

ing the quality of our moral judgments, is all for which we contend; and Paley's instance is quite worthless for his argument.

Had he grounded his rejection of the moral sense on the avowed depravity of our nature, and the impotency of moral rule, in putting down the evil that is at war with our better feelings, we should, with one mind, have allowed the force of his objection; and some would, I doubt not, have accepted his conclusion. In so doing they would however have done wrong: for the rejection of the moral sense, on religious grounds, is one of the errors of fanaticism. Amidst all the ruin that is within us, there are still the elements of what is good; and were there left in the natural heart no kindly affections and moral sentiments, man would be no longer responsible for his sins; and every instance of persuasion against the impulse of bad passion, and of conversion from evil unto good, would be nothing less than a moral miracle. On such a view of human nature, the Apostles of our religion might as well have wasted their breath on the stones of the wilderness as on the hearts of their fellow-men in the cities of the heathen.

Had Paley, rejecting the authority of the moral sense on grounds like these, proceeded to build up a system of christian ethics, founded on the word of God, enforced by its heavenly sanction, and recommended through the affections to a practical acceptance as a rule of life, he might have conferred a great benefit on the cause of morality and religion. He might then have gone on to shew, that the code of christian morals contains a set of rules co-ordinate with other rules which the wise and the good of all ages have endeavoured to establish and