

strictly or specifically upon the question, if we but share however generally in nature's perplexities; in her undefined terrors, and these strangely blended with her vague and uncertain hopes; in her unresolved doubts, her longing yet fruitless aspirations.

18. We have already observed the difficulty to which natural theism is put in accounting for the ills of life—and by availing ourselves of the undoubted fact, that mainly they are reducible into moral causes, we have certainly approximated at least to the right interpretation of them. The most appalling of all these in our mysterious world is the mystery of death. Even although it could be made out, that there is here a triumphant superiority of happiness to misery—this, instead of bringing an explanation to the difficulty, would in fact bring a difficulty to the explanation. Let the few little years of our pilgrimage have been as bright and as beautiful as they may—still what account is to be given of that universal plague, wherewith all that ever breathes on the face of our earth hath been so hopelessly and incurably infected? Of what avail are the smile and the sunshine of our ephemeral being, when they only serve to aggravate its closing horrors; and to give a more revolting hideousness to that desolation, by which it is so fearfully ended? Let the picture of all those joys which gladden the family circle be rendered as touching as it may—it is death, it is universal and unsparing death, which turns it all to cruelest mockery. Even though without one other ingredient to embitter the cup of life, this