

case that should ever occur, just in the way he would wish to have it met. Those laws might have been so framed and disposed that, after running on in one unvarying course for ages, a new one might come in, or the old ones be modified, and at once produce effects quite different, and then the first laws resume again their usual course. And the new or modified law might be made to produce its extraordinary or peculiar effects just at the moment when some miracle or special providence would be needed. Thus what would be to us a special or miraculous interposition of divine power, might be the foreseen and foreordained result of God's original purpose. And if we can conceive how such an effect could be produced once, we cannot doubt that infinite wisdom and power could in like manner meet every possible case in which what we call special and miraculous providence would be needed. With our limited powers, we are obliged, after constructing a complicated machine, to put it into operation before we can judge certainly of its effects; and then, if our wishes are not met, we must alter the parts, or in some other way meet the new cases that occur; and hence we find it difficult to conceive how it can be otherwise with God. But he saw the operation of the vast machine of the universe just as clearly at the beginning as at any subsequent period. He, therefore, can do at the beginning what we can do only after experience, namely, adapt the parts to every variety of circumstances.

If I mistake not, we are indebted to Bishop Butler for the germ of these views; but Professor Babbage has illustrated them by reference to an extraordinary machine of his own invention, called "The Calculating Engine." It is adapted to perform the most extensive and complicated numerical calculations, of course with absolute certainty, because its parts are arranged by certain laws. And he finds that precisely such effects, on a small scale, can be produced by this machine, as have been imputed above to the divine agency in creation. It is moved by a weight and a wheel which turns at a short interval around its axis, and prints a series of natural numbers, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, etc., each exceeding its antecedent by unity. "Now, reader, let me ask you," says Professor Babbage; "how long you will have counted before you are firmly convinced that the engine, supposing its adjustments to remain unaltered, will continue, whilst its motion is maintained, to pro-