

arbitrary arrangements, that we contrasted the dispositions of matter with its laws.

5. For the purpose, then, of viewing aright what that is, in which, nakedly and singly, the chief strength of the natural argument for a God lies—we should not only distinguish between the existence of matter and its dispositions, but also between the laws of matter and its dispositions. We have already said, that we detach an ingredient of weakness from the cause, when we give up that part of the argument which is founded on the bare existence of matter; and we at least bring out more prominently, because more separately, the main strength of the argument—when we discriminate between the evidence for a divine wisdom in the laws of matter, and the evidence for a divine wisdom in the disposition of its parts. If matter have existed from eternity, it must have had properties of some kind; and why not, it is asked, as well the actual properties which characterize it as any others? La Place, indeed, goes so far as to found an atheistical insinuation on the doctrines which he professes to demonstrate—that every virtue which radiates from a central point diminishes in intensity with the squares of the distances; and hence, if gravitation be a property at all, the actual law of gravitation is an essential property of matter. Now, it is not sufficiently adverted to, that we can even afford to give up the evidence as indicated singly by the laws, because of the overpassing evidence which is indicated by the collocations of matter. Laws of themselves would announce nought whatever of the hand or mind of an