

than nothing—a set of perturbations interfering with the calm results of a dispassionate calculation. Such a system has no fitness for man's nature.

4. *Virtue is the doing good to mankind, in obedience to the will of God and for the sake of everlasting happiness.* This is the definition adopted by Paley; and it is, I think, open to many grave objections.

In the first place, without straining its meaning beyond what the words can well bear, it does not include many important christian virtues; such as self-denial, resignation to the will of God, and voluntary suffering for the sake of conscience. It may be said that these virtues indirectly benefit mankind: but the good of mankind is not, at least, their immediate object.—Again, a man may act well from habit or affection, without ever thinking of reward, either here or hereafter. Surely such actions cease not to be virtuous; yet they come not within the words of Paley's definition—Lastly, if such be our definition of virtue, what becomes of the virtues of the heathen world—of men who knew nothing certain of a future state, and perhaps seldom thought of it? We know that they possessed a moral nature—that they reasoned correctly and beautifully on moral questions—that many of them acknowledged the supremacy of conscience—and that they sometimes performed heroic deeds of self-denial. Are we then (for the sake of a mere moral definition) to blot out the recorded sentiments and actions of mankind—to destroy the distinction between good and evil—and to denounce all the deeds of the heathen world as violations of the law of nature, and moral wrongs, because performed by men, who, having no clear revelation of a future