

is not to strengthen our confidence in the constancy of nature's sequences—but to ascertain what be the real and precise terms of each sequence. It is for this purpose that experiments are so varied—for in that assemblage of contemporaneous things amid which a given result takes place, it is often not known at the first which of the things is the strict and proper antecedent—and it is to determine this, that sometimes certain of the old circumstances are detached from the groupe and certain new ones added, till the discrimination has been precisely made between what is essential and what is merely accessory in the process.

3. This predisposition to count on the uniformity of nature is an original law of the mind, and is not the fruit of our observation of that uniformity. It has been well stated by Dr. Brown that there is no more of logical dependence between the propositions, that a stone has a thousand times fallen to the earth and a stone will always fall to the earth, than there is between the propositions that a stone has once fallen to the earth and a stone will always fall to the earth. “At whatever link of the chain we begin,” he says, “we must always meet with the same difficulty, the conversion of the past into the future. If it be absurd to make this conversion at one stage of inquiry, it is just as absurd to make it at any other stage; and, as far as our memory extends, there never was a time at which we did not make the instant conversion.” The truth is, that experience teaches the past only—not the future. It tells us what has happened before the present moment—and to infer