

with the most rigid and invariable fulfilment. This is the strongest practical vindication which can be imagined, of the unshaken faith that we might place in the instinctive and primary suggestions of nature. It restores that feeling of security to our intellectual processes which the Philosophy of Hume so laboured to unsettle: And we again feel a comfort and a confidence in the exercises of reason—when thus reassured in the solidity of those axioms which are reason's stepping-stones, in the substantive truth and certainty of those first principles whence all argumentation takes its rise.

6. But the mention of David Hume leads to the consideration of that atheistical argument which has been associated with his name—an argument not founded however on any denial of the regularity of nature's sequences—but proceeding on the admission of that regularity; and only assuming the necessity of experience to ascertain what the sequences actually are. Mr. Hume's argument is this: After having once observed the conjunction between any two terms of an invariable sequence—it is granted that from the observed existence of either of the terms, we can conclude without observation the existence of the other—that from a perceived antecedent we can foretell its consequent, although we should not see it; or on the other hand from the perceived consequent we can infer the antecedent, although it should not have been seen by us. Having had the observation once of the two terms A and B, and of the causal relation between them, the appearance of A singly would warrant the anticipation of B, or of B singly the inference of A.