionship of his fellows, it must be evident that the

main tendencies and aptitudes of his moral constitution should be looked for in connection with his social relationships, with the action and reaction which take place between man and the brethren of his species. We therefore understand external nature to comprehend in it, not merely all that is external to mind, but all that is external to the individual possessor of a human mind,—who is surrounded not only by an economy of complex and extended materialism, but who is surrounded by other men and other minds than his own. Without this generalized view of external nature, we should be left in possession of but scanty materials for evincing its adaptation to the moral constitution of man, though an ample field of observation would still lie open to us in unfolding the aptitude of the human understanding, with its various instincts and powers, for the business of physical investigation. For the purpose then of enhancing our argument, or rather of doing but justice to it, we propose to consider not merely those relations between mind and matter, but those relations between mind and mind, the establishment of which attests a wise and beneficent contrivance. We shall thus be enabled to enter on a department of observation distinct from that of all the other labourers in this joint enterprise,—and while their provinces respectively are to trace the hand of a great and good Designer in the mechanism of the heavens, or the mechanism of the terrestrial physics, or the mechanism of various organic structures in the animal and vegetable kingdoms; it will be part of ours, more especially, to point out the evidences of a forming and presiding, and withal benevolent intelligence in the mechanism of human society.

3. We conceive of external nature then that it comprehends more than the mute and unconscious materialism, and the objective truth—it comprehends also the living society by which the possessor of a moral and intellectual constitution is surrounded. Did we exclude the latter from our regards, we should be keeping out of view a number of as wise, and certainly, in the degree that mind is of higher consideration than body, of far more beneficial and important adaptations than any which are presented to our notice in the mechanical, or chemical, or physiological departments of creation. Both in the reciprocities of domestic life, and in those wider relations, which bind large assemblages of men into political and economical systems, we shall discern the incontestible marks of a divine wisdom and care; prin-

ciples or laws of human nature in virtue of which the social economy moves rightly and prosperously onward, and apart from which all would go into derangement; affinities between man and his fellows, that harmonize the individual with the general interests, and are obviously designed as provisions for the well-being both of families and nations.

4. It might help to guard us against a possible misconception, if now, at the outset of our argument, we shall distinguish between the moral constitution of man, and that moral system of doctrine which embodies in it the outer truths or principles of ethical science. The two are as distinct from each other, as are the objective and the subjective in any quarter of contemplation whatever, and ought no more to be confounded than, in optics, the system of visible things with the anatomical structure of the eye. The organ which perceives or apprehends truth is separate in reality, and should be kept separate in thought, from the truth which is apprehended; and thus it is that we should view the moral constitution of man and the moral system of virtue as diverse and distinct from each other. The one belongs to the physiology of the mind, and is collected, like all other experimental truth, by a diligent observation of facts and phenomena. The other, involving, as it does, those questions which relate to the nature of virtue, or to the origin and principles of moral obligation, directs the attention of the mind to another quarter than to its own processes, and presents us with a wholly distinct matter of contemplation. The acts of moral judgment or feeling should not be confounded with the objects of moral judgment or feeling, any more, in fact, than the rules of logic should be confounded with the laws which govern the procedure of the human understanding. The question, "what is virtue?" or "what is that which constitutes virtue?" is one thing. The question, "what is the mental process by which man takes cognizance of virtue?" is another. They are as distinct from each other as are the principles of good reasoning from the processes of the reasoning faculty. It is thus that the mental philosophy, whose proper and legitimate province is the physics of the mind, should be kept distinct from logic and ethics, and the philosophy of taste. The question, "what is beautiful in scenery?" or "what is right in character?" or "what is just in argument?" is distinct from the question, "what is the actual and historical procedure of the

mind in addressing itself to these respective objects of contemplation?" as distinct, indeed, as the question of "*Quid est*" is from "*Quid oportet*;" or as the question of "what is" from "what ought to be."* A sound objective system of ethics may be framed, irrespective of any attention that we give to man's moral constitution. A sound system of logic may be framed, irrespective of any attention that we give to man's intellectual constitution. And on the other hand, however obscure or unsettled these sciences may still be; and more especially, whatever controversies may yet obtain respecting the nature and the elementary principles of virtue,—such notwithstanding, may be the palpable and ascertained facts in the nature and history of subjective man, that, both on his mental constitution, and on the adaptation thereto of external nature, there might remain a clear and unquestionable argument for the power, and wisdom, and goodness of God.

5. Having thus referred our argument, not to the constitution of morality in the abstract, but to the constitution of man's moral nature—a concrete and substantive reality, made up of facts that come within the domain of observation; let us now consider how it is that natural theology proceeds with her demonstrations, on other constitutions and other mechanisms in creation, that we may learn from this in what manner we should commence and prosecute our labours, on that very peculiar, we had almost said, untried field of investigation which has been assigned to us.

6. The chief then, of at least the usual subject-matter of the argument for the wisdom and goodness of God, is the obvious adaptation wherewith creation teems, throughout all its borders, of means to a beneficial end. And it is manifest that the argument grows in strength with the number and complexity of these means. The greater number of independent circumstances which must meet together for the production of a useful result—then, in the actual fact of their

* See the introduction to Sir James MacIntosh's Ethical Dissertation. "The purpose of the physical sciences, throughout all their provinces, is to answer the question, "*What is?*" The purpose of the moral sciences is to answer the question, "*What ought to be?*"—It should be well kept in view, that mental philosophy is one province of the physical sciences, and belongs to the first of these two departments, being distinct from moral philosophy, which forms the second of them.

concurrence, is there less of probability for its being the effect of chance, and more of evidence for its being the effect of design. A beneficent combination of three independent elements is not so impressive or so strong an argument for a divinity, as a similar combination of six or ten such elements. And every mathematician, conversant in the doctrine of probabilities, knows how with every addition to the number of these elements, the argument grows in force and intensity, with a rapid and multiple augmentation—till at length, in some of the more intricate and manifold conjunctions, those more particularly having an organic character and structure, could we but trace them to an historical commencement, we should find, on the principles of computation alone, that the argument against their being fortuitous products, and for their being the products of a scheming and skilful artificer, was altogether overpowering.

7. We might apply this consideration to various departments in nature. In astronomy, the independent elements seem but few and simple, which must meet together for the composition of a planetarium. One uniform law of gravitation, with a force of projection impressed by one impulse on each of the bodies, could suffice to account for the revolutions of the planets round the sun, and of the satellites around their primaries, along with the diurnal revolution of each, and the varying inclinations of the axes to the planes of their respective orbits. Out of such few contingencies, the actual orrery of the heavens has been framed. But in anatomy, to fetch the opposite illustration from another science, what a complex and crowded combination of individual elements must first be effected, ere we obtain the composition of an eye, —for the completion of which mechanism, there must not only be a greater number of separate laws, as of refraction and muscular action and secretion; but a vastly greater number of separate and distinct parts, as the lenses, and the retina, and the optic nerve, and the eye-lid and eye-lashes, and the various muscles wherewith this delicate organ is so curiously beset, and each of which is indispensable to its perfection, or to the right performance of its functions. It is passing marvellous that we should have more intense evidence for a God in the construction of an eye, than in the construction of the mighty planetarium— or that, within less than the compass of a handbreadth, we should find in this lower world a more pregnant and legible

inscription of the Divinity, than can be gathered from a broad and magnificent survey of the skies, lighted up though they be, with the glories and the wonders of astronomy.

8. But while nothing can be more obvious than that the proof for design in any of the natural formations, is the stronger, in proportion to the number of separate and independent elements which have been brought together, and each of which contributes essentially to its usefulness—we have long held it of prime importance to the theistical argument, that clear exhibition should be made of a distinction not generally adverted to, which obtains between one set of these elements and another. We shall illustrate this by a material, ere we apply it to a mental workmanship.

9. There is, then, a difference of great argumentative importance in this whole question, between the *Laws of Matter* and the *Dispositions of Matter*. In astronomy, for example, when attending to the mechanism of the planetary system, we should instance at most but two laws—the law of gravitation; and perhaps the law of perseverance, on the part of all bodies, whether in a state of rest or of motion, till interrupted by some external cause. But had we to state the dispositions of matter in the planetary system, we should instance a greater number of particulars. We should describe the arrangement of its various parts, whether in respect to situation, or magnitude, or figure—as the position of a large and luminous mass in the centre, and of the vastly smaller but opaque masses which circulated around it but at such distances as not to interfere with each other, and of the still smaller secondary bodies which revolved about the planets: And we should include in this description the impulses in one direction, and nearly in one plane, given to the different moving bodies; and so regulated, as to secure the movement of each, in an orbit of small eccentricity. The dispositions of matter in the planetary system were fixed at the original setting up of the machine. The laws of matter were ordained for the working of the machine. The former, that is the dispositions, make up the frame-work, or what may be termed the apparatus of the system. The latter, that is the laws, uphold the performance of it.

10. Now the tendency of atheistical writers is to reason exclusively on the laws of matter, and to overlook its dispositions. Could all the beauties and benefits of the astronomical system be referred to the single law of gravitation, it

would greatly reduce the strength of the argument for a designing cause. La Place, as if to fortify still more the atheism of such a speculation, endeavoured to demonstrate of this law—that in respect of its being inversely proportional to the square of the distance from the centre, it is an essential property of matter. La Grange had previously established—that but for such a proportion, or by the deviation of a thousandth part from it, the planetary system would go into derangement—or, in other words, that the law, such as it is, was essential to the stability of the present mundane constitution. La Place would have accredited the law, the unconscious and unintelligent law, that thing according to him of blind necessity, with the whole of this noble and beautiful result—overlooking what La Grange held to be indispensable as concurring elements in his demonstration of it—certain dispositions along with the law—such as the movement of all the planets, first in one direction, second nearly in one plane, and then in nearly circular orbits. We are aware that according to the discoveries, or rather perhaps to the guesses of some later analysts, the three last circumstances might be dispensed with; and yet notwithstanding, the planetary system, its errors still remaining periodical, would in virtue of the single law oscillate around a mean state that should be indestructible and everlasting. Should this come to be a conclusively settled doctrine in the science, it will extenuate, we admit, the argument for a designing cause in the formation of the planetarium. But it will not annihilate that argument—for there do remain certain palpable utilities in the dispositions as well as laws of the planetary system, acknowledged by all the astronomers; such as the vastly superior weight and quantity of matter accumulated in its centre, and the local establishment there of that great fountain of light and heat from which the surrounding worlds receive throughout the whole of their course an equable dispensation. What a mal-adjustment would it have been, had the luminous and the opaque matter changed places in the firmament; or the planets, by the eccentricity of their orbits, been subject to such vicissitudes of temperature, as would certainly, in our own at least, have entailed destruction both on the animal and vegetable kingdoms.

11. But whatever defect or doubtfulness of evidence there may be in the mechanism of the heavens—this is amply made up for in a more accessible mechanism, near at hand. If

either the dispositions of matter in the former mechanism be so few, or the demonstrable results of its single law be so independent of them, that the agency of design rather than of necessity or chance be less manifest than it otherwise would be in the astronomical system; nothing on the other hand can exceed the force and concentration of that proof, which is crowded to so marvellous a degree of enhancement within the limits of the anatomical system. It is this which enables us to draw so much weightier an argument for a God, from the construction of an eye than from the construction of a planetarium. And here it is quite palpable, that it is in the dispositions of matter more than in the laws of matter, where the main strength of the argument lies, though we hear much more of the wisdom of Nature's laws, than of the wisdom of her collocations.* Now it is true that the law of refraction is indispensable to the faculty of vision; but the laws indispensable to this result are greatly outnumbered by the dispositions which are indispensable to it—such as the rightly sized and shaped lenses of the eye; and the rightly placed retina spread out behind them, and at the precise distance where the indispensable picture of external nature might be formed, and presented as it were for the information of the occupier within; and then, the variety and proper situation of the numerous muscles, each entrusted with an important

* This distinction between the laws and collocations of matter is overlooked by atheistical writers, as in the following specimen from the 'Système de la Nature' of Mirabaud. 'These prejudiced dreamers,' speaking of believers in a God, 'are in an extacy at the sight of the periodical motion of the planets; at the order of the stars; at the various productions of the earth; at the astonishing harmony in the component parts of animals. In that moment however, they forget the laws of motion; the powers of gravitation; the forces of attraction and repulsion; they assign all these striking phenomena to unknown causes, of which they have no one substantive idea.'

When Professor Robinson felt alarmed by the attempted demonstration of La Place, that the law of gravitation was an essential property of matter, lest the cause of natural theology should be endangered by it—he might have recollected that the main evidence for a Divinity lies not in the laws of matter, but in their collocations—because of the utter inadequacy in the existing laws to have originated the existing collocations of the material world. So that if ever a time was, when these collocations were not—there is no virtue in the laws that can account for their commencement, or that supersedes the fiat of a God.

function, and all of them contributing to the power and perfection of this curious and manifoldly complicated organ. It is not so much the endowment of matter with certain properties, as the arrangement of it into certain parts, that bespeaks here the hand of an artist; and this will be found true of the anatomical structure in all its departments. It is not the mere chemical property of the gastric juice that impresses the belief of contrivance; but the presence of the gastric juice, in the very situation whence it comes forth to act with advantage on the food, when received into the stomach, and there submitted to a digestive process for the nourishment of the animal economy. It is well to distinguish these two things. If we but say of matter that it is furnished with such powers as make it subservient to many useful results, we keep back the strongest and most unassailable part of the argument for a God. It is greatly more pertinent and convincing to say of matter, that it is distributed into such parts as to ensure a right direction and a beneficial application for its powers. It is not so much in the establishment of certain laws for matter, that we discern the aims or the purposes of intelligence, as in certain dispositions of matter, that put it in the way of being usefully operated upon by the laws. Insomuch, that though we conceded to the atheist, the eternity of matter, and the essentially inherent character of all its laws—we could still point out to him, in the manifold adjustments of matter, its adjustments of place, and figure, and magnitude, the most impressive signatures of a Deity. And what a countless variety of such adjustments within the compass of an animal, or even a vegetable frame-work. In particular—what an amount and condensation of evidence for a God in the workmanship of the human body. What bright and convincing lessons of theology might man, (would he but open his eyes,) read on his own person—that microcosm of divine art, where as in the sentences of a perfect epitome, he might trace in every lineament or member the finger and authorship of the Godhead.

12 In the performances of human art, the argument for design that is grounded on the useful dispositions of matter, stands completely disentangled from the argument that is grounded on the useful laws of matter—for in every implement or piece of mechanism constructed by the hands of man, it is in the latter apart from the former, that the indications of contrivance wholly and exclusively lie. We do not ac-

credit man with the establishment of any laws for matter—yet he leaves enough by which to trace the operations of his intelligence in the collocations of matter. He does not give to matter any of its properties; but he arranges it into parts; and by such arrangement alone, does he impress upon his workmanship the incontestable marks of design; not in that he has communicated any powers to matter, but in that he has intelligently availed himself of these powers, and directed them to an obviously beneficial result. The watch-maker did not give its elasticity to the main-spring, nor its regularity to the balance-wheel, nor its transparency to the glass, nor the momentum of its varying forces to the levers of his mechanism,—yet is the whole replete with the marks of intelligence notwithstanding, announcing throughout the hand of a maker who had an eye on all these properties, and assigned the right place and adjustment to each of them, in fashioning and bringing together the parts of an instrument for the measurement and the indication of time. Now, the same distinction can be observed in all the specimens of natural mechanism. It is true that we accredit the author of these with the creation and laws of matter, as well as its dispositions; but this does not hinder its being in the latter and not in the former, where the manifestations of skill are most apparent, or where the chief argument for a divinity lies. The truth is, that mere laws, without collocations, would have afforded no security against a turbid and disorderly chaos. One can imagine of all the substantive things which enter into the composition of a watch, that they may have been huddled together, without shape, and without collocation, into a little chaos, or confused medley;—where, in full possession of all the properties which belong to the matter of the instrument, but without its dispositions, every evidence of skill would have been wholly obliterated. And it is even so with all the substantive things which enter into the composition of a world. Take but their forms and collocations away from them, and this goodly universe would instantly lapse into a heaving and disorderly chaos—yet without stripping matter of any of its properties or powers. There might still, though operating with random and undirected activity, be the laws of impulse, and gravitation, and magnetism, and temperature, and light, and the forces of chemistry, and even those physiological tendencies which, however abortive in a state of primitive rudeness, or before the spirit of a God

moved on the face of the waters, waited but a right distribution of the parts of matter, to develope into the full effect and establishment of animal and vegetable kingdoms. The thing wanted for the evolution of this chaos into an orderly and beneficial system is not the endowing of matter with right properties ; but the forming of it into things of right shape and magnitude, and the marshalling of these into right places. This last alone would suffice for bringing harmony out of confusion ; and, apart altogether from the first, or, without involving ourselves in the metaphysical obscurity of those questions which relate to the origination of matter and to the distinction between its arbitrary and essential properties, might we discern, in the mere arrangement of matter, the most obvious and decisive signatures of the artist hand which has been employed on it.

13. That is a fine generalization by the late Professor Robison, of Edinburgh, which ranges all philosophy into two sciences—one the science of contemporaneous nature ; the other, the science of successive nature. When the material world is viewed according to this distinction, the whole science of its contemporaneous phenomena is comprehended by him under the general name of Natural History, which takes cognizance of all those characters in external nature that exist together at the instant, and which may be described without reference to time—as smell, and colour, and size, and weight, and form, and relation of parts, whether of the simple inorganic or more complex organic structures. But when the elements of time and motion are introduced, we are then presented with the phenomena of successive nature ; and the science that embraces these is, in contradistinction to the former, termed Natural Philosophy. This latter science may be separated or subdivided further into natural philosophy, strictly and indeed usually so called, whose province it is to investigate those changes which take effect in bodies by motions that are sensible and measurable ; and chemistry, or the science of those changes which take effect in bodies by motions which are not sensible or, at least, not measurable, and which cannot therefore be made the subjects of mathematical computation or reasoning. This last, again, is capable of being still further partitioned into the science which investigates the changes effected by means of insensible motion in all organic matter, or chemistry strictly and usually so called ; and the sci-

ence of physiology, whose province it is to investigate the like changes that take place in organic bodies, whether of the animal or vegetable kingdoms.

