

and has implanted within us the recognition of His authority? But further, this sense of responsibility is not the obligation to obey an unknown or arbitrary will; not the recognition that we ought to fulfil commands from a certain source irrespective of their character. It is the feeling of obligation to do right actions. It is not necessary to inquire here, how the moral qualities of actions are determined. Conscience, in saying, You ought to do right, declares that righteousness belongs to Him, under whose moral government we are. This sense of obligation to right conduct, in which He makes known His will within us, cannot but be an expression of His own character. Besides, the issues of obedience to, or disregard of, the voice of conscience, in the moral experience of mankind, while mixed in character, yet on the whole bear witness that God is a moral governor, who loves righteousness and hates iniquity. This testimony is not contradicted by the fact that sin exists and is so prevalent. There is mystery here, before which we have to confess our ignorance. That the permission of sin sometimes becomes the condition of worthy ends, may be a partial explanation. For the rest, our moral natures assure us that He, whose purpose is expressed in our consciousness of responsibility to act aright, cannot be the author of moral evil. Thus in advance of the manifestations of the supernatural in external nature, the spirit with the breath of man proclaims, God reigns, a God of righteousness.

But, through his moral nature, man recognizes not only a law of duty defining conduct, but a thought of good inspiring it. This is a psychological fact equally with the idea of right. These two ideas are distinct from one another, yet inseparable. The conception of right action is not simply that of striving to attain what is good, neither is the good purely identical with doing right. The one implies a standard, by which actions are tested, the other an ideal, towards which the person tends. Yet a true standard will be associated with the highest good, and a worthy ideal will be reached through right action alone. What is right is to be done for its own sake regardless of consequences; but in determining the moral quality of actions, their tendency to promote the highest good cannot be left out of view. With the thought of the good we are again in contact with an ultimate, irreducible idea. It may be possible to specify elements entering into the realization