

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.

19. 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 to 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