14. Or, the distinction between these two sciences of contemporaneous and successive nature may otherwise be stated thus. The one, or natural history, is conversant with objects—the other, or natural philosophy in its most comprehensive meaning, is conversant with events. It is obvious that the dispositions of matter come within the province of the former science—while the laws of matter, or the various moving forces by which it is actuated, fall more properly under the enquiries of the latter science. Now, adopting this nomenclature, we hold it a most important assertion for the cause of natural theology, that should all the present arrangements of our existing natural history be destroyed, there is no power in the laws of our existing natural philosophy to replace them. Or, in other words, if ever a time was, when the structure and dispositions of matter, under the present economy of things were not—there is no force known in nature, and no combination of forces that can account for their commencement. The laws of nature may keep up the working of the machinery—but they did not and could not set up the machine. The human species, for example, may be upholden, through an indefinite series of ages, by the established law of transmission—but were the species destroyed, there are no observed powers of nature by which it could again be originated. For the continuance of the system and of all its operations, we might imagine a sufficiency in the laws of nature; but it is the first construction of the system which so palpably calls for the intervention of an artificer, or demonstrates so powerfully the fiat and finger of a God.

15. This distinction between nature's laws and nature's collocations is mainly lost sight of in those speculations of geology, the object of which is to explain the formation of new systems emerging from the wreck of old ones. They proceed on the sufficiency of nature's laws for building up the present economy of things out of the ruins of a former economy, which the last great physical catastrophe on the face of our earth had overthrown. Now, in these ruins, viewed as materials for the architecture of a renovated world, there did reside all those forces, by which the processes of the existing economy are upholden; but the geolo-

gists assign to them a function wholly distinct from this, when they labour to demonstrate, that by laws, and laws alone, the frame-work of our existing economy was put together. It is thus that they would exclude the agency of a God from the transition between one system, or one formation, and another, although it be precisely at such transition when this agency seems most palpably and peculiarly called for. We feel assured that the necessity for a divine intervention, and, of course, the evidence of it would have been more manifest, had the distinction between the laws of matter and its collocations been more formally announced, or more fully proceeded on by the writers on natural theism. And yet it is a distinction that must have been present to the mind of our great Newton, who expressly affirms that a mechanism of wonderful structure could not arise by the mere laws of nature. In his third printed letter to Bentley, he says, that "the growth of *new systems* out of *old ones*, without the mediation of a divine power, seems to me apparently absurd;" and that "the system of nature was set *in order* in the beginning, with respect to size, figure, proportions, and properties, by the counsels of God's own intelligence." In the last extracts, by his admission of the properties along with the dispositions of matter, he somewhat confounds or disguises again the important distinction, which at times, he had clearly in his view.*

16. But one precious fruit of the recent geological discoveries may be gathered from the testimony which they afford to the destruction of so many terrestrial economies now gone by, and the substitution of the existing one in their place. If there be truth at all in the speculations of this science, there is nothing which appears to have been more con-

* Towards the end of the third book of Newton's *Optics*, we have the following very distinct testimony upon this subject; "For it became Him who created them to set them in order. And if he did so, it is unphilosophical to seek for any other origin of the world, or to pretend that it might arise out of a chaos by the mere laws of nature; though being once formed, it may continue by those laws for many ages."

This disposition to resolve the collocations into the laws of nature proves, in the expressive language of Granville Penn, how strenuously, not "physical science, but only some of its disciples have laboured to exclude the *Creator* from the *details* of his own creation; straining every nerve of ingenuity to ascribe them *all* to *secondary causes*."

clusively established by them, than a definite origin or commencement for the present animal and vegetable races. Now we know what it is which upholds the whole of the physiological system that is now before our eyes,—even the successive derivation of each individual member from a parent of its own likeness; but we see no force in nature, and no complication of forces which can tell us what it was that originated the system. It is at this passage in the history of nature, where we meet with such pregnant evidence for the interposition of a designing cause,—an evidence, it will be seen, of prodigious density and force, when we compute the immense number and variety of those aptitudes, whether of form or magnitude or relative position, which enter into the completion of an organic structure. It is in the numerical superiority of the distinct collocations to the distinct laws of matter, that the superior evidence of the former lies. We do not deny that there is argument for a God in the number of beneficial, while, at the same time, distinct and independent laws wherewith matter is endowed. We only affirm a million-fold intensity of argument in the indefinitely greater number of beneficial, and at the same time distinct and independent number of collocations whereinto matter has been arranged. In this-respect the human body may be said to present a more close and crowded and multifarious inscription of the divinity, than any single object within the compass of visible nature. It is instinct throughout with the evidence of a builder's hand; and thus the appropriate men of science who can expound those dispositions of matter which constitute the anatomy of its frame-work, and which embrace the physiology of its various processes, are on secure and firm vantage ground for an impressive demonstration.

17. Now there are many respects in which the evidence for a God, given forth by the constitution of the human body, differs from the evidence given forth by the constitution of the human spirit. It is with the latter evidence that we have more peculiarly to deal; but at present we shall only advert to a few of its distinct and special characteristics. The subject will at length open into greater detail, and development before us,—yet a brief preliminary exposition may be useful at the outset, should it only convey some notion of the difficulties and particularities of the task which has been put into our hands.

18. A leading distinction between the material and the mental fabrications is the far greater complexity of the for-

mer, at least greater to all human observation. Into that system of means which has been formed for the object of seeing, there enter at least twenty separate contingencies, the absence of any one of which would either derange the proper function of the eye, or altogether destroy it. We have no access to aught like the observation of a mental structure, and all of which our consciousness informs us is a succession of mental phenomena. Now in these we are sensible of nothing but a very simple antecedent followed up, and that generally on the instant, by a like simple consequent. We have the feeling and still more the purpose of benevolence, followed up by complacency. We have the feeling or purpose, and still more the execution of malignity, or rather the recollection of that execution, followed up by remorse. However manifold the apparatus may be which enables us to see an external object,—when the sight itself, instead of the consequent in a material succession, becomes the antecedent in a mental one; or, in other words, when it passes from a material to a purely mental process; then as soon, does it pass from the complex into the simple; and, accordingly, the sight of distress is followed up, without the intervention of any curiously elaborated mechanism that we are at all conscious of, by an immediate feeling of compassion. These examples will, at least, suffice to mark a strong distinction between the two enquiries, and to show that the several arguments drawn from each must at least be formed of very different materials.

19. There are two distinct ways in which the mind can be viewed, and which constitute different modes of conception, rather than diversities of substantial and scientific doctrine. The mind may either be regarded as a congeries of different faculties; or as a simple and indivisible substance, with the susceptibility of passing into different states. By the former mode of viewing it, the memory, and the judgment, and the conscience, and the will, are conceived of as so many distinct but co-existent parts of mind, which is thus represented to us somewhat in the light of an organic structure, having separate members, each for the discharge of its own appropriate mental function or exercise. By the latter, which we deem also the more felicitous mode of viewing it, these distinct mental acts, instead of being referred to distinct parts of the mind, are conceived of as distinct acts of the whole mind, insomuch that the whole mind remembers, or the whole mind

judges, or the whole mind wills, or, in short, the whole mind passes into various intellectual states or states of emotion, according to the circumstances by which at the time it is beset, or to the present nature of its employment. We might thus either regard the study of mind as a study in contemporaneous nature; and we should then, in the delineation of its various parts, be assigning to it a natural history,—or we might regard the study of mind as a study in successive nature; and we should then, in the description of its various states, be assigning to it a natural philosophy. When such a phrase as the anatomy of the human mind is employed by philosophers, we may safely guess that the former is the conception which they are inclined to form of it.* When such a phrase again as the physiology of the human mind is made use of, the latter is the conception by which, in all probability, it has been suggested. It is thus that Dr. Thomas Brown designates the science of mind as mental physiology. With him, in fact, it is altogether a science of sequences, his very analysis being the analysis of results, and not of compounds.

20. Now, in either view of our mental constitution there is the same strength of evidence for a God. It matters not for this, whether the mind be regarded as consisting of so many useful parts, or as endowed with as many useful properties. It is the number, whether the one or other, of these—out of which the product is formed of evidence for a designing cause. The only reason why the useful dispositions of matter are so greatly more prolific of this evidence than the useful laws of matter, is, that the former so greatly outnumber the latter. Of the twenty independent circumstances which enter into beneficial concurrence in the formation of an eye, that each of them should be found in a situation of optimism, and none of them occupying either an indifferent or a hurtful position—it is this which speaks so emphatically against the hypothesis of a random distribution, and for the hypothesis of an intelligent order. Yet this is but one out of the many like specimens, wherewith the animal economy thickens and teems in such marvellous profusion. By the doctrine of probabilities, the mathematical evidence, in this question between the two suppositions of intelligence or chance, will be found, even on many a single organ of the human frame-

* It is under this conception too that writers propose to lay down a map of the human faculties.

work, to preponderate vastly more than a million-fold on the side of the former. We do not affirm of the human mind that it is so destitute of all complication and variety, as to be deficient altogether in this sort of evidence. Let there be but six laws or ultimate facts in the mental constitution, with the circumstance of each of them being beneficial; and this of itself would yield no inconsiderable amount of precise and calculable proof, for our mental economy being a formation of contrivance, rather than one that is fortuitous or of blind necessity. It will at once be seen, however, why mind, just from its greater simplicity than matter, should contribute so much less to the support of natural theism, of that definite and mathematical evidence which is founded on combination.

21. But, although in the mental department of creation, the argument for a God that is gathered out of such materials, is not so strong as in the other great department—yet it does furnish a peculiar argument of its own, which, though not grounded on mathematical data, and not derived from a lengthened and logical process of reasoning, is of a highly effective and practical character notwithstanding. It has not less in it of the substance, though it may have greatly less in it of the semblance of demonstration, that it consists of but one step between the premises and the conclusion. It is briefly, but cannot be more clearly and emphatically expressed than in the following sentence.—“He that formed the eye, shall he not see? He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? He that teacheth man knowledge, shall he not know?” That the parent cause of intelligent beings shall be itself intelligent is an aphorism, which if not demonstrable in the forms of logic, carries in the very announcement of it a challenging power over the acquiescence of all spirits. It is a thing of instant conviction, as if seen in the light of its own evidence, more than a thing of lengthened and laborious proof. It may be stigmatized as a mere impression—nevertheless the most of intellects go as readily along with it, as they would from one *contiguous* step to another of many a stately argumentation. If it cannot be exhibited as the conclusion of a syllogism, it is because of its own inherent right to be admitted there as the major proposition. To proscribe every such truth, or to disown it from being truth, merely because incapable of deduction, would be to cast away the first principles of all reasoning. It would banish the autho-

rity of intuition, and so reduce all philosophy and knowledge to a state of universal scepticism—for what is the first departure of every argument but an intuition, and what but a series of intuitions are its successive stepping-stones? We should soon involve ourselves in helpless perplexity and darkness, did we insist on every thing being proved and on nothing being assumed—for valid assumptions are the materials of truth, and the only office of argument is to weave them together into so many pieces of instruction for the bettering or enlightening of the species.

22. That blind and unconscious matter cannot, by any of her combinations, evolve the phenomena of mind, is a proposition seen in its own immediate light, and felt to be true with all the speed and certainty of an axiom. It is to such truth, as being of instant and almost universal consent, that more than to any other, we owe the existence of a natural theology among men: yet, because of the occult mysticism wherewith it is charged, it is well that ours is a case of such rich and various argument; that in her service we can build up syllogisms, and expatiate over wide fields of induction, and amass stores of evidence, and, on the useful dispositions of matter alone, can ground such large computations of probability in favour of an intelligent cause or maker for all things, as might silence and satisfy the reasoners.

23. But we forget that the object of the joint compositions which enter into this work, is not properly to demonstrate the being but the attributes of God, and more especially His power, and wisdom, and goodness. We start from that point at which the intuitions and proofs of the question have performed their end of convincing man that God is; and from this point, we set forth on an enquiry into the character which belongs to him. Now this is an enquiry which the constitution of the mind, and the adaptation of that constitution to the external world, are pre-eminently fitted to illustrate. We hold that the material universe affords decisive attestation to the natural perfections of the Godhead, but that it leaves the question of his moral perfections involved in profoundest mystery. The machinery of a serpent's tooth, for the obvious infliction of pain and death upon its victims, may speak as distinctly for the power and intelligence of its Maker as the machinery of those teeth which, formed and inserted for simple mastication, subserve the purposes of a bland and beneficent economy. An apparatus of suffering

and torture might furnish as clear an indication of *design*, though a design of cruelty, as does an apparatus for the ministration of enjoyment furnish the indication also of *design* but a design of benevolence. Did we confine our study to the material constitution of things, we should meet with the enigma of many perplexing and contradictory appearances. We hope to make it manifest, that in the study of the mental constitution, this enigma is greatly alleviated, if not wholly done away; and, at all events, that within our peculiar province there lie the most full and unambiguous demonstrations, which nature hath any where given to us, both of the benevolence and the righteousness of God.

24. If, in some respects, the phenomena of mind tell us less decisively than the phenomena of matter, of the existence of God, they tell us far more distinctly and decisively of His attributes. We have already said that, from the simplicity of the mental system, we met with less there of that evidence for design which is founded on combination, or on that right adjustment and adaptation of the numerous particulars, which enter into a complex assemblage of things, and which are essential to some desirable fulfilment. It is not, therefore, through the medium of this particular evidence—the evidence which lies in combination; that the phenomena and processes of mind are the best for telling us of the Divine existence. But if otherwise, or previously told of this, we hold them to be the best throughout all nature for telling us of the Divine character. For if once convinced, on distinct grounds, that God is, it matters not how simple the antecedents or the consequents of any particular succession may be. It is enough that we know what the terms of the succession are, or what the effect is wherewith God wills any given thing to be followed up. The character of the ordination, and so the character of the ordainer, depends on the terms of the succession; and not on the nature of that intervention or agency, whether more or less complex, by which it is brought about. And should either term of the succession, either the antecedent or consequent, be some moral feeling, or characteristic of the mind, then the inference comes to be a very distinct and decisive one. That the sight of distress, for example, should be followed up by compassion, is an obvious provision of benevolence, and not of cruelty, on the part of Him who ordained our mental constitution. Again, that a feeling of kindness in the heart should

be followed up by a feeling of complacency in the heart, that in every virtuous affection of the soul there should be so much to gladden and harmonize it, that there should always be peace within when there is conscious purity or rectitude within; and, on the other hand, that malignity and licentiousness, and the sense of any moral transgression whatever, should always have the effect of discomfiting, and sometimes even of agonizing the spirit of man—that such should be the actual workmanship and working of our nature, speaks most distinctly, we apprehend, for the general righteousness of Him who constructed its machinery and established its laws. An omnipotent patron of vice would have given another make, and a moral system with other and opposite tendencies to the creatures whom he had formed. He would have established different sequences; and, instead of that oil of gladness which now distils, as if from a secret spring of satisfaction, upon the upright; and instead of that bitterness and disquietude which are now the obvious attendants on every species of delinquency, we should have had the reverse phenomena of a reversely constituted species, whose minds were in their state of wildest disorder when kindling with the resolves of highest excellence; or were in their best and happiest, and most harmonious mood, when brooding over the purposes of dishonesty, or frenzied with the passions of hatred and revenge.

25. In this special track of observation, we have at least the means or data for constructing a far more satisfactory demonstration of the divine attributes, that can possibly be gathered, we think from the ambiguous phenomena of the external world. In other words, it will be found that the mental phenomena speak more distinctly and decisively for the character of God than do the material phenomena of creation. And it should not be forgotten that whatever serves to indicate the character, serves also to confirm the existence of the Divine Being. For this character, whose signatures are impressed on Nature, is not an abstraction, but must have residence on a concrete and substantive Being, who hath communicated a transcript of Himself to the workmanship of his own hands. It is thus, that, although in our assigned department there is greater poverty of evidence for a God in as far as that evidence is grounded on a skilful disposition of parts,—yet, in respect of another kind of evidence, there is no such poverty; for greatly more replete as we hold

our special department to be with the unequivocal tokens of a moral character, we by that simple but strong ligament of proof which connects a character with an existence, can, in the study of mind alone, find a firm stepping-stone to the existence of a God. Our universe is sometimes termed the mirror of Him who made it. But the optical reflection, whatever it may be, must be held as indicating the reality which gave it birth; and, whether we discern there the expression of a reigning benevolence, or a reigning justice, these must not be dealt with as the aerial or the fanciful personifications of qualities alone, but as the substantial evidences of a just and benevolent, and, withal, a living God.

26. But, in the prosecution of our assigned task, we shall, after all, meet with much of that evidence, which lies in the manifold, and, withal, happy conjunction of many individual things, by the meeting together of which, some distinctly beneficial end is accomplished, brought about in that one way and in no other. For it ought further to be recollected, that, simple as the constitution of the human mind is, and proportionally unfruitful, therefore, as it may be of that argument for a God, which is founded on the right assortment and disposition of many parts, or even of many principles; yet, on studying the precise terms of the commission which has been put into our hands, it will be found that the materials even of this peculiar argument lie abundantly within our province. For it is not strictly the mental constitution of man which forms the subject of our prescribed essay, but the adaptation to that constitution of external nature. We have to demonstrate, not so much that the mind is rightly constituted in itself, as that the mind is rightly placed in a befitting theatre for the exercise of its powers. It is to demonstrate that the world and its various objects are suited to the various capacities of this inhabitant—this moral and intelligent creature, of whom we have to prove that the things which are around him bear a fit relation to the laws or the properties which are within him. There is ample room here for the evidence of collocation. Yet there remains this distinction between the mental and the corporeal economy of man, that whereas the evidence is more rich and manifold in the bodily structure itself, than even in its complex and numerous adaptations to the outer world;* the like evidence,

* Yet Paley has a most interesting chapter on the adaptations of external nature to the human frame-work, though the main

in our peculiar department, is meagre, as afforded by the subjective mind, when compared with the evidence of its various adjustments and fitnesses to the objective universe around it, whether of man's moral constitution to the state of human society, or of his intellectual to the various objects of physical investigation.

