

compromise with guilt. The actual sufferings of life speak loudly and experimentally against the supposition; and when one looks to the disease and the agony of spirit, and above all the hideous and unsparing death, with its painful struggles and gloomy forebodings, which are spread universally over the face of the earth—we cannot but imagine of the God who presides over such an economy, that He is not a being who will falter from the imposition of any severity, which might serve the objects of a high administration. Else all steadfastness of purpose and steadfastness of principle, were fallen from. God would stand forth to the eye of His own creatures, a spectacle of outraged dignity. And He of whom we image that He dwells in an inviolable sanctuary, the august Monarch of heaven and earth—with a law by subjects dishonoured, by the sovereign unavenged—would possess but the semblance and the mockery of a throne.

32. Such a conception is not only a violence to the apprehensions of nature, but is even acknowledged at times by our academic theists, as a violence to the sound philosophy of the subject. The most striking testimony to this effect is that given by Dr. Adam Smith, on the first appearance of his “Theory of Moral Sentiments;” nor does it detract from its interest or its value, that he afterwards suppressed it, in the subsequent editions of his work:—“All our natural sentiments,” he says, “prompt us to believe, that as perfect virtue is supposed necessarily to appear to the Deity as it does to us, as for its own sake and without any farther view, the natural and proper object of love