

3. When we look to the beauty which overspreads the face of nature, and the exquisite gratification which it ministers to the senses of man—we cannot doubt, either the taste for beauty which resides in the primeval mind that emanated all this gracefulness; or the benevolence that endowed man with a kindred taste, and so fitted him for a kindred enjoyment. This conclusion, however, like any moral conclusion we have yet come to, respecting the perfections or the purposes of God, is founded on generalities—on the general amount of beauty in the world, and the delight wherewith men behold and admire it. Yet, beside this, we may draw a corroborative evidence for the same, from the machinery of certain special contrivances—as the construction of the calyx in plants, for the defence of the tender blossom previous to its expansion; and the apparatus for scattering seeds, whereby the earth is more fully invested with its mantle of rich and varied garniture. And notwithstanding the blight which has so obviously passed over the moral world, and defaced many of its original lineaments, while it has left the materialism of creation, the loveliness of its scenes and landscapes, in a great measure untouched—still we possess very much the same materials for a Natural Theology, in reasoning on the element of virtue, as in reasoning on the element of beauty. We have first those generalities of argument which are already expounded by us at sufficient length; and we have also the evidence, now to be unfolded, of certain special provisions for the preservation and growth of the