27. The great object of philosophy is to ascertain the simple or ultimate principles, into which all the phenomena of nature may by analysis be resolved. But it often happens that in this attempt she stops short at a secondary law, which might be demonstrated by further analysis to be itself a complex derivative of the primitive or elementary laws. Until this work of analysis be completed, we shall often mistake what is compound for what is simple, both in the philosophy of mind and the philosophy of matter—being frequently exposed to intractable substances or intractable phenomena in both, which long withstand every effort that science makes for their decomposition. It is thus that the time is not yet come, and may never come, when we shall fully understand, what be all the simple elements or simple laws of matter; and what be all the distinct elementary laws, or, as they have sometimes been termed, the ultimate facts in the constitution of the human mind. But we do not need to wait for this communication, ere we can trace, in either department, the wisdom and beneficence of a Deity—for many are both the material and the mental processes which might be recognised as pregnant with utility, and so, pregnant with evidence for a God, long before the processes themselves are analyzed. The truth is, that a secondary law, if it do not exhibit any additional proof of design, in a distinct useful principle, exhibits that proof in a distinct and useful disposition of parts,—for, generally speaking, a secondary law is the result of an operation by some primitive law, in peculiar and new circumstances. For example, the law of the tides is a secondary law, resolvable into one more general and elementary—even the law of gravitation. But we might imagine a state of things, in which the discovery of this connection would have been impossible,—as a sky perpetually mantled with a cloudy envelopment, which, while it did not intercept the light either of the sun or moon, still hid these bodies from

strength and copiousness of his argument lie in the anatomy of the frame-work itself.

our direct observation. In these circumstances, the law of the tides and the law of gravitation, though identical in themselves, could not have been identified by us; and so, we might have ascribed this wholesome agitation of the sea and of the atmosphere to a distinct power or principle in nature—affording the distinct indication of both a kind and intelligent Creator. Now this inference is not annihilated it is not even enfeebled by the discovery in question; for although the good arising from tides in the ocean and tides in the air, is not referable to a peculiar law—it is at least referable to a peculiar collocation. And this holds of all the useful secondary laws in the material world. If they cannot be alleged in evidence for the number of beneficial principles in nature—they can at least be alleged in evidence for the number of nature's beneficial arrangements. If they do not attest the multitude of useful properties, they at the least attest the multitude of useful parts in nature; and the skill, guided by benevolence which has been put forth in the distribution of them. So that long ere the philosophy of matter is perfected, or all its phenomena and its secondary laws have been resolved into their original and constituent principles—may we, in their obvious and immediate utility alone detect as many separate evidences in nature as there are separate facts in nature, for a wise and benevolent Deity.

28. And the same will be found true of the secondary laws in the mental world, which, if not as many distinct beneficial principles in the constitution of the mind, are the effect of as many distinct and beneficial arrangements in the objects or circumstances by which it is surrounded. We have not to wait the completion of its still more subtle and difficult analysis, ere we come within sight of those varied indications of benevolent design which are so abundantly to be met with, both in the constitution of the mind itself, and in the adaptation thereto of external nature. Some there are, for example, who contend that the laws of taste are not primitive but secondary: that our admiration of beauty in material objects is resolvable into other and original emotions, and more especially, by means of the associating principle, into our admiration of moral excellence. Let the justness of this doctrine be admitted; and its only effect on our peculiar argument is, that the benevolence of God in thus multiplying our enjoyments, instead of being indicated by a distinct law for suiting the human mind to the objects

which surround it, is indicated both by the distribution of these objects and by their investment with such qualities as suit them to the previous constitution of the mind—that he hath pencilled them with the very colours, or moulded them into the very shapes which suggest either the graceful or the noble of human character; that he hath imparted to the violet its hue of modesty, and clothed the lily in its robe of purest innocence, and given to the trees of the forest their respective attitudes of strength or delicacy, and made the whole face of nature one bright reflection of those virtues which the mind and character of man had originally radiated. If it be not by the implantation of a peculiar law in mind, it is at least by a peculiar disposition of tints and forms in external nature, that he hath spread so diversified a loveliness over the panorama of visible things; and thrown so many walks of enchantment around us; and turned the sights and the sounds of rural scenery into the ministers of so much and such exquisite enjoyment; and caused the outer world of matter to image forth in such profusion those various qualities, which at first had pleased or powerfully affected us in the inner world of consciousness and thought. It is by the modifying operation of circumstances that a primary is transmuted into a secondary law; and if the blessings which we enjoy under it cannot be ascribed to the insertion of a distinct principle in the nature of man, they can at least be ascribed to a useful disposition of circumstances in the theatre around him.

29. It is thus that philosophical discovery, which is felt by many to enfeeble the argument for a God, when it reduces two or more subordinate to simpler and anterior laws, does in fact leave that argument as entire as before—for if, by analysis, it diminish the number of beneficial properties in matter, it replaces the injury which it may be supposed to have done in this way to the cause of theism, by presenting us with as great an additional number of beneficial arrangements in nature. And further, it may not be out of place to observe, that there appear to be two distinct ways by which an artificer might make manifest the wisdom of his contrivances. He may either be conceived of, as forming a substance and endowing it with the fit properties; or as finding a substance with certain given properties, and arranging it into fit dispositions for the accomplishment of some desirable end. Both the former and the latter of these we ascribe to

the divine artificer—of whom we imagine, that He is the Creator as well as the Disposer of all things. It is only the latter that we can ascribe to the human artificer, who creates no substance, and ordains no property; but finds the substance with all its properties ready made and put into his hands, as the raw material out of which he fashions and rears his structures of various design and workmanship. Now it is a commonly received, and has indeed been raised into a sort of universal maxim, that the highest property of wisdom is to achieve the most desirable end, or the greatest amount of good, by the fewest possible means, or by the simplest machinery. When this test is applied to the laws of nature—then we esteem it, as enhancing the manifestation of intelligence, that one single law, as gravitation, should, as from a central and commanding eminence, subordinate to itself a whole host of most important phenomena; or that from one great and parent property, so vast a family of beneficial consequences should spring. And when the same test is applied to the dispositions, whether nature or art—then it enhances the manifestation of wisdom, when some great end is brought about with a less complex or cumbersome instrumentality, as often takes place in the simplification of machines, when, by the device of some ingenious ligament or wheel, the apparatus is made equally, perhaps more effective, whilst less unwieldy or less intricate than before. Yet there is one way in which, along with an exceeding complication in the mechanism, there might be given the impression, of the very highest skill and capacity having been put forth on the contrivance of it. It is when, by means of a very operose and complex instrumentality, the triumph of art has been made all the more conspicuous, by a very marvellous result having been obtained out of very unpromising materials. It is true, that, in this case too, a still higher impression of skill would be given, if the same or a more striking result were arrived at, even after the intricacy of the machine had been reduced, by some happy device, in virtue of which, certain of its parts or circumvolutions had been superseded; and thus, without injury to the final effect, so much of the complication had been dispensed with. Still, however, the substance, whether of the machine or manufacture, may be conceived so very intractable as to put an absolute limit on any further simplification, or as to create an absolute necessity for

all the manifold contrivance which had been expended on it. When this idea predominates in the mind—then all the complexity which we may behold does not reduce our admiration of the artist, but rather deepens the sense that we have, both of the reconditeness of his wisdom, and of the wondrous vastness and variety of his resources. It is the extreme wideness of the contrast, between the sluggishness of matter and the fineness of the results in physiology, which so enhances our veneration for the great Architect of Nature, when we behold the exquisite organizations of the animal and vegetable kingdoms.* The two exhibitions are wholly distinct from each other—yet each of them may be perfect in its own way. The first is held forth to us, when one law of pervading generality is found to scatter a myriad of beneficent consequences in its train. The second is held forth, when, by an infinite complexity of means, a countless variety of expedients with their multiform combinations, some one design, such as the upholding of life in plants or animals is accomplished. Creation presents us in marvellous profusion with specimens of both these—at once confirming the doctrine, and illustrating the significancy of the expression in which Scripture hath conveyed it to us, when it tells of the *manifold* wisdom of God.

30. But while, on a principle already often recognised, this multitude of necessary conditions to the accomplishment of a given end, enhances the argument for a God, because each separate condition reduces the hypothesis of chance to a more violent improbability than before; yet it must not be disguised that there is a certain transcendental mystery which it has the effect of aggravating, and which it leaves unresolved. We can understand the complex machinery and the circuitous processes to which a human artist must resort, that he might overcome the else uncomplying obstinacy of inert matter, and bend it in subserviency to his special designs. But that the Divine artist who first created the matter and ordained its laws, should find the same complication necessary for the accomplishment of his purposes; that such an elaborate workmanship, for example, should be required to establish the functions of sight and hearing in the animal economy, is very like the lavish or ostensible

*Dr. Paley would state the problem thus. The laws of matter being given, so to organize it, as that it shall produce or sustain the phenomena, whether of vegetation or of life.

ingenuity of a Being employed in conquering the difficulty which himself had raised. It is true, the one immediate purpose is served by it which we have just noticed,—that of presenting, as it were, to the eye of enquirers a more manifold inscription of the Divinity. But if, instead of being the object of inference, it had pleased God to make himself the object of a direct manifestation, then for the mere purpose of becoming known to his creatures, this reflex or circuitous method of revelation would have been altogether uncalled for. That under the actual system of creation, and with its actual proofs, he has made his existence most decisively known to us, we most thankfully admit. But when question is made between the actual and the conceivable systems of creation which God might have emanated, we are forced to confess, that the very circumstances which, in the existing order of things, have brightened and enhanced the evidence of His being, have also cast a deeper secrecy over what may be termed the general policy of His government and ways. And this is but one of the many difficulties, which men of unbridled speculation and unob-servant of that sound philosophy that keeps within the limits of human observation, will find it abundantly possible to conjure up on the field of natural theism. It does look an impracticable enigma that the Omnipotent God, who could have grafted all the capacities of thought and feeling on an elementary atom, should have deemed fit to incorporate the human soul in the midst of so curious and complicated a frame-work. For what a variegated structure is man's animal economy. What an apparatus of vessels and bones and ligaments. What a complex mechanism. What an elaborate chemistry. What a multitude of parts in the anatomy, and of processes in the physiology of this marvellous system. What a medley, we had almost said, what a package of contents. What an unwearied play of secretions and circulations and other changes incessant and innumerable. In short, what a laborious complication; and all to uphold a living principle, which, one might think, could by a simple fiat of omnipotence, have sprung forth at once from the great source and centre of the spiritual system, and mingled with the world of spirits—just as each new particle of light is sent forth by the emanation of a sunbeam, to play and glisten among the fields of radiance

31. But to recall ourselves from this digression among the

possibilities of what might have been, to the realities of the mental system, such as it actually is. Ere we bring the very general observations of this chapter to a close, we would briefly notice an analogy between the realities of the mental and those of the corporeal system. The enquirers into the latter have found it of substantial benefit to their science, to have mixed up with the prosecution of it a reference to final causes. Their reasoning on the likely uses of a part in anatomy, has, in some instances, suggested or served as a guide to speculations, which have been at length verified by a discovery. We believe, in like manner, that reasoning on the likely or obvious uses of a principle in the constitution of the human mind, might lead, if not to the discovery, at least to the confirmation of important truth—not perhaps in the science itself, but in certain of the cognate sciences which stand in no very distant relation to it. For example, we think it should rectify certain errors which have been committed both in jurisprudence and political economy, if it can be demonstrated that some of the undoubted laws of human nature are traversed by them; and so, that violence is thereby done to the obvious designs of the Author of Nature. We shall not hold it out of place, though we notice one or two of these instances, by which it might be seen that the mental philosophy, when studied in connection with the palpable views of Him by whom all its principles and processes were ordained, is fitted to enlighten the practice of legislation, and more especially to determine the wisdom of certain arrangements which have for their object the economic well-being of society.

32. We feel the arduousness of our peculiar task, and the feeling is not at all alleviated by our sense of its surpassing dignity. The superiority of mind to matter has often been the theme of eloquence to moralists. For what were all the wonders of the latter and all its glories, without a spectator mind that could intelligently view and that could tastefully admire them? Let every eye be irrevocably closed, and this were equivalent to the entire annihilation in nature of the element of light; and in like manner, if the light of all consciousness were put out in the world of mind, the world of matter, though as rich in beauty, and in the means of benevolence as before, were thereby reduced to a virtual nonentity. In these circumstances, the lighting up again of even but one mind would restore its being, or at least its signifi-

cancy to that system of materialism, which, untouched itself, had just been desolated of all those beings in whom it could kindle reflection, or to whom it could minister the sense of enjoyment. It were tantamount to the second creation, of it,—or, in other words, one living intelligent spirit is of higher reckoning and mightier import than a dead universe.

PART 1.

ON THE ADAPTATION OF EXTERNAL NATURE TO THE MORAL CONDITION OF MAN.

CHAPTER I.

On the Supremacy of Conscience.

1. AN abstract question in morals is distinct from a question respecting the constitution of man's moral nature; and the former ought no more to be confounded with the latter, than the truths of geometry with the faculties of the reasoning mind which comprehends them. The virtuousness of justice was a stable doctrine in ethical science, anterior to the existence of the species; and would remain so, though the species were destroyed—just as much as the properties of a triangle are the enduring stabilities of mathematical science; and that, though no matter had been created to exemplify the positions or the figures of geometry. The objective nature of virtue is one thing. The subjective nature of the human mind, by which virtue is felt and recognized, is another. It is not from the former, any more than from the eternal truths of geometry, that we can demonstrate the existence or attributes of God—but from the latter, as belonging to the facts of a creation emanating from His will, and therefore bearing upon it the stamp of His character. The nature and constitution of virtue form a distinct subject of enquiry from the nature and constitution of the human mind. Virtue is not a creation of the Divine will, but has had everlasting residence in the nature of the Godhead. The mind of man is a creation; and therefore indicates, by its characteristics, the character of Him, to the fiat and the forthgoing of whose will it owes its existence. We must frequently, in the course of this discussion, advert to the principles of ethics; but it is not on the system of ethical doctrine that our argument properly is founded. It is on the phenomena and the laws of actual human nature, which itself, one of the great facts of creation, may be regarded like

all its facts, as bearing on it the impress of that mind which gave birth to creation.

2. But further. It is not only not with the system of ethical doctrine—it is not even with the full system of the philosophy of our nature that we have properly to do. On this last there is still a number of unsettled questions; but our peculiar argument does not need to wait for the conclusive determination of them. For example, there is many a controversy among philosophers respecting the primary and secondary laws of the human constitution. Now, if it be an obviously beneficial law, it carries evidence for a God, in the mere existence and operation of it, independently of the rank which it holds, or of the relation in which it stands to the other principles of our internal mechanism. It is thus that there may, at one and the same time, be grounded on the law in question a clear theological inference; and yet there may be associated with it an obscure philosophical speculation. It is well that we separate these two; and, more especially, that the decisive attestation given by any part or phenomenon of our nature to the Divine goodness, shall not be involved in the mist and metaphysical perplexity of other reasonings, the object of which is altogether distinct and separate from our own. The facts of the human constitution, apart altogether from the philosophy of their causation, demonstrate the wisdom and benevolence of Him who framed it; and while it is our part to follow the light of this philosophy, as far as the light and the guidance of it are sure, we are not, in those cases, when the final cause is obvious as day, though the proximate efficient cause should be hidden in deepest mystery,—we are not, on this account, to confound darkness with light, or light with darkness.

3. By attending throughout to this observation, we shall be saved from a thousand irrelevancies as well as obscurities of argument; and it is an observation peculiarly applicable, in announcing that great fact or phenomenon of mind, which, for many reasons, should hold a foremost place in our demonstration—we mean the felt supremacy of conscience. Philosophers there are, who have attempted to resolve this fact into ulterior or ultimate ones in the mental constitution; and who have denied to the faculty a place among its original and uncompounded principles. Sir James Macintosh tells us of the generation of human conscience; and, not merely states, but endeavours to explain the phe-

nomenon of its felt supremacy within us. Dr. Adam Smith also assigns a pedigree to our moral judgments; but, with all his peculiar notions respecting the origin of the awards of conscience, he never once disputes their authority; or, that, by the general consent of mankind, this authority is, in sentiment and opinion at least, conceded to them.* It is somewhat like an antiquarian controversy respecting the first formation and subsequent historical changes of some certain court of government, the rightful authority of whose decisions and acts is, at the same time, fully recognized. And so, philosophers have disputed regarding the court of conscience—of what materials it is constructed, and by what line of genealogy from the anterior principles of our nature it has sprung. Yet most of these have admitted the proper right of sovereignty which belongs to it; its legitimate place as the master and the arbiter over all the appetites and desires and practical forces of human nature. Or, if any have dared the singularity of denying this, they do so in opposition to the general sense and general language of mankind, whose very modes of speech compel them to affirm that the biddings of conscience are of paramount authority—its peculiar office being to tell what all men should, or all men ought to do.

4. The proposition, however, which we are now urging, is not that the obligations of virtue are binding, but that man has a conscience which tells him that they are so—not that justice and truth and humanity are the dogmata of the abstract moral system, but that they are the dictates of man's moral nature—not that in themselves they are the constituent parts of moral rectitude, but that there is a voice within every heart which thus pronounces on them. It is not with

* 'Upon whatever,' observes Dr. Adam Smith, "we suppose our moral faculties to be founded, whether upon a certain modification of reason, upon an original instinct called a moral sense, or upon some other principle of our nature, it cannot be doubted that they were given us for the direction of our conduct in this life. They carry along with them the most evident badges of this authority, which denote that they were set up within us to be the supreme arbiters of all our actions, to superintend all our senses, passions and appetites, and to judge how far each of them was either to be indulged or restrained. It is the peculiar office of these faculties to judge, to bestow censure or applause upon all the other principles of our nature.

Theory of Moral Sentiments, Part iii. chap. v.

the constitution of morality, viewed objectively, as a system or theory of doctrine, that we have properly to do; but with the constitution of man's spirit, viewed as the subject of certain phenomena and laws—and, more particularly, with a great psychological fact in human nature, namely the homage rendered by it to the supremacy of conscience. In a word, it is not of a category, but of a creation that we are speaking. The one can tell us nothing of the divine character, while the other might afford most distinct and decisive indications of it. We could find no demonstration whatever of the divine purposes, on a mere ethical, any more than we could, on a logical or mathematical category. But it is very different with an actual creation, whether in mind or in matter—a mechanism of obvious contrivance, and whose workings and tendencies, therefore, must be referred to the design, and so to the disposition or character of that Being, whose spirit hath devised and whose fingers have framed it.

