

ing God as eternal and omnipresent, conscious of all the relations, and of all the objects of the universe, instituting laws founded on the contemplation of these relations, and carrying these laws into effect by his immediate energy,—we had attained to a conception, in some degree definite, of the Deity, such as natural philosophy leads us to conceive him. But by resting in this mode of conception, we should overlook, or at least should disconnect from our philosophical doctrines, all that most interests and affects us in the character of the Creator and Preserver of the world;—namely, that he is the law-giver and judge of our actions; the proper object of our prayer and adoration; the source from which we may hope for moral strength here, and for the reward of our obedience and the elevation of our nature in another state of existence.

We are very far from believing that our philosophy alone can give us such assurance of these important truths as is requisite for our guidance and support; but we think that even our physical philosophy will point out to us the necessity of proceeding far beyond that conception of God, which represents him merely as the mind in which reside all the contrivance, law, and energy of the material world. We believe that the view of the universe which modern science has already opened to us, compared with the prospect of what she has still to do in pursuing the path on which she has just entered, will show us how immeasurably inadequate such a mode of conception would be: and that if we take into our account, as we must in reason do, all that of which we have knowledge and consciousness, and of which we have as yet no systematic science, we shall be led to a conviction that the Creator and Preserver of the material world must also contain in him such properties and attributes as imply his moral character, and as fall in most consistently with all that we learn in any other way of his providence and holiness, his justice and mercy.