

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