5. And neither do we urge the proposition that conscience has in every instance, the actual direction of human affairs, for this were in the face of all experience. It is not that every man obeys her dictates, but that every man feels he ought to obey them. These dictates are often in life and practice disregarded: so that conscience is not the sovereign *de facto*. Still there is a voice within the hearts of all which asserts that conscience is the sovereign *de jure*; that to her belongs the command rightfully, even though she do not possess it actually. In a season of national anarchy, the actual power and the legitimate authority are often disjoined from each other. The lawful monarch may be dethroned, and so lose the might; while he continues to possess—nay, while he may be acknowledged throughout his kingdom to possess the right of sovereignty. The distinction still is made, even under this reign of violence, between the usurper and the lawful sovereign; and there is a similar distinction among the powers and principles of the human constitution, when an insurrection takes place of the inferior against the superior; and conscience, after being dethroned from her place of mastery and control, is still felt to be the superior, or rather supreme faculty of our nature notwithstanding. She may have fallen from her dominion, yet still wear the badges of a fallen sovereign, having the acknowledged right of authority, though the power of enforcement has been wrested away from her. She may be outraged in all her preroga-

tives by the lawless appetites of our nature, —but not without the accompanying sense within of an outrage and a wrong having been inflicted, and a reclaiming voice from thence which causes itself to be heard and which remonstrates against it. The insurgent and inferior principles of our constitution may, in the uproar of their wild mutiny, lift a louder and more effective voice than the small still voice of conscience. They have the might but not the right. Conscience, on the other hand, is felt to have the right though not the might—the legislative office being that which properly belongs to her, though the executive power should be wanting to enforce her enactments. It is not the reigning but the rightful authority of conscience that we, under the name of her supremacy, contend for; or, rather the fact that, by the consent of all our higher principles and feelings, this rightful authority is reputed to be hers; and, by the general concurrence of mankind awarded to her.

6. And here it is of capital importance to distinguish between an original and proper tendency, and a subsequent aberration. This has been well illustrated by the regulator of a watch, whose office and primary design, and that obviously announced by the relation in which it stands to the other parts of the machinery, is to control the velocity of its movements. And we should still perceive this to have been its destination, even though, by accident or decay, it had lost the power of command which at the first belonged to it. We should not misunderstand the purpose of its maker, although, in virtue of some deterioration or derangement which the machinery had undergone, that purpose were now frustrated. And we could discern the purpose in the very make and constitution of the mechanism. We might even see it to be an irregular watch; and yet this needs not prevent us from seeing, that, at its original fabrication, it was made for the purpose of moving regularly. The mere existence and position of the regulator might suffice to indicate this,—although it had become powerless, either from the wearing of the parts, or from some extrinsic disturbance to which the instrument had been exposed. The regulator, in this instance, may be said to have the right, though not the power of command, over the movements of the time-piece; yet the loss of the power has not obliterated the vestiges of the right; so that, by the inspection of the machinery alone, we both learn the injury which has been done to

it, and the condition in which it originally came from the hand of its maker—a condition of actual as well as rightful supremacy, on the part of the regulator, over all its movements. And a similar discovery may be made, by examination of the various parts and principles which make up the moral system of man: for we see various parts and principles there. We see Ambition, having power for its object, and without the attainment of which it is not satisfied; and Avarice, having wealth for its object, without the attainment of which it is not satisfied; and Benevolence, having for its object the good of others, without the attainment of which it is not satisfied; and the love of Reputation, having for its object their applause, without which it is not satisfied; and lastly, to proceed no further in the enumeration, Conscience, which surveys and superintends the whole man, whose distinct and appropriate object it is to have the entire control both of his inward desires and outward doings, and without the attainment of this it is thwarted from its proper aim, and remains unsatisfied. Each appetite, or affection of our nature, has its own distinct object; but this last is the object of Conscience, which may be termed the moral affection. The place which it occupies, or rather which it is felt that it should occupy, and which naturally belongs to it, is that of a governor, claiming the superiority, and taking to itself the direction over all the other powers and passions of humanity. If this superiority be denied to it, there is a felt violence done to the whole economy of man. The sentiment is, that the thing is not as it should be: and even after conscience is forced, in virtue of some subsequent derangement, from this station of rightful ascendancy, we can still distinguish between what is the primitive design or tendency, and what is the posterior aberration. We can perceive, in the case of a deranged or distempered watch, that the mechanism is out of order; but even then, on the bare examination of its workmanship, and more especially from the place and bearing of its regulator, can we pronounce that it was made for moving regularly. And in like manner, on the bare inspection of our mental economy alone, and more particularly from the place which conscience has there, can we, even in the case of the man who refuses to obey its dictates, affirm that he was made for walking conscientiously.

7. The distinction which we now labour to establish between conscience and the other principles of our nature,

does not respect the actual force or prevalence which may, or may not, severally belong to them. It respects the universal judgment which, by the very constitution of our nature, is passed on the question of rightness—on the question, which of all these should have the prevalence, whenever there happens to be a contest between them. All which we affirm is, that if conscience prevail over the other principles, then every man is led, by the very make and mechanism of his internal economy, to feel that this is as it ought to be; or, if these others prevail over conscience, that this is not as it ought to be. One, it is generally felt, may be too ambitious, or too much set on wealth and fame, or too resentful of injury, or even too facile in his benevolence, when carried to the length of being injudicious and hurtful; but no one is ever felt, if he have sound and enlightened views of morality, to be too conscientious. When we affirm this of conscience, we but concur in the homage rendered to it by all men, as being the rightful, if not the actual superior, among all the feelings and faculties of our nature. It is a truth, perhaps, too simple for being reasoned; but this is because, like many of the most important and undoubted certainties of human belief, it is a truth of instant recognition. When stating the supremacy of conscience, in the sense that we have explained it, we but state what all men feel; and our only argument, in proof of the assertion, is—our only argument can be, an appeal to the experience of all men.

8: Bishop Butler has often been spoken of as the first discoverer of this great principle in our nature; though, perhaps, no man can properly be said to discover what all men are conscious of. But certain it is, that he is the first who hath made it the subject of a full and reflex cognizance. It forms the argument of his three first sermons, in a volume which may safely be pronounced, the most precious repository of sound ethical principles extant in any language. The authority of conscience, says Dugald Stewart, "although beautifully described by many of the ancient moralists, was not sufficiently attended to by modern writers, as a fundamental principle in the science of ethica, till the time of Dr. Butler." It belongs to the very essence of the principle, that we clearly distinguish, between what we find to be the actual force of conscience, and what we feel to be its rightful authority. These two may exist in a state of separation from each other just as in a Civil Government,

the reigning power may, in seasons of anarchy, be dissevered from that supreme court or magistrate to whom it rightfully belongs. The mechanism of a political fabric is not adequately or fully described by the mere enumeration of its parts. There must also enter into the description, the relation which the parts bear to each other; and more especially, the paramount relation of rightful ascendancy and direction, which that part, in which the functions of Government are vested, bears to the whole. Neither is the mechanism of man's personal constitution fully or adequately described, by merely telling us in succession the several parts of which it is composed—as the passions, and the appetites, and the affections, and the moral sense, and the intellectual capacities, which make up this complex and variously gifted creature. The particulars of his mental system must not only be stated, each in their individuality; but the bearing or connexion which each has with the rest—else it is not described as a system at all. In making out this description, we should not only not overlook the individual faculty of conscience, but we must not overlook its relative place among the other feelings and faculties of our nature. That place is the place of command. What conscience lays claim to is the mastery or regulation over the whole man. Each desire of our nature rests or terminates in its own appropriate object, as the love of fame in applause, or hunger in food, or revenge in the infliction of pain upon its object, or affection for another in the happiness and company of the beloved individual. But the object of the moral sense is to arbitrate and direct among all these propensities. It claims the station and the prerogative of a mistress over them. Its peculiar office is that of superintendence, and there is a certain feeling of violence or disorder, when the mandates which it issues in this capacity, are not carried into effect. Every affection in our nature is appeased by the object that is suited to it. The object of conscience is the subordination of the whole to its dictates. Without this it remains unappeased, and as if bereft of its rights. It is not a single faculty, taking its own separate and unconnected place among the other feelings and faculties which belong to us. Its proper place is that of a guide or a governor. It is the ruling power in our nature; and its proper, its legitimate business, is to prescribe that man shall be as he ought, and do as he ought. But instead of expa-

tiating any further at present in language of our own, let us here admit a few brief sentences from Butler himself, that great and invaluable expounder both of the human constitution, and of moral science. "That principle by which we survey, and either approve or disapprove our own heart, temper, and actions, is not only to be considered as what in its turn is to have some influence, which may be said of every passion, of the basest appetites : but likewise as being superior ; as from its very nature manifestly claiming superiority over all others : insomuch that you cannot form a notion of this faculty conscience, without taking in judgment direction and superintendency. This is a constituent part of the idea, that is of the faculty itself : and to preside and govern, from the very economy and constitution of man, belongs to it. Had it strength, as it has right ; had it power, as it has manifest authority ; it would absolutely govern the world." "This faculty was placed within us to be our proper governor ; to direct and regulate all under principles, passions, and motives of action. This is its right and office. Thus sacred is its authority. And how often soever men violate and rebelliously refuse to submit to it, for supposed interest which they cannot otherwise obtain, or for the sake of passion which they cannot otherwise gratify ; this makes no alteration as to the *natural right* and *office* of conscience.

9. Now it is in these phenomena of Conscience that Nature offers to us, far her strongest argument, for the moral character of God. Had He been an unrighteous Being himself, would He have given to this the obviously superior faculty in man, so distinct and authoritative a voice on the side of righteousness ? Would He have so constructed the creatures of our species, as to have planted in every breast a reclaiming witness against himself ! Would he have thus inscribed on the tablet of every heart the sentence of his own condemnation ; and is not this just as unlikely, as that He should have inscribed it in written characters on the forehead of each individual ? Would He so have fashioned the workmanship of His own hands ; or, if a God of cruelty, injustice, and falsehood, would He have placed in the station of master and judge that faculty which, felt to be the highest in our nature, would prompt a generous and high-minded revolt of all our sentiments against the Being who formed us ? From a God possessed of such characteristics, we should surely have expected a differently-moulded humanity ; or, in other

words, from the actual constitution of man, from the testimonies on the side of all righteousness, given by the vicegerent within the heart, do we infer the righteousness of the Sovereign who placed it there. He would never have established a conscience in man, and invested it with the authority of a monitor, and given to it those legislative and judicial functions which it obviously possesses; and then so framed it, that all its decisions should be on the side of that virtue which he himself disowned, and condemnatory of that vice which he himself exemplified. This is an evidence for the righteousness of God, which keeps its ground, amid all the disorders and aberrations to which humanity is liable; and can no more, indeed, be deafened or overborne by these, than is the rightful authority of public opinion, by the occasional outbreakings of iniquity and violence which take place in society. This public opinion may, in those seasons of misrule when might prevails over right, be deforced from the practical ascendancy which it ought to have; but the very sentiment that it so ought, is our reason for believing the world to have been originally formed, in order that virtue might have the rule over it. In like manner, when, in the bosom of every individual man, we can discern a conscience, placed there with the obvious design of being a guide and a commander, it were difficult not to believe, that, whatever the partial outrages may be which the cause of virtue has to sustain, it has the public mind of the universe in its favour; and that therefore He, who is the Maker and the Ruler of such a universe, is a God of righteousness. Amid all the subsequent obscurations and errors, the original design, both of a deranged watch and of a deranged human nature, is alike manifest; first, of the maker of the watch, that its motions should harmonize with time; second of the maker of man, that his movements should harmonize with truth and righteousness. We can, in most cases, discern between an aberration and an original law; between a direct or primitive tendency and the effect of a disturbing force, by which that tendency is thwarted and overborne. And so of the constitution of man. It may be now a loosened and disproportioned thing, yet we can trace the original structure—even as from the fragments of a ruin, we can obtain the perfect model of a building from its capital to its base. It is thus that however prostrate conscience may have fallen, we can still discern its place of native and original pre-eminence, as being at

once the legislator and the judge in the moral system, though the executive forces of the system have made insurrection against it, and thrown the whole into anarchy. There is a depth of mystery in every thing connected with the existence or the origin of evil in creation; yet even in the fiercest uproar of our stormy passions, Conscience, though in her softest whispers, gives to the supremacy of rectitude the voice of an undying testimony; and her light still shining in a dark place, her unquelled accents still heard in the loudest outcry of Nature's rebellious appetites, form the strongest argument within reach of the human faculties, that, in spite of all partial or temporary derangements, Supreme Power and Supreme Goodness are as one. It is true that rebellious man hath, with daring footstep, trampled on the lessons of Conscience; but why, in spite of man's perversity, is conscience, on the other hand, able to lift a voice so piercing and so powerful, by which to remonstrate against the wrong, and to reclaim the honours that are due to her? How comes it that, in the mutiny and uproar of the inferior faculties, that faculty in man, which wears the stamp and impress of the highest, should remain on the side of truth and holiness? Would humanity have thus been moulded by a false and evil spirit; or would he have committed such impolicy against himself, as to insert in each member of our species a principle which would make him feel the greatest complacency in his own rectitude, when he feels the most high-minded revolt of indignation and dislike against the Being who gave him birth? It is not so much that Conscience takes a part among the other faculties of our nature; but that Conscience takes among them the part of a governor, and that man, if he do not obey her suggestions, still, in despite of himself, acknowledges her rights. It is a mighty argument for the virtue of the governor above, that all the laws and injunctions of the governor below are on the side of virtue. It seems as if He had left this representative, or remaining witness, for Himself, in a world that had cast off its allegiance; and that, from the voice of the judge within the breast, we may learn the will and the character of Him who hath invested with such authority his dictates. It is this which speaks as much more demonstratively for the presidency of a righteous God in human affairs, than for that of impure or unrighteous demons, as did the rod of Aaron, when it swallowed the rods of the enchanters and magicians in Egypt. In the wildest

anarchy of man's insurgent appetites and sins, there is still a reclaiming voice—a voice which, even when in practice disregarded, it is impossible not to own; and to which, at the very moment that we refuse our obedience, we find that we cannot refuse the homage of what ourselves do feel and acknowledge to be the best, the highest principles of our nature.

10. However difficult from the very simplicity of the subject it may be, to state or to reason the argument for a God, which is founded on all the supremacy of conscience—still, historically and experimentally, it will be found, that it is of more force than all other arguments put together, for originating and upholding the natural theism which there is in the world. The theology of conscience is not only of wider diffusion, but of far more practical influence than the theology of academic demonstration. The ratiocination by which this theology is established, is not the less firm or the less impressive, that, instead of a lengthened process, there is but one step between the premises and the conclusion—or, that the felt presence of a judge within the breast, powerfully and immediately suggests the notion of a Supreme Judge and Sovereign, who placed it there. Upon this question, the mind does not stop short at mere abstraction; but passing at once from the abstract to the concrete, from the law of the heart, it makes the rapid inference of a lawgiver. It is the very rapidity of this inference which makes it appear like intuition; and which has given birth to the mystic theology of innate ideas. Yet the theology of conscience disclaims such mysticism, built, as it is, on a foundation of sure and sound reasoning; for the strength of an argumentation in nowise depends upon the length of it. The sense of a governing principle within, begets in all men the sentiment of a living governor without and above them, and it does so with all the speed of an instantaneous feeling; yet it is not an impression, it is an inference notwithstanding—and as much so as any inference from that which is seen, to that which is unseen. There is, in the first instance, cognizance taken of a fact—if not by the outward eye, yet as good, by the eye of consciousness which has been termed the faculty of internal observation. And the consequent belief of a God, instead of being an instinctive sense of the Divinity, is the fruit of an inference grounded on that fact. There is instant transition made, from the sense of a Moni-

tor within to the faith of a living Sovereign above; and this argument, described by all, but with such speed as almost to warrant the expression of its being felt by all, may be regarded, notwithstanding the force and fertility of other considerations, as the great prop of natural religion among men.

11. And we mistake, if we think it was ever otherwise, even in the ages of darkest and most licentious paganism. This theology of conscience has often been greatly obscured, but never, in any country or at any period in the history of the world, has it been wholly obliterated. We behold the vestiges of it in the simple theology of the desert; and, perhaps, more distinctly there, than in the complex superstitions of an artificial and civilized heathenism. In confirmation of this, we might quote the invocations to the *Great Spirit* from the wilds of North America. But, indeed, in every quarter of the globe, where missionaries have held converse with savages, even with the rudest of nature's children—when speaking on the topics of sin and judgment, they do not speak to them in vocables unknown. And as this sense of a universal law and a Supreme Lawgiver never waned into total extinction among the tribes of ferocious and untamed wanderers—so neither was it altogether stifled by the refined and intricate polytheism of more enlightened nations. The whole of classic authorship teems with allusions to a supreme Governor and Judge: And when the guilty Emperors of Rome were tempest driven by remorse and fear, it was not that they trembled before a spectre of their own imagination. When terror mixed, which it often did, with the rage and cruelty of Nero, it was the theology of conscience which haunted him. It was not the suggestion of a capricious fancy which gave him the disturbance—but a voice issuing from the deep recesses of a moral nature, as stable and uniform throughout the species as in the material structure of humanity; and in the lineaments of which we may read that there is a moral regimen among men, and therefore a moral Governor who hath instituted, and who presides over it. Therefore it was that these imperial despots, the worst and haughtiest of recorded monarchs, stood aghast at the spectacle of their own worthlessness. It is true, there is a wretchedness which naturally and essentially belongs to a state of great moral unhingement; and this may account for their discomforts, but it will not account for their fears. They may, because of this,

have felt the torments of a present misery. But whence their fears of a coming vengeance? They would not have trembled at nature's law, apart from the thought of nature's lawgiver. The imagination of an unsanctioned law would no more have given disquietude, than the imagination of a vacant throne. But the law, to their guilty apprehensions, bespoke a judge. The throne of heaven, to their troubled eye, was filled by a living monarch. Righteousness, it was felt, would not have been so enthroned in the moral system of man, had it not been previously enthroned in the system of the universe; nor would it have held such a place and pre-eminence in the judgment of all spirits, had not the father of spirits been its friend and ultimate avenger. This is not a local or geographical notion. It is a universal feeling—to be found wherever men are to be found, because interwoven with the constitution of humanity. It is not, therefore, the peculiarity of one creed, or of one country. It circulates at large throughout the family of man. We can trace it in the theology of savage life; nor is it wholly overborne by the artificial theology of a more complex and idolatrous paganism. Neither crime nor civilization can extinguish it; and, whether in the "conscientia scelerum" of the fierce and frenzied Cataline, or in the tranquil contemplative musings of Socrates and Cicero, we find the impression of at once a righteous and a reigning Sovereign.

