

seeing that underived or unreasoned truth must necessarily form the basis, as well as the continuous cement of all reasoning. They challenge us to account for these native and original convictions of the mind; and affirm that they may be as much due to an arbitrary organization of the percipient faculty, as to the objective trueness of the things which are perceived. And we cannot dispute the possibility of this. We can neither establish by reasoning those truths, whose situation is, not any where in the stream, but at the fountain of ratiocination; nor can we deny that beings might have been so differently constituted, as that, with reverse intuitions to our own, they might have recognised as truths what we instantly recoil from as falsehoods, or felt to be absurdities our first and foremost principles of truth. And when this suspicion is once admitted, so as to shake our confidence in the judgments of the intellect, it were but consistent that it should be extended to the departments both of morality and taste. Our impressions of what is virtuous or of what is fair, may be regarded as alike accidental and arbitrary with our impressions of what is true—being referable to the structure of the mind, and not to any objective reality in the things which are contemplated. It is thus that the absolutely true, or good, or beautiful, may be conceived of, as having no stable or substantive being in nature; and the