

state, could not erect their rule of life upon its sanctions? In answering this question by a decided negative, I wish to fence myself against an objection which may rise in the minds of some religious men. I consider these as questions of morality and not of religion. If it be from revelation only that we have any certain knowledge of a future state and of the conditions of our future acceptance; it must be from the records of revelation only that we can learn what are the qualities of the soul which are to fit it for the future presence of God.

Bishop Butler commences his *Dissertation on the Nature of Virtue*, with the following assertion. *That which renders beings capable of moral government is their having a moral nature, and moral faculties of perception and of action.* He soon after adds, *That however much men may have disputed about the nature of virtue, and whatever ground for doubt there may be about particulars; yet that in general, there is an universally acknowledged standard of it. It is that which all ages and all countries have made a profession of in public: it is that which every man you meet, puts on the shew of: it is that which the primary and fundamental laws of all civil constitutions, over the face of the earth, make it their business and endeavour to enforce the practice of upon mankind: namely justice, veracity, and regard to the common good.* Here every thing remains indefinite: yet all the successive propositions have their meaning. The author knew well that the things he had to deal with were indefinite, and that he could not fetter them in the language of a formal definition, without violating their nature. But how small has been the number of moral writers