12. And it confirms still more our idea of a government—that conscience not only gives forth her mandates with the one and authority of a Superior; but, as if on purpose to enforce their observance, thus follows them up with an obvious discipline of rewards and punishments. It is enough but to mention, on the one hand, that felt complacency which is distilled, like some precious elixir, upon the heart by the recollection of virtuous deeds and virtuous sacrifices; and, on the other hand, those inflictions of remorse, which are attendant upon wickedness, and wherewith, as if by the whip of a secret tormentor, the heart of every conscious sinner is agonized. We discern in these the natural sanctions of morality, and the moral character of Him who hath ordained them. We cannot otherwise explain the peace and triumphant satisfaction which spring from the consciousness of well doing—nor can we otherwise explain the degradation as well as bitter distress, which a sense of demerit brings along with it. Our only adequate interpretation

of these phenomena is, that they are the present remunerations or the present chastisements of a God who loveth righteousness, and who hateth iniquity. Nor do we view them as the conclusive results of virtue and vice, but rather as the tokens and the precursors either of a brighter reward or of a heavier vengeance, that are coming. It is thus that the delight of self-approbation, instead of standing alone, brings hope in its train; and remorse, instead of standing alone, brings terror in its train. The expectations of the future are blended with these joys and sufferings of the present; and all serve still more to stamp an impression, of which traces are to be found in every quarter of the earth—that we live under a retributive economy, and that the God who reigns over it takes a moral and judicial cognizance of the creatures whom He hath formed.

13. What then are the specific injunctions of conscience? for on this question essentially depends every argument that we can derive from this power or property of our nature, for the moral character of God. If, on the one hand, the lessons given forth by a faculty, which so manifestly claims to be the pre-eminent and ruling faculty of our nature, be those of deceit and licentiousness and cruelty—then, from the character of such a law, should we infer the character of the lawgiver; and so feel the conclusion to be inevitable, that we are under the government of a malignant and unrighteous God, at once the patron of vice and the persecutor of virtue in the world. If on the other hand, temperance, and chastity, and kindness, and integrity, and truth, be the mandates which generally, if not invariably proceed from her—then, on the same principles of judgment, should we reckon that He who is the author of conscience, and who gave it the place of supremacy and honour, which it so obviously possesses in the moral system of man, was himself the friend and the exemplar of all those virtues which enter into the composition of perfect moral rectitude. In the laws and the lessons of human conscience, would we study the character of the Godhead, just as we should study the views and dispositions of a monarch, in the instructions given by him to the viceroy of one of his provinces. If, on the one hand, virtue be prescribed by the authority of conscience, and followed up by her approval, in which very approval there is felt an inward satisfaction and serenity of spirit, that of itself forms a most delicious reward; and if, on the other hand, the

perpetrations of wickedness are followed up by the voice of her rebuke, in which, identical with remorse, there is a sting of agony and discomfort, amounting to the severest penalty—then, are we as naturally disposed to infer of Him who ordained such a mental constitution that He is the righteous Governor of men, as, if seated on a visible throne in the midst of us, He had made the audible proclamation of His law, and by His own immediate hand, had distributed of His gifts to the obedient, and inflicted chastisements on the rebellious. The law of conscience may be regarded as comprising all those virtues which the hand of the Deity hath inscribed on the tablet of the human heart, or on the tablet of natural jurisprudence; and an argument for these being the very virtues which characterize and adorn Himself, is that they must have been transcribed from the prior tablet of His own nature.

14. We are sensible that there is much to obscure this inference in the actual circumstances of the world. More especially—it has been alleged, on the side of scepticism, that there is an exceeding diversity of moral judgments among men; that, out of the multifarious decisions of the human conscience, no consistent code of virtue can be framed; and that, therefore, no consistent character can be ascribed to Him, who planted this faculty in the bosom of our species, and bade it speak so uncertainly and so variously.* But to this it may be answered, in the first place, that the apparent diversity is partly reducible into the blinding, or, at least, the distorting effect of passion and interest, which sometimes are powerful enough to obscure our perception, even of mathematical and historical truths, as well as of moral distinctions; and without therefore affecting the stability of either.

* On the uniformity of our moral judgments, we would refer to the 74th and 75th of Dr. Brown's Lectures on the Philosophy of the Human Mind. "If we bear in mind" says Sir James Mackintosh, "that the question relates to the coincidence of all men in considering the same qualities as virtues, and not to the preference of one class of virtues by some, and of a different class by others, the exceptions from the agreement of mankind, in their systems of practical morality, will be reduced to absolute insignificance; and we shall learn to view them as no more affecting the harmony of the moral faculties, than the resemblance of the limbs and features is affected by monstrous conformations, or by the unfortunate effects of accident and disease in a very few individuals."

it is thus, for example, that mercantile cupidity has blinded many a reckless adventurer to the enormous injustice of the slave trade; that passion and interest together have transmuted revenge into a virtue; and that the robbery, which, if prosecuted only for the sake of individual gain, would have appeared to all under an aspect of most revolting selfishness, puts on the guise of patriotism, when a whole nation deliberates on the schemes, or is led by a career of daring and lofty heroism, to the spoliations of conquest. In all such cases, it is of capital importance to distinguish between the real character of any criminal action, when looked to calmly, comprehensively, and fully; and what that is in the action which the perpetrator singles out and fastens upon as his plea, when he is either defending it to others, or reconciling it to his own conscience. In as far as he knows the deed to be incapable of vindication, and yet rushes on the performance of it, there is but delinquency of conduct incurred, not a diversity of moral judgment; nor does Conscience, in this case, at all betray any caprice or uncertainty in her decisions. It is but the conduct, and not the conscience which is in fault; and to determine whether the latter is in aught chargeable with fluctuation, we must look not to the man's performance, but to his plea. Two men may differ as to the moral character of an action; but if each is resting the support of his own view on a different principle from the other, there may still be a perfect uniformity of moral sentiment between them. They own the authority of the same laws; they only disagree in the application of them. In the first place, the most vehement denouncer of a guilty commerce that one with the most strenuous of its advocates, on the duty which each man owes to his family; and again, neither of them would venture to maintain the lawfulness of the trade, because of the miseries inflicted by it on those wretched sufferers who were its victims. The defender of this ruthless and rapacious system disowns not, in sentiment at least, however much he may disown in practice, the obligations of justice and humanity—nay, in all the palliations which he attempts of the enormity in question, he speaks of these as undoubted virtues, and renders the homage of his moral acknowledgments to them all. In the sophistry of his vindication, the principles of the ethical system are left untouched and entire. He meddles not with the virtuousness either of humanity or justice; but he tells of the humanity of slavery,

and the justice of slavery. It is true, that he heeds not the representations which are given of the atrocities of his trade—that he does not attend because he wills not to attend; and in this there is practical unfairness. Still it but resolves itself into perversity of conduct, and not into perversity of sentiment. The very dread and dislike he has for the informations of the subject, are symptoms of a feeling that his conscience cannot be trusted with the question; or in other words, prove him to be possessed of a conscience which is just like that of other men. The partialities of interest and feeling may give rise to an infinite diversity of moral judgments in our estimate of actions; while there may be the most perfect uniformity and stability of judgment in our estimate of principles: and, on all the great generalities of the ethical code, Conscience may speak the same language, and own one and the same moral directory all the world over.

15. When consciences then pronounce differently of the same action, it is for the most part, or rather, it is almost always, because understandings view it differently. It is either because the controversialists are regarding it with unequal degrees of knowledge; or, each, through the medium of his own partialities. The consciences of all would come forth with the same moral decision, were all equally enlightened in the circumstances, or in the essential relations and consequences of the deed in question; and what is just as essential to this uniformity of judgment, were all viewing it fairly as well as fully. It matters not, whether it be ignorantly or wilfully, that each is looking at this deed, but in the one aspect, or in the one relation that is favourable to his own peculiar sentiment. In either case, the diversity of judgment on the moral qualities of the same action, is just as little to be wondered at as a similar diversity on the material qualities of the same object—should any of the spectators labour under an involuntary defect of vision, or voluntarily persist either in shutting or in averting his eyes. It is thus that a quarrel has well been termed a misunderstanding, in which each of the combatants may consider, and often honestly consider, himself to be in the right; and that on reading the hostile memorials of two parties in a litigation, we can perceive no difference in their moral principles, but only in their historical statements; and that, in the public manifestoes of nations when entering upon war, we can discover no trace of a contrariety of conflict in their ethical

systems, but only in their differently put or differently coloured representations of fact; all proving, that with the utmost diversity of judgment among men respecting the moral qualities of the same thing, there may be a perfect identity of structure in their moral organs notwithstanding; and that Conscience, true to her office, needs but to be rightly informed, that she may speak the same language, and give forth the same lessons in all the countries of the earth.

16. It is this which explains the moral peculiarities of different nations. It is not that justice, humanity, and gratitude are not the canonized virtues of every region; or that falsehood, cruelty, and fraud would not, in their abstract and unassociated nakedness, be viewed as the objects of moral antipathy and rebuke. It is, that, in one and the same material action, when looked to in all the lights of which, whether in reality or by the power of imagination, it is susceptible, various, nay, opposite moral characteristics may be blended; and that while one people look to the good only without evil, another may look to the evil only without the good. And thus the identical acts which in one nation are the subjects of a most reverent and religious observance, may, in another be regarded with a shuddering sense of abomination and horror. And this, not because of any difference in what may be termed the moral categories of the two people, nor because, if moral principles in their unmixed generality were offered to the contemplation of either, either would call evil good or good evil. When theft was publicly honoured and rewarded in Sparta, it was not because theft in itself was reckoned a good thing; but because patriotism, and dexterity, and those services by which the interests of patriotism might be supported, were reckoned to be good things. When the natives of Hindostan assemble with delight around the agonies of a human sacrifice, it is not because they hold it good to rejoice in a spectacle of pain; but because they hold it good to rejoice in a spectacle of heroic devotion to the memory of the dead. When parents are exposed, or children are destroyed, it is not because it is deemed to be right that there should be the infliction of misery for its own sake; but because it is deemed to be right that the wretchedness of old age should be curtailed, or that the world should be saved from the miseries of an over-crowded species. In a word, in the very worst of these anomalies, some form of good may be de-

tected, which has led to their establishment ; and still, some universal and undoubted principle of morality, however perverted or misapplied, can be alleged in vindication of them. A people may be deluded by their ignorance ; or misguided by their superstition ; or, not only hurried into wrong deeds, but even fostered into wrong sentiments, under the influences of that cupidity or revenge, which are so perpetually operating in the warfare of savage or demisavage nations. Yet, in spite of all the topical moralities to which these have given birth, there is an unquestioned and universal morality notwithstanding. And in every case, where the moral sense is unfettered by these associations ; and the judgment is uncramped, either by the partialities of interest or by the inveteracy of national customs which habit and antiquity have rendered sacred—Conscience is found to speak the same language, nor, to the remotest ends of the world, is there a country or an island, where the same uniform and consistent voice is not heard from her. Let the mists of ignorance and passion and artificial education be only cleared away ; and the moral attributes of goodness and righteousness and truth be seen undistorted, and in their own proper guise ; and there is not a heart or a conscience throughout earth's teeming population, which could refuse to do them homage. And it is precisely because the Father of the human family has given such hearts and conscience, to all his children, that we infer these to be the very sanctities of the Godhead, the very attributes of his own primeval nature.

17. There is a countless diversity of tastes in the world, because of the infinitely various circumstances and associations of men. Yet is there a stable and correct standard of taste notwithstanding, to which all minds, that have the benefit of culture and enlargement, are gradually assimilating and approximating. It holds far more emphatically true, that in spite of the diversity of moral judgments, which are vastly less wide and numerous than the former, there is a fixed standard of morals, rallying around itself all consciences, to the greater principles of which, a full and unanimous homage is rendered from every quarter of the globe ; and even to the lesser principles and modifications of which, there is a growing and gathering consent, with every onward step in the progress of light and civilization. In proportion as the understandings of men become more enlightened, do their consciences become more accordant with each

other. Even now there is not a single people on the face of the earth, among whom barbarity and licentiousness and fraud are deified as virtues,—where it does not require the utmost strength, whether of superstition or of patriotism in its most selfish and contracted form, to uphold the delusion. Apart from these local and, we venture to hope, these temporary exceptions, the same moralities are recognized and honoured; and, however prevalent in practice, in sentiment at least, the same vices are disowned and execrated all the world over. In proportion as superstition is dissipated, and prejudice is gradually weakened by the larger intercourse of nations, these moral peculiarities do evidently wear away, till at length, if we may judge from the obvious tendency of things, conscience will, in the full manhood of our species assert the universality and the unchangeableness of her decisions. There is no speech nor language, where her voice is not heard; her line is gone out through all the earth; and her words to the ends of the world.

18. On the whole, then, conscience, whether it be an original or a derived faculty, yet as founded on human nature, if not forming a constituent part of it, may be regarded as a faithful witness for God the author of that nature, and as rendering to his character a consistent testimony. It is not necessary, for the establishment of our particular lesson, that we should turn that which is clear into that which is controversial by our entering into the scientific question respecting the physical origin of conscience, or tracing the imagined pedigree of its descent from simpler or anterior principles in the constitution of man. For, as has been well remarked by Sir James Mackintosh—"If conscience be inherent, that circumstance is, according to the common mode of thinking a sufficient proof of its title to veneration. But if provision be made, in the constitution and circumstances of all men for uniformity, producing it by processes similar to those which produce other acquired sentiments, may not our reverence be augmented by admiration of that supreme wisdom, which, in such mental contrivances, yet more highly than in the lower world of matter, accomplish mighty purposes by instruments so simple?" It is not therefore the physical origin, but the fact, of the uniformity of conscience, wherewith is concerned the theological inference that we attempt to draw from it. This ascendant faculty of our nature, which has been so often termed the divinity within us, notwith-

standing the occasional sophistry of the passions, is on the whole, representative of the Divinity above us; and the righteousness and goodness and truth, the lessons of which it gives forth every where, may well be regarded, both as the laws which enter into the juridical constitution, and as the attributes which enter into the moral character of God.

19. We admit a considerable diversity of moral observation in the various countries of the earth, but without admitting any correspondent diversity of moral sentiment between them. When human sacrifices are enforced and applauded in one nation—this is not because of their cruelty, but notwithstanding of their cruelty. Even there, the universal principle of humanity would be acknowledged, that it were wrong to inflict a wanton and uncalled for agony on any of our fellows—but there is a local superstition which counteracts the universal principle, and overbears it. When in the republic of Sparta, theft, instead of being execrated as a crime, was dignified into an art and an accomplishment, and on that footing admitted into the system of their youthful education—it was not because of its infringement on the rights of property, but notwithstanding of that infringement, and only because a local patriotism made head against the universal principle, and prevailed over it. Apart from such disturbing forces as these, it will be found that the sentiments of men gravitate towards one and the same standard all over the globe; and that, when once the obscurations of superstition and selfishness are dissipated, there will be found the same moral light in every mind, a recognition of the same moral law, as the immutable and eternal code of righteousness for all countries and all ages. The following is the noble testimony of a heathen, who tells us with equal eloquence and truth, that, even amid all the perversities of a vitiated and endlessly diversified creed, conscience sat mistress over the whole earth, and asserted the supremacy of her own unalterable obligations. “*Est quidem vera lex, recta ratio, naturæ congruens, diffusa in omnes, constans, sempiterna, quæ vocet ad officium jubendo, vetando a fraude deterreat; quæ tamen neque probos frustra jubet aut vetat, nec improbos jubendo aut vetando movet. Huic legi nec obrogari fas est, neque derogari ex hac aliquid licet, neque tota abrogari potest. Nec vero, aut per senatum aut per populum solvi hæc lege possumus. Neque est quærendus*

explanator aut interpres ejus alius. Nec erit alia lex Romæ, alia Athenis, alia nunc, alia posthac; sed et omnes gentes, et omni tempore, una lex et sempiterna et immortalis continebit; unusque erit communis quasi magister, et imperator omnium Deus ille, legis hujus inventor, disceptator, lator; cui qui non parebit, ipse se fugiet, ac naturum hominus aspernabitur, atque hoc ipso luet maximas pœnas, etiam si cœtera supplicia quæ putantur effugerit."

20. Such then is our first argument for the moral character of God—even the moral character of the law of conscience; that conscience which he hath inserted among the faculties of our nature; and armed with the felt authority of a master; and furnished with sanctions for the enforcement of its dictates; and so framed, that, apart from local perversities of the understanding or the habits, all its decisions are on the side of righteousness. The inference is neither a distant nor an obscure one, from the character of such a law to the character of its law-giver. Neither is it an inference, destroyed by the insurrection which has taken place on the part of our lower faculties, or by the actual prevalence of vice in the world. For this has only enabled conscience to come forth with another and additional demonstration of its sovereignty—just as the punishment of crime in society bears evidence to the justice of the government which is established there. In general the inward complacency felt by the virtuous, does not so impressively bespeak the real purpose and character of this the ruling faculty in man, as do the remorse, and the terror, and the bitter dissatisfaction, wherewith the hearts of the wicked are exercised. It is true, that by every act of iniquity, outrage is done to the law of conscience; but there is a felt reaction within which tells that the outrage is resented; and then it is, that conscience makes most emphatic assertion of its high prerogative, when, instead of coming forth as the benign and generous dispenser of its rewards to the obedient, it comes forth like an offended monarch in the character of an avenger. Were we endowed with prophetic vision, so as to behold, among the yet undisclosed secrets of futurity, the spectacle of a judge, and a judgment-seat, and an assembled world, and the retributions of pleasure and pain to the good and to the evil; this were fetching from afar an argument for the righteousness of God. But the instant pleasure and the instant pain wherewith conscience follows up the doings of man, brings

this very argument within the limits of actual observation. Only, instead of being manifested by the light of a preternatural revelation, it is suggested to us by one of the most familiar certainties of experience, for in these phenomena and feelings of our own moral nature, do we behold not only a present judgment, but a present execution of the sentence.

CHAPTER II.

SECOND GENERAL ARGUMENT.

On the inherent Pleasure of the Virtuous, and Misery of the Vicious Affections.

