

every new occurrence of the same event in the same apparent circumstances. This too is our real object in the repetition of experiments. Not that we suspect that Nature will ever vacillate from her constancy—for if by one decisive experiment we should fix the real terms of any succession, this experiment were to us as good as a thousand. But each succession in nature is so liable to be obscured and complicated by other influences, that we must be quite sure, ere we can proclaim our discovery of some new sequence, that we have properly disentangled her separate trains from each other. For this purpose, we have often to question Nature in many different ways; we have to combine and apply her elements variously; we have sometimes to detach one ingredient, or to add another, or to alter the proportions of a third—and all in order, not to ascertain the invariableness of Nature, for of this we have had instinctive certainty from the beginning; but, in order to ascertain what the actual footsteps of her progressions are, so as to connect each effect in the history of Nature's changes with its strict and proper cause. Meanwhile, amid all the suspense and the frequent disappointments which attend this search into the processes of nature, our confidence in the rigid and inviolable uniformity of these processes remains unshaken—a confidence not learned from experience, but amply confirmed and accorded to by experience. For this instinctive expectation is never once refuted, in the whole course of our subsequent researches. Nature though stretched on a rack, or put to the torture by the inquisitors