

transcending our highest conceptions of good, man would never rise to those higher regions of moral excellence which we know him to be capable of attaining. "To deny a God," again says the great philosopher, "destroys magnanimity and the raising of human nature; for take an example of a dog, and mark what a generosity and courage he will put on, when he finds himself maintained by a man; who, to him, is instead of a God, or *melior natura*: which courage is manifestly such, as that creature, without that confidence of a better nature than his own, could never attain. So man, when he resteth and assureth himself upon divine protection and favour, gathereth a force and faith, which human nature could not obtain. Therefore, as atheism is in all respects hateful, so in this, that it depriveth human nature of the means to exalt itself above human frailty."*

Such a law, then, of reference to a Supremely Good Being, is impressed upon our nature, as the condition and means of its highest moral advancement. And strange indeed it would be if we should suppose, that in a system where all besides indicates purpose and design, this law should proceed from no such origin; and no less inconceivable, that such a law, purposely impressed upon man to purify and elevate his nature, should delude and deceive him.

8. Nothing remains, therefore, but that the Creator, who, for purposes that even we can see to be wise and good, has impressed upon man this tendency to look to him for support, for advancement, for such happiness as is reconcileable with holiness;—to believe him to be the union of all perfection, the highest point of all intellectual and moral excellence;—is, in reality, such a guardian and judge, such a good, and wise, and perfect Being, as we thus irresistibly conceive him. It would indeed be extravagant to assert that the imagination of the creature,

* Bacon. Essay on Atheism.