1. We are often told by moralists, that there is a native and essential happiness in moral worth; and a like native and essential wretchedness in moral depravity—inso much that the one may be regarded as its own reward, and the other as its own punishment. We do not always recollect that this happiness on the one hand, and this misery on the other, are each of them made up, severally of distinct ingredients; and that thus, by mental analysis, we might strengthen our argument both for the being and the character of God. When we discover, that, into this alleged happiness of the good there enter more enjoyments than one, we, thereby obtain two or more testimonies of the divine regard for virtue; and the proof is enhanced in the same peculiar way, that the evidence of design is, in any other department of creation, when we perceive the concurrence of so many separate and independent elements, which meet together for the production of some complex and beneficial result.*

2. We have already spoken of one such ingredient. There is a felt satisfaction in the thought of having done what we know to be right; and, in counterpart to this complacency of self-approbation, there is a felt discomfort, amounting often to bitter and remorseful agony, in the thought of having done what conscience tells us to be wrong. This implies a sense of the rectitude of what is virtuous. But without thinking of its rectitude at all, without viewing it in reference either to the law of conscience or to the law of God, with no regard

See Chap. I. 6.

to jurisprudence in the matter—there is, in the virtuous affection itself, another and a distinct enjoyment. We ought to cherish and to exercise benevolence; and there is a pleasure in the consciousness of doing what we ought: but beside this moral sentiment, and beside the peculiar pleasure appended to benevolence as moral, there is a sensation in the merely physical affection of benevolence; and that sensation of itself, is in the highest degree pleasurable. The primary or instant gratification which there is in the direct and immediate feeling of benevolence is one thing: the secondary or reflex gratification which there is in the consciousness of benevolence as moral is another thing. The two are distinct of themselves; but the contingent union of them, in the case of every virtuous affection, gives a multiple force to the conclusion, that God is the lover, and, because so, the patron or the rewarder of virtue. He hath so constituted our nature, that in the very flow and exercise of the good affections, there shall be the oil of gladness. There is instant delight in the first conception of benevolence. There is sustained delight in its continued exercise. There is consummated delight in the happy smiling and prosperous result of it. Kindness, and honesty, and truth, are, of themselves, and irrespective of their rightness, sweet unto the taste of the inner man. Malice, envy, falsehood, injustice, irrespective of their wrongness, have of themselves, the bitterness of gall and wormwood. The Deity hath annexed a high mental enjoyment, not to the consciousness only of good affections, but to the very sense and feeling of good affections. However closely these may follow on each other—nay, however implicated or blended together they may be at the same moment into one compound state of feeling; they are not the less distinct on that account, of themselves. They form two pleasurable sensations, instead of one; and their apposition, in the case of every virtuous deed or virtuous desire, exhibits to us that very concurrence in the world of mind, which obtains with such frequency and fulness in the world of matter—affording in every new part that is added, not a simply repeated only, but a vastly multiplied evidence for design, throughout all its combinations. There is a pleasure in the very sensation of virtue; and there is a pleasure attendant on the sense of its rectitude. These two phenomena are independent of each other. Let there be a certain number of chances against the first in a random economy of

things, and also a certain number of chances against the second. In the actual economy of things, where there is the conjunction of both phenomena—it is the product of these two numbers which represents the amount of evidence afforded by them, for a moral government in the world, and a moral Governor over them.

3. In the calm satisfactions of virtue, this distinction may not be so palpable, as in the pungent and more vividly felt disquietudes which are attendant on the wrong affections of our nature. The perpetual corrosion of that heart, for example, which frets in unhappy peevishness all the day long, is plainly distinct from the bitterness of that remorse which is felt, in the recollection of its harsh and injurious outbursts on the innocent sufferers within its reach. It is saying much for the moral character of God, that he has placed a conscience within us, which administers painful rebuke on every indulgence of a wrong affection. But it is saying still more for such being the character of our Maker—so to have framed our mental constitution, that in the very working of these bad affections there should be the painfulness of a felt discomfort and discordancy. Such is the make or mechanism of our nature, that it is thwarted and put out of sorts, by rage and envy, and hatred; and this, irrespective of the adverse moral judgments which conscience passes upon them. Of themselves, they are unsavoury; and no sooner do they enter the heart, than they shed upon it an immediate distillation of bitterness. Just as the placid smile of benevolence bespeaks the felt comfort of benevolence; so, in the frown and tempest of an angry countenance, do we read the unhappiness of that man who is vexed and agitated by his own malignant affections—eating inwardly as they do on the vitals of his enjoyment. It is, therefore, that he is often styled, and truly, a self tormentor; or, his own worst enemy. The delight of virtue in itself, is a separate thing from the delight of the conscience which approves it. And the pain of moral evil in itself, is a separate thing from the pain inflicted by conscience in the act of condemning it. They offer to our notice two distinct ingredients, both of the present reward attendant upon virtue, and of the present penalty attendant upon vice; and so, enhance the evidence that is before our eyes, for the moral character of that administration, under which the world has been placed by its author. The appetite of hunger is rightly alleged, in evidence of the care,

wherewith the Deity hath provided for the well-being of our natural constitution; and the pleasurable taste of food is rightly alleged as an additional proof of the same. And so if the urgent voice of conscience within, calling us to virtue be alleged in evidence of the care, wherewith the Deity hath provided for the well-being of our moral constitution; the pleasurable taste of virtue in itself, with the bitterness of its opposite, may well be alleged as additional evidence thereof. They alike afford the present and the sensible tokens of a righteous administration, and so of a righteous God.

4. Our present argument is grounded, neither on the rectitude of virtue, nor on its utility in the grosser and more palpable sense of that term—but on the immediate sweetness of it. It is the office of conscience to tell us of its rectitude. It is by experience that we learn its utility. But the sweetness of it—the *dulce* of virtue, as distinguished from its *utile*, is a thing of instant sensation. It may be decomposed into two ingredients, with one of which conscience has to do—even the pleasure we have, when any deed or any affection of ours receives from her a favourable verdict. But it has another ingredient which forms the proper and the distinct argument that we are now urging—even the pleasure we have in the mere relish of the affection itself. If it be a proof of benevolence in God, that our external organs of taste should have been so framed, as to have a liking for wholesome food; it is no less the proof both of a benevolent and a righteous God, so to have framed our mental economy, as that right and wholesome morality should be palatable to the taste of the mner man. Virtue is not only seen to be right it is felt to be delicious. There is happiness in the very wish to make others happy. There is a heart's ease, or a heart's enjoyment, even in the first purposes of kindness, as well as in its subsequent performances. There is a certain rejoicing sense of clearness in the consistency, the exactitude of justice and truth. There is a triumphant elevation of spirit in magnanimity and honour. In perfect harmony with this, there is a placid feeling of serenity and blissful contentment in gentleness and humility. There is a noble satisfaction in those victories, which, at the bidding of principle, or by the power of self-command, may have been achieved over the propensities of animal nature. There is an elate independence of soul, in the consciousness of having nothing to hide, and nothing to be ashamed of. In a word, by the constitu-

tion of our nature, each virtue has its appropriate charm; and virtue, on the whole, is a fund of varied, as well as of perpetual enjoyment, to him who hath imbibed its spirit, and is under the guidance of its principles. He feels all to be health and harmony within; and without he seems as if to breathe in an atmosphere of beautiful transparency—proving how much the nature of man and the nature of virtue are in unison with each other. It is hunger which urges to the use of food; but it strikingly demonstrates the care and benevolence of God, so to have framed the organ of taste, as that there shall be a superadded enjoyment in the use of it. It is conscience which urges to the practice of virtue; but it serves to enhance the proof of a moral purpose, and therefore of a moral character in God, so to have framed our mental economy, that, in addition to the felt obligation of its rightness, virtue should of itself, be so regaling to the taste of the inner man.

5. In counterpart to these sweets and satisfactions of virtue, is the essential and inherent bitterness of all that is morally evil. We repeat, that, with this particular argument, we do not mix up the agonies of remorse. It is the wretchedness of vice in itself, not the wretchedness which we suffer because of its recollected and felt wrongness that we now speak of. It is not the painfulness of the compunction felt because of our anger, upon which we at this moment insist; but the painfulness of the emotion itself; and the same remark applies to all the malignant desires of the human heart. True, it is inseparable from the very nature of a desire, that there must be some enjoyment or other, at the time of its gratification; but, in the case of these evil affections, it is not unmixed enjoyment. The most ordinary observer of his own feelings, however incapable of analysis, must be sensible, even at the moment of wreaking, in full indulgence of his resentment, on the man who has provoked or injured him, that all is not perfect and entire enjoyment within; but that, in this, and indeed in every other malignant feeling, there is a sore burden of disquietude—an unhappiness tumultuating in the heart, and visibly pictured on the countenance. The ferocious tyrant who has only to issue forth his mandate, and strike dead at pleasure the victim of his wrath, with any circumstance too of barbaric caprice and cruelty, which his fancy in the very waywardness of passion unrestrained and power unbounded might suggest to him—ha

may be said to have experienced through life a thousand gratifications, in the solaced rage and revenge, which, though ever breaking forth on some new subject, he can appease again every day of his life by some new execution. But we mistake it if we think otherwise than that, in spite of these distinct and very numerous nay daily gratifications if he so choose, it is not a life of fierce and internal agony notwithstanding. It seems indispensable to the nature of every desire, and to form part indeed of its very idea, that there should be a distinctly felt pleasure, or at least, a removal at the time of a distinctly felt pain, in the act of its fulfilment—yet, whatever recreation or relief may have thus been rendered, without doing away the misery often in the whole amount of it the intense misery, inflicted upon man by the evil propensities of his nature. Who can doubt for example the unhappiness of the habitual drunkard? And that, although the ravenous appetite, by which he is driven, along a stormy career, meets every day, almost every hour of the day, with the gratification that is suited to it. The same may be equally affirmed of the voluptuary, or of the depredator, or of the extortioner, or of the liar. Each may succeed in the attainment of his specific object; and we cannot possibly disjoin from the conception of success the conception of some sort of pleasure—yet in perfect consistency, we affirm, with a sad and heavy burthen of unpleasantness or unhappiness on the whole. He is little conversant with our nature who does not know of many a passion belonging to it, that it may be the instrument of many pleasurable, nay delicious or exquisite sensations, and yet be a wretched passion still; the domineering tyrant of a bondsman, who at once knows himself to be degraded, and feels himself to be unhappy. A sense of guilt is one main ingredient of this misery—yet physically, and notwithstanding the pleasure or the relief inseparable at the moment from every indulgence of the passions, there are other sensations of bitterness, which of themselves, and apart from remorse, would cause the suffering to preponderate.

6. There is an important discrimination made by Bishop Butler in his sermons; and, by the help of which, this phenomenon, of apparent contradiction or mystery in our nature may be satisfactorily explained. He distinguishes between the final object of any of our desires, and the pleasure attendant on or rather inseparable from its gratification. The

object is not the pleasure, though the pleasure be an **unfailing** and essential accompaniment on the attainment of the object. This is well illustrated by the appetite of hunger, of which it were more proper to say that it seeks for food, than that it seeks for the pleasure which there is in eating the food. The food is the object; the pleasure is the accompaniment. We do not here speak of the distinct and secondary pleasure which there is in the taste of food, but of that other pleasure which strictly and properly attaches to the gratification of the appetite of hunger. This is the pleasure, or relief, which accompanies the act of eating; while the ultimate object, the object in which the appetite rests and terminates, is the food itself. The same is true of all our special affections. Each has a proper and peculiar object of its own, and the mere pleasure attendant on the prosecution or the indulgence of the affection is not, as has been clearly established by Butler and fully reasserted by Dr. Thomas Brown, is not that object. The two are as distinct from each other, as a thing loved is distinct from the pleasure of loving it. Every special inclination has its special and counterpart object. The object of the inclination is one thing; the pleasure of gratifying the inclination is another; and, in most instances, it were more proper to say, that it is for the sake of the object than for the sake of the pleasure that the inclination is gratified. The distinction that we now urge, though felt to be a subtle, is truly a substantial one; and pregnant, both with important principle and important application. The discovery and clear statement of it by Butler may well be regarded as the highest service rendered by any philosopher to moral science; and that from the light which it casts, both on the processes of the human constitution and on the theory of virtue. As one example of the latter service, the principle in question, so plainly and convincingly unfolded by this great Christian philosopher in his sermon on the love of our neighbour, strikes, and with most conclusive effect, at the root of the selfish system of morals; a system which professes that man's sole object, in the practice of all the various moralities, is his own individual advantage. Now, in most cases of a special, and more particularly of a virtuous affection, it can be demonstrated, that the object is a something out of himself and distinct from himself. Take compassion for one instance out of the many. The object of this affection is the relief of another's misery, and, in the fulfil-

ment of this, does the affection meet with its full solace and gratification; that is in a something altogether external from himself. It is true, that there is an appropriate pleasure in the indulgence of this affection, even as there is in the indulgence of every other; and in proportion, too, to the strength of the affection, will be the greatness of the pleasure. The man who is doubly more compassionate than his fellow, will have doubly a greater enjoyment in the relief of misery; yet that, most assuredly, not because he of the two is the more intently set on his own gratification, but because he of the two is the more intently set on an outward accomplishment, the relief of another's wretchedness. The truth is, that, just because more compassionate than his fellow, the more intent is he than the other on the object of this affection, and the less intent is he than the other on himself the subject of this affection. His thoughts and feelings are more drawn away to the sufferer, and therefore more drawn away from himself. He is the most occupied with the object of this affection; and, on that very account, the least occupied with the pleasure of its indulgence. And it is precisely the objective quality of these regards, which stamps upon compassion the character of a disinterested affection. He surely is the most compassionate whose thoughts and feelings are most drawn away to the sufferer, and most drawn away from self; or, in other words, most taken up with the direct consideration of him who is the object of this affection, and least taken up with the reflex consideration of the pleasure that he himself has in the indulgence of it. Yet this prevents not the pleasure from being actually felt; and felt, too, in very proportion to the intensity of the compassion; or, in other words, more felt the less it has been thought of at the time, or the less it has been pursued for its own sake. It seems unavoidable in every affection, that, the more a thing is loved, the greater must be the pleasure of indulging the love of it: yet it is equally unavoidable, that the greater in that case will be our aim towards the object of the affection, and the less will be our aim towards the pleasure which accompanies its gratification. And thus, to one who reflects profoundly and carefully on these things, it is no paradox that he who has had doubly greater enjoyment than another in the exercise of compassion, is doubly the more disinterested of the two; that he has had the most pleasure in this affection who has been the least careful to please himself!

with the indulgence of it; that he whose virtuous desires, as being the strongest, have in their gratification ministered to self the greatest satisfaction, has been the least actuated of all his fellows by the wishes, and stood at the greatest distance from the aims of selfishness.*

7. And moreover, there is a just and philosophical sense, in which many of our special affections, besides the virtuous, are alike disinterested with these; even though they have been commonly ranked among the selfish affections of our nature. The proper object of self-love is the good of self; and this calm general regard to our own happiness may be considered, in fact, as the only interested affection to which our nature is competent. The special affections are, one and all of them, distinct from self-love, both in their objects, and in their real psychological character of the affections themselves. The object of the avaricious affection is the acquirement of wealth; of the resentful, the chastisement of an offender; of the sensual, something appropriate or suited to that corporeal affection which forms the reigning appetite at the time. In none of these, is the good of self the proper discriminative object of the affection; and the mind of him who is under their power, and engaged in their prosecution, is differently employed, from the mind of him, who, at the time, is either devising or doing aught for the general or abstract end of his own happiness. None of these special affections is identical with the affection which has happiness for its object. So far from this, the avaricious man often, conscious of the strength of his propensity, and at the moment of being urged forward by it to new speculations, acknowledges in his heart, that he would be happier far, could he but moderate its violence, and be satisfied with a humbler fortune than that to which his aspirations would carry him. And the resentful man, in the very act of being tempest driven to some furious onset against the person who has affronted or betrayed him, may yet be sensible that instead of seeking for any benefit to himself, he is rushing on the destruction of his character, or fortune, or even life. And many is the drunkard who under the goadings of an appetite which he cannot withstand, in place of self-love being the principle, and his own greatest happiness the object, knows himself to be on the road to inevitable ruin. There

* The purely disinterested character of a right religious affection might be proved by these considerations.

is an affection which has happiness for its object; but this is not the affection which rules and has the ascendancy in any of these instances. These are all special affections, grounded on the affinities which obtain between certain objects and parts of human nature; and which cannot be indulged beyond a given extent, without distemper and discomfort to the whole nature; so that, in spite of all the particular gratifications which follow in their train, the man over whom they tyrannize may be unhappy upon the whole. The very distinction between the affection of self-love and the special affections proves that there is a corresponding distinction in their objects; and this again, that many of the latter may be gratified, while the former is disappointed,—or, in other words, that, along with many particular enjoyments the general state of man may be that of utter and extreme wretchedness. It is therefore a competent question, what those special affections are, which most consist with the general happiness of the mind; and this, notwithstanding that they all possess one circumstance in common—the unavoidable pleasure appendant to the gratification of each of them.*

* The following are the clear and judicious observations of Sir James Mackintosh on this subject:—

“In contending, therefore, that the benevolent affections are disinterested, no more is claimed for them than must be granted to mere animal appetites and to malevolent passions. Each of these principles alike seeks its own object, for the sake simply of obtaining it. Pleasure is the result of the obtainment, but no separate part of the aim or the agent. The desire that another person may be gratified, seeks that outward object alone, according to the general course of human desire. Resentment is as disinterested as gratitude or pity, but not more so. Hunger or thirst may be as much as the purest benevolence, at variance with self-love. A regard to our own general happiness is not a vice, but in itself an excellent quality. It were well if it prevailed more generally over craving and shortsighted appetites. The weakness of the social affections, and the strength of the private desires, properly constitute selfishness; a vice utterly at variance with the happiness of him who harbours it, and as such, condemned by self-love. There are as few who attain the greatest satisfaction to themselves, as who do the greatest good to others. It is absurd to say with some, that the pleasure of benevolence is selfish, because it is felt by self. Understanding and reasoning are acts of self, for no man can think by proxy; but no man ever called them *selfish*, why? Evidently because they do not regard self. Precisely the same reason ap-

8. This explanation will help us to understand wherein it is that the distinction in point of enjoyment, between a good and an evil affection of our nature properly lies. For there is a certain species of enjoyment common to them all. It were a contradiction in terms to affirm otherwise; for it were tantamount to saying, that an affection may be gratified, without the actual experience of a gratification. There must be some sensation or other of happiness, at the time when a man obtains that which he is seeking for; and if it be not a positive sensation of pleasure, it will at least be the sensation of relief from pain, as when one meets with the opportunity of wreaking upon its object, that indignation which had long kept his heart in a tumult of disquietude. We therefore would mistake the matter, if we thought, that a state even of thorough and unqualified wickedness was exclusive of all enjoyment—for even the vicious affections must share in that enjoyment, which inseparably attaches to every affection, at the moment of its indulgence. And thus it is, that even in the veriest Pandemonium, might there be lurid gleams of ecstasy, and shouts of fiendish exultation—the merriment of desperadoes in crime, who send forth the outcries of their spiteful and savage delight, when some deep-laid villany has triumphed; or when in some dire perpetration of revenge, they have given full satisfaction and discharge to the malignity of their accursed nature. The assertion therefore may be taken too generally, when it is stated, that there is no enjoyment whatever in the veriest hell of assembled outcasts; for even there might there be many separate and specific gratifications. And we must abstract the pleasure essentially involved in every affection, at the instant of its indulgence, and which cannot possibly be disjoined from it, ere we see clearly and distinctively wherein it is that, in respect of enjoyment, the virtuous and vicious affections differ from each other. For it is true, that there is a common resemblance between them; and that, by the universal law and nature of affection, there must be some sort of agreeable sensation, in the act of their obtaining

plies to benevolence. Such an argument is a gross confusion of self, as it is a *subject* of feeling or thought, with self considered as the *object* of either. It is no more just to refer the private appetites to self-love because they commonly promote happiness, than it would be to refer them to self-hatred, in those frequent cases where their gratification obstructs it."

that which they are seeking after. Yet it is no less true, that, did the former affections bear supreme rule in the heart, they would brighten and tranquilize the whole of human existence—whereas, had the latter the entire and practical ascendancy, they would distemper the whole man, and make him as completely wretched as he were completely worthless.

