

CHAPTER X.

On the Capacities of the World for making a virtuous Species happy ; and the Argument deducible from this, both for the Character of God and the Immortality of Man.

1. WE have already stated the distinction between the theology of those who would make the divine goodness consist of all moral excellence ; and of those who would make it consist of benevolence alone. Attempts have been made to simplify the science of morals, by the reduction of its various duties or obligations into one element—as when it is alleged, that the virtuousness of every separate morality is reducible into benevolence, which is regarded as the central, or as the great master and generic virtue that is comprehensive of them all. There is a theoretic beauty in this imagination—yet it cannot be satisfactorily established, by all our powers of moral or mental analysis. We cannot rid ourselves of the obstinate impression, that there is a distinct and native virtuousness, both in truth and in justice, apart from their subserviency to the good of men ; and accordingly, in the ethical systems of all our most orthodox expounders, they are done separate ho-