

author:—"Passive virtues, of all others the severest, of all others perhaps the most acceptable to the Deity, would, it is evident, be excluded from a constitution in which happiness and misery should regularly follow virtue and vice. Patience and composure under distress, affliction, and pain; a steadfast keeping up of our confidence in God, and of our reliance on his final goodness, at the time when every thing present is adverse and discouraging; and (what is no less difficult to retain) a cordial desire for the happiness of others, even when we are deprived of our own; these dispositions, which constitute, perhaps, the perfection of our moral nature, would not have found their proper office and object in a state of avowed retribution."*

But, if Christianity does not promise us the enjoyment of worldly prosperity, it promises that peace which the world can neither give nor take away.

"What nothing earthly gives, or can destroy,
The soul's calm sunshine, and the heart-felt joy,
Are virtue's prize!"†

* Paley's Elements of Natural Theology.

† Pope's Essay on Man.