9. There is one leading difference then between a virtuous and a vicious affection—that there is always a felt sweetness in the very presence and contact of the former; whereas, in the presence and contact of the latter, there is generally or very often at least, a sensation of bitterness. Let them agree as they may in the undoubted fact of a gratification in the attainment of their respective ends, the affections themselves may be long in existence and operation before their ends are arrived at; and then it is, we affirm, that if compared, there will be found a wide distinction and dissimilarity between them. The very feeling of kindness is pleasant to the heart; and the very feeling of anger is a painful and corrosive one. The latter, we know, is often said to be a mixed feeling—because of both the pleasure and the pain which are said to enter into it. But it will be found that the pleasure, in this case, lies in the prospect of a full and final gratification; and very often, in a sort of current or partial gratification which one may experience beforehand, in the mere vent or utterance by words, of the labouring violence that is within—seeing that words of bitterness, when discharged on the object of our wrath, are sometimes the only, and even the most effective executioners of all the vengeance that we meditate; besides that by their means, we may enlist in our favour the grateful sympathy of other men—thus obtaining a solace to ourselves, and aggravating the punishment of the offender, by exciting against him, in addition to our own hostility, the hostile indignation of his fellows. And thus too is it, that, in the case of anger, there may not only be a completed gratification at the last, by the infliction of a full and satisfactory chastisement; but a gratification, as it were by instalments, with every likely purpose of retaliation that we may form in our bosoms, and every sentence of keen and reproachful eloquence that may fall from our lips. And so anger has been affirmed to be a mixed emotion, from confounding the pleasure that lies in the gratification of the emotion, with the pleasure that is supposed to lie in the feel-

ing of the emotion. But the truth is, that, apart from the gratification, the emotion is an exceedingly painful one—inso-much that the gratification mainly lies in the removal of a pain, or in the being ridded of a felt uneasiness. Compassion may in the same way be termed a mixed feeling. But on close attention to these two affections and comparison between them, it will be found, that all the pleasure of anger lies in its gratification, and all the pain of it in the feeling itself—whereas all the pain of compassion lies in the disappointment of its gratification, while in the feeling itself there is nought but pleasure. Let the respective gratifications of these two affections—the one, by the fulfilled retaliation of a wrong; the other, by the fulfilled relief of a suffering—let these gratifications be put out of notice altogether, that we might but attend to the yet ungratified feelings themselves; and we cannot imagine a greater difference of state between two minds, than that of one which luxuriates in the tenderness of compassion, and that of another which breathes and is infuriated with the dark passions and the still darker purposes of resentment. Or we may appeal to the experience of the same mind, which at one time may have its hour of meditated kindness, and at another its hour of meditated revenge. We speak of these two, not in the moment of their respective triumphs, not of the sensations attendant on the success of each—but of the direct and instant sensations which lie in the feelings themselves. They form two as distinct states in the moral world, as sunshine and tempest are in the physical world. We have but to name the elements which enter into the composition of each, in order to suggest the utter contrariety which obtains between them—between the calm and placid cheerfulness on the one hand of that heart which is employed in conceiving the generous wishes, or in framing the liberal and fruitful devices of benevolence; and, on the other hand, the turbulence and fierce disorder of the same heart, when burning disdain, or fell and implacable hatred has taken possession of it—the reaction of its own affronted pride, or aggrieved sense of the injury which has been done to it.

10. But perhaps the most favourable moment for comparison between them, is when each is frustrated of its peculiar aim; and so each is sent back upon itself, with that common suffering to which all the affections are liable—the suffering of a disappointment. We shall be at no loss to de-

termine on which side the advantage lies, if we have either felt or witnessed benevolence in tears, because of the misery which it cannot alleviate; and rage in the agonies of its defeated impotence, because of the haughty or successful defiance of an enemy, whom with vain hostility it has tried to assail, but cannot reach. We have the example of a good affection under disappointment, in the case of virtuous grief or virtuous indignation; and of a bad affection under disappointment, in the case of envy, when, in spite of every attempt to calumniate or depress its object, he shines forth to universal acknowledgment and applause, in all the lustre of his vindicated superiority. It marks how distinct these two sets of feelings are from each other, that, with the former, even under the pain of disappointment, there is a something in the very taste and quality of the feelings themselves, which acts as an emollient or a charm, and mitigates the painfulness—while, with the latter, there is nought to mitigate, but every thing to exasperate, and more fiercely to agonize. The malignant feelings are no sooner turned inwardly, by the arrest of a disappointment from without, than they eat inwardly; and when foiled in the discharge of their purposed violence upon others, they recoil—and, without one soothing ingredient to calm the labouring effervescence, they kindle a hell in the heart of the unhappy owner. Internally, there is a celestial peace and satisfaction in virtue, even though in the midst of its outward discomfiture, it be compelled to weep over the unredressed wrongs and sufferings of humanity. On the other hand, the very glance of disappointed malevolence, bespeaks of this evil affection, that, of itself it is a fierce and fretting distemper of the soul, an executioner of vengeance for all the guilty passions it may have fanned into mischievous activity, and for all the crimes it may have instigated.

11. And this contrast between a good and an evil affection, this superiority of the former to the latter is fully sustained, when, instead of looking to the state of mind which is left by the disappointment of each, we look to the state of mind which is left by their respective gratifications—the one a state of sated compassion, the other of sated resentment. There is one most observable distinction between the states of feeling, by which an act of compassion on the one hand, and of resentment on the other, are succeeded. It is seldom that man feasts his eyes on that spectacle of prostrate suf-

fering which, in a moment of fury, he hath laid at his feet; in the same way that he feasts his eyes on that picture of family comfort which smiles upon him from some cottage home, that his generosity had reared. This looks as if the sweets of benevolence were lasting, whereas the sweets of revengeful malice, such as they are, are in general but momentary. An act of compassion may extinguish for a time the feeling of compassion, by doing away that suffering which is the object of it; but then it generally is followed up by a feeling of permanent regard. An act of revenge, when executed to the full extent of the desire or purpose, does extinguish and put an end to the passion of revenge; and is seldom, if ever, followed up by a feeling of permanent hatred. An act of kindness but attaches the more, and augments a friendly disposition towards its object. It were both untrue in itself, and unfair to our nature to say, that an act of revenge but exasperates the more, and always augments, or even often augments, a hostile disposition towards its object. It has been said that we hate the man whom we have injured; but whatever the truth of this observation may be, certain it is, that we do not so hate the man of whom we have taken full satisfaction for having injured us; or, if we could imagine aught so monstrous, and happily so rare, as the prolonged, the yet unquelled satisfaction of one, who could be regaled for hours with the sighs of him whom his own hands had wounded; or, for months and years, with the pining destitution of the household whom himself had impoverished and brought low; this were because the measure of the revenge had not equalled the measure of the felt provocation, only perhaps to be appeased and satiated by death. This, at length, would terminate the emotion. And here a new insight opens upon us into the distinction between a good and a bad affection. Benevolence, itself of immortal quality, would immortalize its objects: malignity, if not appeased by an infliction short of death, would destroy them.* The one is ever strengthening itself upon old objects, and fastening upon new ones; the other is ever extinguishing its resentment towards old objects by the pettier acts of chastisement, or, if nothing short of a capital punishment will appease it, by dying with their death. The exterminating blow, the death which "clears all scores"—this

* So true it is, that he who hateth his brother with implacable hatred is a murderer.

forms the natural and necessary limit even to the fiercest revenge; whereas, the outgoings of benevolence are quite indefinite. In revenge the affection is successively extinguished; and, if returned, it is upon new objects. In benevolence, the affection is kept up for old objects, while ever open to excitement from new ones; and hence a living and a multiplying power of enjoyment, which is peculiarly its own. On the same principle that we water a shrub just because we had planted it, does our friendship grow and ripen the more towards him on whom we had formerly exercised it. The affection of kindness for each individual object survives the act of kindness, or, rather, is strengthened by the act. Whatever sweetness may have been originally in it, is enhanced by the exercise; and, so far from being stifled by the first gratification, it remains in greater freshness than ever for higher and larger gratifications than before. It is the perennial quality of their gratification, which stamps that superiority on the good affections, we are now contending for. Benevolence both perpetuates itself upon its old objects, and expands itself into a wider circle as it meets with new ones. Not so with revenge, which generally disposes of the old object by one gratification, and then must transfer itself to a new object, ere it can meet with another gratification. Let us grant that each affection has its peculiar walk of enjoyment. The history of the one walk presents us with a series of accumulations; the history of the other with a series of extinctions.

12. But in dwelling on this beautiful peculiarity, by which a good affection is distinguished from a bad one, we are in danger of weakening our immediate argument. We bring forward the matter a great deal too favourably for the malignant desires of the human heart, if while reasoning on the supposition of an enjoyment, however transitory in their gratification, we give any room for the imagination that even this is unmixed enjoyment. We have already stated, that, of themselves and anterior to their gratification, there is a painfulness in these desires; and that when by their gratification we get quit of this painfulness, we might after all obtain little more than a relief from misery. But the truth is, that, generally speaking, we obtain a great deal less on the side of happiness than this; for, in most cases, all that we obtain by the gratification of a malignant passion, is but the exchange of one misery for another; and this apart still from

the remorse of an evil perpetration. There is one familiar instance of it, which often occurs in conversation—when, piqued by something offensive in the remark or manner of our fellows, we react with a severity which humbles and overwhelms him. In this case, the pain of the resentment is succeeded by the pain we feel in the spectacle of that distress which ourselves have created: and this, too aggravated perhaps by the reprobation of all the by-standers, affording thereby a miniature example of the painful alternations which are constantly taking place in the history of moral evil; when the misery of wrong affections is but replaced, to the perpetrator himself, by the misery of the wrong actions to which they have hurried him. It is thus that a life of frequent gratification may, notwithstanding, be a life of intense wretchedness. It may help our imagination of such a state, to conceive of one, subject every hour to the agonies of hunger, with such a mal-conformation at the same time in his organ of taste, that, in food of every description, he felt a bitter and universal nausea. There were here a constant gratification, yet a constant, and severe endurance—a mere alternation of cruel sufferings—the displacement of one set of agonies, by the substitution of other agonies in their room. This is seldom, perhaps never realized in the physical world; but in the moral world it is a great and general phenomenon. The example shows at least the possibility of a constitution, under which a series of incessant gratifications may be nothing better than a restless succession of distress and disquietude; and that such should be the constitution of our moral nature as to make a life of vice a life of vanity and cruel vexation, is strong experimental evidence of Him who ordained this constitution, that He hateth iniquity, that He loveth righteousness.

13. But the peculiarity which we have been incidentally led to notice, is, in itself, pregnant with inference also. We should augur hopefully of the final issues of our moral constitution, as well as conclude favourably of Him who hath ordained it—when we find its workings to be such, that, on the one hand, the feeling of kindness towards an individual object not only survives, but is indefinitely strengthened by the acts of kindness; and, on the other hand, that, not only does an act of revenge satiate and put an end to the feeling of revenge, but even, that certain acts of hostility towards the individual object of our hatred will make us relent from

this hatred, and at length extinguish it altogether. May we not perceive in this economy a balance in point of tendency, and at length of ultimate effect on the side of virtue? May it not warrant the expectation, that, while benevolence, that great conservative principle of being, has in it a principle conservative of itself as well as of its objects, the outbreaks of evil are but partial and temporary; and that the moral world, viewed as a progressive system and now only in its transition state, has been so constructed as to secure both the perpetuity of all the good affections and the indefinite expansion of them to new objects and over a larger and ever-widening territory? At all events, whatever reason there may be to fear, that, in the future arrangements of nature and providence, both virtue and vice will be capable of immortality—we might gather from what passes under our eyes, in this rudimental and incipient stage of human existence, that even with our present constitution virtue alone is capable of a blissful immortality. For malice and falsehood carry in them the seeds of their own wretchedness, if not of their own destruction. Only grant the soul to be imperishable; and if the character of the governor is to be gathered from the final issues of the government over which he presides—it says much for the moral character of Him who framed us, that, unless there be an utter reversal of the nature which Himself has given, then, in respect to the power of conferring enjoyment or of maintaining the soul in its healthiest and happiest mood, it is righteousness alone which endureth for ever, and charity alone which never faileth.

14. And beside taking account of the special enjoyments which attach to the special virtues we might observe on the general state of that mind, which, under the consistent and comprehensive principle of being or doing what it ought, studies rightly to acquit itself of all the moral obligations. Beside the perpetual feast of an approving conscience, and the constant recurrence of those particular gratifications which attach to the indulgence of every good affection,—is it not quite obvious of every mind which places itself under a supreme regimen of morality, that then, it is in its best possible condition with regard to enjoyment: like a well strung instrument, in right and proper tone, because all its parts are put in right adjustment with each other? If conscience be indeed the superior faculty of our nature, then, every time it is cast down from this pre-eminence, there must

be a sensation of painful dissonance; and the whole man feels out of sorts, as one unhinged or denaturalized. This perhaps is the main reason that a state of well-doing stands associated with a state of well-being; and why the special virtue of temperance is not more closely associated with the health of the body, than the general habit of virtue is with a wholesome and well-conditioned state of the soul. There is then no derangement as it were in the system of our nature—all the powers, whether superior or subordinate, being in their right places, and all moving without discord and without dislocation. It were anticipating our argument, did we refer at present to the confidence and regard wherewith a virtuous man is surrounded in the world. We have not yet spoken of the adaptations to man's moral constitution from without, but only of the inward pleasures and satisfactions which are yielded in the workings of the constitution itself. And surely when we find it to have been so constructed and attuned by its maker, that, in all the movements of virtue there is a felt and grateful harmony, while a certain jarring sense of violence and discomposure ever attends upon the opposite—we cannot imagine how the moral character of that being who Himself devised this constitution and established all its tendencies, can be more clearly or convincingly read, than in phenomena like these.

15. We have already said that the distinction so well established by Butler, between the object of our affection and its accompanying, nay, inseparable pleasure, was the most effectual argument that could be brought to bear against the selfish system of morals. The virtuous affection that is in a man's breast simply leads him to do what he ought; and in that object he rests and terminates. Like every other affection, there must be a pleasure conjoined with the prosecution of it; and at last a full and final gratification in the attainment of its object. But the object must be distinct from the pleasure, which itself is founded on a prior suitability between the mind and its object. When a man is actuated by a virtuous desire; it is the virtue itself that he is seeking, and not the gratification that is in it. His single object is to be or to do rightly—though, the more intent he is upon this object, the greater will, the greater must be his satisfaction if he succeed in it. Nevertheless, it is not the satisfaction which he is seeking; it is the object which yields the satisfaction—the object too for its own sake, and not for the

sake of its accompanying or its resulting enjoyment. Nay, the more strongly and therefore the more exclusively set upon virtue for its own sake; the less will he think of its enjoyment, and yet the greater will his actual enjoyment be. In other words, virtue, the more disinterested it is, is the more prolific of happiness to him who follows it; and then it is, that, when freed from all the taints of mercenary selfishness, it yields to its votary the most perfect and supreme enjoyment. Such is the constitution of our nature, that virtue loses not its disinterested character; and yet man loses not his reward; and the author of this constitution, He who hath ordained all its laws and its consequences, has given signal proof of his own Supreme regard for virtue, and therefore, of the supreme virtue of His own character, in that He hath so framed the creatures of His will, as that their perfect goodness and perfect happiness are at one. Yet the union of these does not constitute their unity. The union is a contingent appointment of the Deity; and so is at once the evidence and the effect of the goodness that is in His own nature.

16. This then is our second general argument for the moral character of God, grounded on the moral constitution of man; and prior, as yet, to any view of its adaptation to external nature. It is distinct from the first argument, as grounded on the phenomena of conscience, which assumes the office of judge within the breast, all whose decisions are on the side of benevolence and justice; and which is ever armed with a certain power of enforcement, both in the pains of remorse and the pleasures of self-approbation. These, however, are distinct and ought to be distinguished from the direct pleasures of virtue in itself, and the direct pains of vice in itself, which form truly separate ingredients, on the one hand of a present and often very painful correction, on the other hand, of a present and very precious reward.

CHAPTER III.

THIRD GENERAL ARGUMENT.

The Power and Operation of Habit.

