

tary act—so many are the objects of thought, both the reality and the nature of which are but dimly apprehended on the first suggestion of them; and of which we can only be made firmly to believe and thoroughly to know by means of a prolonged attention, which is a sustained and voluntary act also. It is thus that the moral state determines the intellectual—for it is by the exercise of a strong and continuous will, upholding or perpetuating the attention, that what at the outset were the probabilities of a subject are at length brightened into its proofs, and the verisimilitudes of our regardful notice become the verities of our confirmed faith.

2. Of all the subjects to which the attention of the human mind can be directed, this principle admits of pre-eminent application to the subject of theology—as involving in it both the present duties and the final destinies of our race. In no other track of inquiry are the moral and the intellectual more thoroughly blended,—as might be evinced by tracing the whole progress, from the first or incipient disposition of mind towards the theme, to the devotedness of its confirmed assurance.

3. Going back then to the very earliest of our mental conceptions on this subject, we advert first to the distinction in point of real and logical import, between unbelief and disbelief. The former we apprehend, to be the furthest amount