

he speaks of these as undoubted virtues, and renders the homage of his moral acknowledgments to them all. In the sophistry of his vindication, the principles of the ethical system are left untouched and entire. He meddles not with the virtuousness either of humanity or justice ; but he tells of the humanity of slavery, and the justice of slavery. It is true, that he heeds not the representations which are given of the atrocities of his trade—that he does not attend because he wills not to attend ; and in this there is practical unfairness. Still it but resolves itself into perversity of conduct, and not into perversity of sentiment. The very dread and dislike he has for the informations of the subject, are symptoms of a feeling that his conscience cannot be trusted with the question ; or, in other words, prove him to be possessed of a conscience which is just like that of other men. The partialities of interest and feeling may give rise to an infinite diversity of moral judgments in our estimate of actions ; while there may be the most perfect uniformity and stability of judgment in our estimate of principles : and, on all the great generalities of the ethical code, conscience may speak the same language, and own one and the same moral directory all the world over.

15. When consciences then pronounce differently of the same action, it is for the most part, or rather, it is almost always, because understandings view it differently. It is either because