

grovel in the enjoyment of the gifts without the burden of any gratitude to that giver whom he rather wills to abide in secrecy. There is most palpable delinquency of spirit in all this; and it would become still more evident, should he distinctly refuse the calls that were brought within his hearing to prosecute an inquiry. The grateful man would not do this. He would be restless under the ignorance of him to whom he owed the preservation of his family. He would feel the uneasiness of a heart whose most urgent desire was left without its object. It is thus that anterior to the knowledge of the giver, and far anterior to the full certainty of him—the moralities which spring from the obligation of his gifts might come into play. Even in this early stage, there is, in reference to him who is yet unknown, a right and a wrong—and there might be evinced either the worth of a grateful disposition, or there be incurred the guilt of its opposite. Under a discipline of penalties and rewards for the encouragement of virtue, one man might be honoured for the becoming sensibilities of his heart to one whom he never saw; and another be held responsible for his conduct to him of whom he utterly was ignorant.

13. It may thus be made to appear, that there is an ethics connected with theology, which may come into play, anterior to the clear view of any of its objects. More especially, we do not need to be sure of God, ere we ought to have certain feelings, or at least certain aspirations towards him. For this purpose we do not need, fully and absolutely to believe that God is. It is enough