

cannot, brave the contemplation of His righteousness. It is this which makes the reasoning as feeble, as the sentiment is flimsy. It, in fact, leaves the system of natural theology without a groundwork—first to argue for immortality on the doubtful assumption of a supreme benevolence, and then to argue this immortality in proof of the benevolence. The whole fabric, bereft of argument and strength, is ready to sink under the weight of unresolved difficulties. The mere benevolence of the Deity is not so obviously or decisively the lesson of surrounding phenomena, as, of itself, to be the foundation of a solid inference regarding either the character of God or the prospects of man. If we would receive the full lesson—if we would learn all which these phenomena, when rightly and attentively regarded, are capable of teaching—if along with the present indications of a benevolence, we take the present indications of a righteousness in God—out of these blended characteristics, we should have materials for an argument of firmer texture. It is to the leaving out of certain data, even though placed within the reach of observation, that the infirmity of the argument is owing—whereas, did we employ aright all the data in our possession, we might incorporate them together into the solid groundwork of a solid reasoning. It is by our sensitive avoidance of certain parts in this contemplation, that we enfeeble the cause. We should find a stable basis in existing appearances, did we give them a fair and full interpretation—as indicating not only the benevolence of God, but, both by the course of