

being felt by the mind as a matter of supreme obligation. They dispute about the moral sense in man, or about the origin and constitution of the court of conscience; but they have no dispute about the supreme authority of conscience—even as, in questions of civil polity and legislation, there may be no dispute about the rightful authority of some certain court, while there may be antiquarian doubts and differences on the subject of its origin and formation. Dr. Smith, for example, while he has his own peculiar views on the origin of our moral principles, never questions their authority. He differs from others, in regard to the rationale, or the anterior steps of that process, which at length terminates in a decision of the mind, on the merit or demerit of a particular action. The rightness and the supremacy of that decision are not in the least doubted by him. There may be a metaphysical controversy about the mode of arriving at our moral judgment, and at the same time a perfect concurrence in it as the guide and the regulator of human conduct—just as there may be an anatomical controversy about the structure of the eye or the terminations of the optic nerve, and a perfect confidence with all parties, in the correctness of those intimations which the eye gives of the position of external objects and their visible properties. By attending to this we obtain a second important help for eliciting from the diversity of theories on the nature of virtue, a cumulative argument for the virtuous nature of the Godhead.

22. When the conflict then of its opposing theories, would seem to bring fearful insecurity on