

should operate with no corresponding purpose: that, while the perception of sweet and bitter has its acknowledged and unmistakeable uses, the universal perception of right and wrong, the unconquerable belief of the merit of certain feelings and actions, the craving alike after moral advancement and after the means of attaining it, should exist only to delude, perplex, and disappoint man. No one, with his contemplations calmed and filled and harmonized by the view of the known constitution of the universe, its machinery "wheeling unshaken" in the farthest skies and in the darkest cavern, its vital spirit breathing alike effectively in the veins of the philosopher and the worm;—no one, under the influence of such a train of contemplations, can possibly admit into his mind a persuasion which makes the moral part of our nature a collection of inconsistent and futile impressions, of idle dreams and warring opinions, each having the same claims to our acceptance. Wide as is the distance between the material and the moral world; shadowy as all reasonings necessarily are which attempt to carry the inferences of one into the other; elevated above the region of matter as all the principles and grounds of truth must be, which belong to our responsibilities and hopes; still the astronomical and natural philosopher can hardly fail to draw from their studies an imperturbable conviction that our moral nature cannot correspond to those representations according to which it has no law, coherency, or object. The mere natural reasoner may, or must stop far short of all that it is his highest interest to know, his first duty to pursue; but even he, if he take any elevated and comprehensive views of his own subject, must escape from the opinions, as unphilosophical as they are comfortless, which would expel from our view of the world all reference to duty and moral good, all reliance on the most universal grounds of trust and hope.

Men's belief of their duty, and of the reasons for practising it, connected as it is with the conviction