

29. This is not a matter of mere sensitive and popular impression ; but in strict accordance with the views of a calm and intelligent jurisprudence. It enters into the very essence of our conception of a moral government, that it must have sanctions which could not have place, were there either to be no dispensation of rewards and punishments ; or were the penalties, though denounced with all the parade and proclamation of law, to be never executed. It is not the lesson of conscience, that God would, under the mere impulse of a parental fondness for the creatures whom He had made, let down the high state and sovereignty which belong to him ; or that He would forbear the infliction of the penalty, because of any soft or timid shrinking from the pain it would give to the objects of His displeasure. There is nothing either in history or nature, which countenances such an imagination of the Deity, as that, in the relentings of mere tenderness, he would stoop to any weak or unworthy 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