

many, on the one hand, who ascribe to it a sufficiency and a strength, that would leave a Gospel uncalled for; and there being a few, upon the other, who regard it as little better than the baseless fabric of a vision. We think that it has a basement, and the fragments beside of a certain humble superstructure, marred, misshapen, and ruinous. But we also think that its disciples are greatly too aspiring—and that they have raised its pretensions far beyond the measure of its powers.

12. As a specimen of the rashness to which we now advert, let us instance one of the current maxims of this Theology—that it is the characteristic of Wisdom to accomplish its ends by the simplest of possible means. In the workmanship of God then, possessed as He is of the most perfect Wisdom, we should expect the greatest simplicity; and more especially the fewest possible causes, or that no more should be set in operation than were necessary or at least expedient for the production of a given effect. It is thus certainly that we form our estimate of human art; and should admire above all others the genius of the man who could simplify a machine by dispensing with some of its parts, while its powers remained in every way as effective as before. The greater the result in fact and the simpler the instrumental apparatus, the higher homage do we pay to the inventive faculties of its author—and we might therefore expect the most striking exemplifications of this combined simplicity and power, in the productions of that Supreme Artificer, who, beside the most consummate skill, has an infinity of resources at command.