1. WE have as yet been occupied with what may be termed the instant sensations, wherewith morality is beset in the mind of man—with the voice of conscience which goes

immediately before, or with the sentence whether of approval or condemnation, which comes immediately after it; and latterly, with those states of feeling which are experienced at the moment when under the power of those affections, to which any moral designation, be it of virtue or vice, is applicable—the pleasure which there is in the very presence and contact of the one, the distaste, the bitterness which there is in the presence and contact of the other.

2. These phenomena of juxtaposition, as they may be termed; these contiguous antecedents and consequents of the moral and the immoral in man, speak strongly the purpose of Him who ordained our mental constitution, in having inserted there such a constant power of command and encouragement on the side of the former, and a like constant operation of checks and discouragement against the latter. But, perhaps, something more may be collected of the design and character of God, by stretching forward our observation prospectively in the history of man, and so extending our regards to the more distant consequences of virtue or vice, both on the frame of his character and the state of his enjoyments. By studying these posterior results, we approximate our views towards the final issues of that administration under which we are placed. That defensive apparatus, wherewith the embryo seed of plants is guarded and protected, might indicate a special care or design in the preserver of it. What that design particularly is comes to be clearly and certainly known, when, in the future history of the plant, we learn what the functions of the seed are, after it has come to maturity; and then observe, that, had it been suffered universally to perish, it would have led,—not to the mortality of the individual, for that is already an inevitable law, but to the extinction and mortality of the species.

3. For tracing forward man's moral history, or the changes which take place in his moral state, it is necessary that we should advert to the influence of habit. Yet it is not properly the philosophy of habit wherewith our argument is concerned, but with the leading facts of its practical operation. A beneficial effect might still remain an evidence of the divine goodness, by whatever steps it should be efficiently or physically brought about—its power in this way depending not on the question how it is, but on the fact that so it is. It were really, therefore, deviating from our own strict and pertinent line of enquiry did we stop to discuss the phi-

losophic theory of habit, or suspend our own independent reasoning till that theory was settled—beside most unwisely and unnecessarily attaching to our theme, all the discredit of an obscure or questionable speculation. It is with palpable and sure results both in the material and mental world, more than with the recondite processes in either, that theism has chiefly to do; and it is by the former more than by the latter that the cause of theism is upholden.

4. We might only observe, in passing, that the modification introduced by Dr. Thomas Brown into the theory of habit, was perhaps uncalled for, even for the accomplishment of his own purpose, which was to demonstrate that it required no peculiar or original law of the human constitution to account for its phenomena. He resolves, and we are disposed to think rightly, the whole operation of habit into the law of suggestion—only, he would extend that law to states of feelings, as well as to thoughts or states of thoughts.* We are all aware that if two objects have been seen or thought of together on any former occasion, then the thought of one of them is apt to suggest the thought of the other, and the more apt the more frequently that the suggestion has taken place—insomuch, that, if the suggestion have taken place very often, we shall find it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to break the succession between the thought which suggests and the thought which is suggested by it. Now Dr. Brown has conceived it necessary to extend this principle to feelings as well as thoughts—insomuch, that, if on a former occasion a certain object have been followed up by a certain feeling, or even if one feeling have been followed up by another, then the thought of the object intro-

* The following is the passage taken from his forty-third lecture, in which Dr. Brown seems to connect feeling with feeling by the same mental law which connects thought with thought. "To explain the influence of habit in increasing the tendency to certain actions I must remark—what I have already more than once repeated—that the suggesting influence which is usually expressed in the phrase *association of ideas*, though that very improper phrase would seem to limit it to our ideas or conceptions only, and has unquestionably produced a mistaken belief of this partial operation of a general influence—is not limited to those more than to any other states of mind, but occurs also with equal force in other feelings, which are not commonly termed ideas or conceptions; that our desires or other emotions, for example, may, like them, form a part of our trains of suggestion, &c. See another equally ambiguous passage in his sixty-fourth lecture.

duces the feeling, or the one feeling introduces the other feeling into the mind, on the same principle that thought introduces thought. Now we should rather be inclined to hold that thought introduces feeling, not in consequence of the same law of suggestion whereby thought introduces thought, but in virtue of the direct power which lies in the object of the thought to excite that feeling. When a voluptuous object awakens a voluptuous feeling, this is not by suggestion, but by a direct influence of its own. When the picture of that voluptuous object awakens the same voluptuous feeling, we would not ascribe it to suggestion, but still put it down to the power of the object, whether presented or only represented, to awaken certain emotions. And as little would we ascribe the excitement of the feeling to suggestion, but still to the direct and original power of the object—though it were pictured to us only in thought, instead of being pictured to us in visible imagery. In like manner, when the thought of an injury awakens in us anger, even as the injury itself did at the moment of its infliction, we should not ascribe this to that peculiar law which is termed the law of suggestion, and which undoubtedly connects thought with thought. But we should ascribe it wholly to that law which connects an object with its appropriate emotion—whether that object be present to the senses, or have only been recalled by the memory and is present to the thoughts. We sustain an injury, and we feel resentment in consequence, without, surely, the law of suggestion having had aught to do with the sequence. We see the aggressor afterwards, and our anger is revived against him, and with this particular succession the law of suggestion has certainly had to do—not, however, in the way of thought suggesting feeling, but only in the way of thought suggesting thought. In truth it is a succession of three terms. The sight of the man awakens a recollection of the injury; and the thought of the injury; and the thought of the injury awakens the emotion. The first sequence, or that which obtains between the first and second term, is a pure instance of the suggestion of thought by thought, or to speak in the old language, of the association of ideas. The second sequence, or that which obtains between the middle and last term, is still, Dr. Brown would say, an instance of suggestion, but of thought suggesting the feeling wherewith it was formerly accompanied. Whereas, in our apprehension it is

due, not to the law of suggestion but to the law which connects an object, whether present at the time or thought upon afterwards, with its counterpart emotion. Still the result is the same, however differently accounted for. One can think, surely of the resentment which now occupies him, as well as he can think of a past resentment—indeed it is difficult to imagine how he can feel a resentment without thinking of it. Let some one thought, then, by the proper law of suggestion, have introduced the thought of an injury that had been done to us; this second thought introduces the feeling of resentment, not by the law of suggestion, but by the law which relates an object, whether present or thought upon, to its appropriate emotion; this emotion is thought upon, and, not the emotion, but the thought of the emotion recalls the thought of the first emotion that was felt at the original infliction of the injury; and this thought again recalls to us the thought of the injury itself, and perhaps the thought of other or similar injuries, which, as at the first, excites anew the feeling of anger, but, at this particular step, by means of a law different from that of suggestion, even the law of our emotions, in virtue of which, certain objects, when present in any way to the cognizance of the understanding, awaken certain sensibilities in the heart. It is thus that thoughts and feelings might reciprocally introduce each other, not by means of but one law of suggestion extending in common to them both, but by the intermingling of two laws in this repeating or circulating process,—even the law of suggestion, acting only upon the thoughts; and the law of emotion, by which certain objects, when presented to the senses or to the memory, have the power to awaken certain correspondent emotions. We in this way get quit of the mysticism which attaches to the notion of mere feelings either suggesting or being suggested by other feelings, separately from thoughts—more especially when, by the association of thoughts or of ideas alone, and the direct power which lies in the objects of these ideas to awaken certain emotions, all the phenomena are capable of being explained. A certain thought or object may suggest the thought of a former provocation; this thought might excite a feeling of resentment; the resentment, thus felt or thought upon, might send back the mind to a still more vivid impression of its original cause; and this again might prolong or waken the resentment anew, and in greater freshness than before. The ultimate effect might be a fierce and

fiery effervescence of irascible feeling. Yet not by the operation of one law, but of two distinct laws in the human constitution; the first that, in virtue of which, thoughts suggest thoughts; the second that, in virtue of which, the object thus thought upon awakens the emotion that is suited to it.

5. But though for once we have thus adverted to the strict philosophy of the subject, it will be apparent, that, in this instance, it is of no practical necessity for the purposes of our argument; and it is truly the same in many other instances, where, if instead of reasoning theologically on the palpable operations of the mechanism, we should reason scientifically on the *modus operandi*, we would run into really irrelevant discussions. The theme of our present chapter is the effect of Habit, in as far as these effects serve to indicate the design or character of Him who is the author of our mental constitution. It matters not to any conclusion of ours, by what recondite, or, it may be, yet undiscovered process these effects are brought about; and whether the common theory, or that of Dr. Brown, or that again as modified and corrected by ourselves, is the just one. It is enough to know, that, if any given process of intermingled thought and feeling have been described by us once, there are laws at work, which, on the first step of that process again recurring, would incline us to describe the whole of the process over again; and with the greater power and certainty, the more frequently that process has been repeated. We are perfectly sure that the more frequently any particular sequence between thought and thought may have occurred, the more readily will it recur;—so that when once the first thought has entered the mind, we may all the more confidently reckon on its being followed up by the second. This we hold enough for explaining the ever recurring force and facility, wherewith feelings also will arise and be followed up by their indulgence—and that, just in proportion to the frequency wherewith in given circumstances they have been awakened and indulged formerly. In as far as the objects of gratification are the exciting causes which stimulate and awaken the desires of gratification; then, any process which ensures the presence and application of the causes, will also ensure the fulfilment of the effects which result from them. If it be the presence or perception of the wine that stands before us which stirs up the appetite; and if, instead of acting on the precept of looking not unto the wine when it is

red, we continue to look till the appetite be so enflamed that the indulgence becomes inevitable—then, as we looked at it continuously when present, will we, by the law of suggestion, be apt to think of it continuously when absent. If the one continuity was not broken by any considerations of principle or prudence—so the less readily will the other continuity be broken in like manner. When we revisit the next social company, we shall probably resign ourselves to the very order of sensations that we did formerly; and the more surely, the oftener that that order has already been described by us. And as the order of objects with their sensations when present, so is the order of thoughts with their desires when absent. This order forces itself upon the mind with a strength proportional to the frequency of its repetition; and desires, when not evaded by the mind shifting its attention away from the objects of them, can only be appeased by their indulgence.

6. It is thus that he who enters on a career of vice, enters on a career of headlong degeneracy. If even for once we have described that process of thought and feeling, which leads, whether through the imagination or the senses, from the first presentation of a tempting object to a guilty indulgence—this of itself establishes a probability, that, on the recurrence of that object, we shall pass onward by the same steps to the same consummation. And it is a probability ever strengthening with every repetition of the process, till at length it advances towards the moral certainty of a helpless surrender to the tyranny of those evil passions, which we cannot resist, just because the will itself is in thralldom, and we choose not to resist them. It is thus that we might trace the progress of intemperance and licentiousness, and even of dishonesty, to whose respective solicitations we have yielded at the first till, by continuing to yield, we become the passive, the prostrate subjects of a force that is uncontrollable, only because we have seldom or never in good earnest tried to control it. It is not that we are struck of a sudden with moral impotency; but we are gradually benumbed into it. The power of temptation has not made instant seizure upon the faculties, or taken them by storm. It proceeds by an influence that is gently and almost insensibly progressive—just as progressive in truth, as the association between particular ideas is strengthened by the frequency of their succession. But even as that association may at length become inveterate, insomuch that when

the first idea finds entry into the mind, we cannot withstand the importunity wherewith the second insists upon following it; so might the moral habit become alike inveterate—thoughts succeeding thoughts, and urging onward their counterpart desires, in that wonted order, which had hitherto connected the beginning of a temptation with its full and final victory. At each repetition, would we find it more difficult to break this order, or to lay an arrest upon it—till at length, as the fruit of this wretched regimen, its unhappy patient is lorded over by a power of moral evil, which possesses the whole man, and wields an irresistible or rather an unresisted ascendancy over him.

7. But this melancholy process, leading to a vicious indulgence, may be counteracted by an opposite process of resistance, though with far greater facility at the first—yet a facility ever augmenting, in proportion as the effectual resistance of temptation is persevered in. That balancing moment, at which pleasure would allure, and conscience is urging us to refrain, may be regarded as the point of departure or divergency, whence once or other of the two processes will take their commencement. Each of them consists in a particular succession of ideas with their attendant feelings; and whichever of them may happen to be described once, has, by the law of suggestion, the greater chance, in the same circumstances, of being described over again. Should the mind dwell on an object of allurements, and the considerations of principle not be entertained—it will pass onward from the first incitement to the final and guilty indulgence by a series of stepping stones, each of which will present itself more readily in future; and with less chance of arrest or interruption by the suggestions of conscience than before. But should these suggestions be admitted, and far more should they prevail—then, on the principle of association, will they be all the more apt to intervene, on the repetition of the same circumstances; and again break that line of continuity, which but for this intervention, would have led from a temptation to a turpitude or a crime. If on the occurrence of a temptation formerly, conscience did interpose, and represent the evil of a compliance, and so impress the man with a sense of obligation, as led him to dismiss the fascinating object from the presence of his mind, or to hurry away from it—the likelihood is, that the recurrence of a similar temptation will suggest the same train of thoughts and feelings

and lead to the same beneficial result; and this is a likelihood ever increasing with every repetition of the process. The train which would have terminated in a vicious indulgence, is dispossessed by the train which conducts to a resolution and an act of virtuous self-denial. The thoughts which tend to awaken emotions and purposes on the side of duty find readier entrance into the mind; and the thoughts which awaken and urge forward the desire of what is evil more readily give way. The positive force on the side of virtue is augmented, by every repetition of the train which leads to a virtuous determination. The resistance to this force on the side of vice is weakened, in proportion to the frequency wherewith that train of suggestions which would have led to a vicious indulgence, is broken and discomfited. It is thus that when one is successively resolute in his opposition to evil, the power of making the achievement and the facility of the achievement itself are both upon the increase; and virtue makes double gain to herself, by every separate conquest which she may have won. The humbler attainments of moral worth are first mastered and secured; and the aspiring disciple may pass onward in a career that is quite indefinite to nobler deeds and nobler sacrifices.

8. And this law of habit when enlisted on the side of righteousness, not only strengthens and makes sure our resistance to vice, but facilitates the most arduous performances of virtue. The man whose thoughts, with the purposes and doings to which they lead, are at the bidding of conscience, will, by frequent repetition, at length describe the same track almost spontaneously—even as in physical education, things, laboriously learned at the first, come to be done at last without the feeling of an effort. And so, in moral education, every new achievement of principle smooths the way to future achievements of the same kind; and the precious fruit or purchase of each moral victory is to set us on higher and firmer vantage-ground for the conquests of principle in all time coming. He who resolutely bids away the suggestions of avarice, when they come into conflict with the incumbent generosity; or the suggestions of voluptuousness, when they come into conflict with the incumbent self-denial; or the suggestions of anger, when they come into conflict with the incumbent act of magnanimity and forbearance—will at length obtain, not a respite only, but a final deliverance from their intrusion. Conscience, the longer it has made way over

the obstacles of selfishness and passion—the less will it give way to these adverse forces, themselves weakened by the repeated defeats which they have sustained in the warfare or moral discipline: Or, in other words, the oftener that conscience makes good the supremacy which she claims—the greater would be the work of violence, and less the strength for its accomplishment, to cast her down from that station of practical guidance and command which of right belongs to her. It is just because, in virtue of the law of suggestion, those trains of thought and feeling, which connect her first biddings with their final execution, are the less exposed at every new instance to be disturbed, and the more likely to be repeated over again, that every good principle is more strengthened by its exercise, and every good affection is more strengthened by its indulgence than before. The acts of virtue ripen into habits; and the goodly and permanent result is, the formation or establishment of a virtuous character.

9. This then forms the subject of our third general argument. The voice of authority within, bidding us to virtue; and the immediate delights attendant on obedience, certainly, speak strongly for the moral character of that administration under which we are placed. But, by looking to posterior and permanent results, we have the advantage of viewing the system of that administration in progress. Instead of the insulated acts, we are led to regard the abiding and the accumulating consequences—and by stretching forward our observation through larger intervals and to more distant points in the moral history of men; we are in likelier circumstances for obtaining a glimpse of their final destination; and so of seizing on this mighty and mysterious secret—the reigning policy of the divine government, whence we might collect the character of Him who hath ordained it. And surely, it is of prime importance to be noted in this examination, that by every act of virtue we become more powerful for its service; and by every act of vice we become more helplessly its slaves. Or, in other words, were these respective moral regimens fully developed into their respective consummations, it would seem, as if by the one, we should be conducted to that state, where the faculty, within, which is felt to be the rightful, would also become the reigning sovereign, and then we should have the full enjoyment of all the harmony and happiness attendant upon virtue—whereas, by the other, those passions of our nature felt to be inferior,

would obtain the lawless ascendancy, and subject their wretched bondsmen to the turbulence, and the agony, and the sense of degradation, which, by the very constitution of our being, are inseparable from the reign of moral evil.

10. We might not fully comprehend the design or meaning of a process, till we have seen the end of it. Had there been no death, the mystery of our present state might have been somewhat alleviated. We might then have seen, in bolder relief and indelible character, the respective consummations of vice and virtue—perhaps the world partitioned into distinct moral territories, where the habit of many centuries had given fixture and establishment, first, to a society of the upright, now in the firm possession of all goodness, as the well-earned result of that wholesome discipline through which they had passed; and, second, to a society of the reprobate, now hardened in all iniquity, and abandoned to the violence of evil passions no longer to be controlled and never to be eradicated. We might then have witnessed the peace, the contentment, the universal confidence and love, the melody of soul, that reigned in the dwellings of the righteous; and contrasted these with the disquietudes, the strifes, the fell and fierce collisions of injustice and mutual disdain and hate implacable, the frantic bacchanalian excesses with their dreary intervals of remorse and lassitude, which kept the other region in perpetual anarchy, and which, constituted as we are, must trouble or dry up all the well-springs of enjoyment, whether in the hearts of individuals or in the bosom of families. We could have been at no loss, to have divined, from the history and state of such a world, the policy of its ruler. We should have recognised in that peculiar economy, by which every act whether of virtue or vice, made its performer still more virtuous or more vicious than before, a moral remuneration on the one hand and a moral penalty on the other—with an enhancement of all the consequences, whether good or evil, which flowed from each of them. We could not have mistaken the purposes and mind of the Deity—when we saw thus palpably, and through the demonstrations of experience, the ultimate effects of these respective processes; and, in this total diversity of character, with a like total diversity of condition, were made to perceive, that righteousness was its own eternal reward, and that wickedness was followed up and that for ever, with the bitter fruit of its own ways.