

spirit, which, thrown adrift from the restraints of principle, has no well-spring of satisfaction in itself, but precariously vacillates, in regard to happiness, with the hazard and the casual fluctuation of outward things. There are, it is true, sufferings purely physical, which belong to the sentient and not to the moral nature—as the maladies of infant disease, and the accidental inflictions wherewith the material frame is sometimes agonized. Still it will be found, that the vast amount of human wretchedness, can be directly referred to the waywardness and morbid state of the human will—to the character of man, and not to the condition which he occupies.

9. Now what is the legitimate argument for the character of God, not from the mere existence of misery, but from the existence of misery thus originated? Wretchedness, of itself, were fitted to cast an uncertainty, even a suspicion, on the benevolence of God. But wretchedness as the result of wickedness, may not indicate the negation of this one attribute. It may only indicate the reality or the presence of another. Suffering without a cause and without an object, may be the infliction of a malignant being. But suffering in alliance with sin, should lead to a very different conclusion. When thus related it may cast no impeachment on the benevolence, and only bespeak the righteousness of God. It tells us that however much He may love the happiness of His creatures, He loves their virtue more. So that, instead of extinguishing the evidence of one perfection, it may leave this evidence entire, and