

controversy is not, whether morality be a solidly constituted fabric; but what that is which constitutes its solidity, and which should be singled out as the keystone of the fabric. Each of the champions in this warfare has fastened on a different keystone; and each pushes the triumph against his adversary by a demonstration of its firmness. Or in other words, virtue is compassed about with such a number of securities, and possesses such a superabundance of strength, as to have given room for the question that was raised about Samson of old—what that is wherein its great strength lies. It is like the controversy which sometimes arises about a building of perfect symmetry—when sides are taken, and counter-explanations are advanced and argued, about the one characteristic or constituting charm, which hath conferred upon it so much gracefulness. It is even so of morality. Each partisan hath advocated his own system; and each, in doing so, hath more fully exhibited some distinct property or perfection of moral rectitude. Morality is not neutralized by this conflict of testimonies; but rises in statelier pride, and with augmented security, from the foam and the turbulence which play around its base. To her, this conflict yields, not a balance, but a summation of testimonies; and, instead of an impaired, it is a cumulative argument, that may be reared out of the manifold controversies to which she has given rise. For when it is asserted by one party in the strife, that the foundation of all morality is the right of God to the obedience of his creatures—let God's absolute right be fully conceded to them.