

spirit with him who is willing, in the midst of many objects of gratification, that there should not be one object of gratitude. It is thus that, even in the ignorance of God, there may be a responsibility towards God. The Discerner of the heart sees, whether, for the blessings innumerable wherewith He has strewed the path of every man, He be treated, like the unknown benefactor who was diligently sought, or like the unknown benefactor who was never cared for. In respect, at least of desire after God, the same distinction of character may be observed between one man and another—whether God be wrapt in mystery, or stand forth in full development to our world. Even though a mantle of deepest obscurity lay over the question of His existence; this would not efface the distinction, between the piety on the one hand which laboured and aspired after Him; and the impiety upon the other which never missed the evidence that it did not care for, and so grovelled in the midst of its own sensuality and selfishness. The eye of a heavenly witness is upon all these varieties; and thus, whether it be darkness or whether it be dislike which hath caused a people to be ignorant of God, there is with him a clear principle of judgment, that He can extend even to the outfields of atheism.

17. It would appear then, that, however shaded from the view of man are the objects of Theology, as in virtue of his moral nature he can feel and recognise in some degree the ethics of Theology—even in this initial state of his mind on the question of a God, there is an impellent force upon the conscience, which he ought to obey, and which he