

law of just and right, is a relation of incalculable consequence. We find that we cannot be permitted to be merely contemplators and speculators with regard to the Governor of the moral world; we must obey His will; we must turn our affections to Him; we must advance in His favour; or we offend against the nature of our position in the scheme of which He is the author and sustainer.

It is far from our purpose to represent natural religion, as of itself sufficient for our support and guidance; or to underrate the manner in which our views of the Lord of the universe have been, much more, perhaps, than we are sometimes aware, illustrated and confirmed by lights derived from revelation. We do not here speak of the manner in which men have come to believe in God, as the Governor of the moral world; but of the fact, that by the aid of one or both of these two guides, Reason or Revelation, reflecting persons in every age have been led to such a belief. And we conceive it may be useful to point out some connexion between such a belief of a just and holy Governor, and the conviction, which we have already endeavoured to impress upon the reader, of a wise and benevolent Creator of the physical world. This we shall endeavour to do in the present book.

At the same time that men have thus learnt to look upon God as their Governor and Judge, the source of their support and reward, they have also been led, not only to ascribe to him power and skill, knowledge and goodness, but also attribute to him these qualities in a mode and degree excluding all limit:—to consider him as almighty, all-wise, of infinite knowledge and inexhaustible goodness; every where present and active, but incomprehensible by our minds, both in the manner of his agency, and the degree of his perfections. And this impression concerning the Deity appears to be that which the mind receives from all objects of contemplation and all modes of advance towards truth. To this con-