

love—He might have willed, we fondly imagine, He might have willed instanter into being a full and finished Paradise, where each rejoicing inhabitant, with a beatitude up to the measure of his capacity, might have expatiated from the first moment of his existence in happiness without a flaw, and that was to last for ever. But this too is reached by a progression of unknown length and magnitude; and meanwhile we live among the imperfections of an embryo state, the struggles and the sighs and we may add the sinfulness of a creation that seems labouring in birth, and as if charged with the pains and the portents of a coming regeneration. Now we should be satisfied to know this as a fact or phenomenon, although we should not know the principle of the phenomenon. It is a great matter, when unable to ascertain *how* it is, to be satisfied with the assurance that *so* it is. The end is more valuable than its means, and one might think that the creative Power might have ordained the end without the stepping-stone of means. But it is not so ordered—for neither has it dispensed with a complex and extended instrumentality in space—nor with a lengthened procedure in time. The life of man is more valuable than the lungs, or the heart, or any other organ which has functions to perform that under our present constitution are indispensable to vitality—And God could, we imagine, have willed this life into direct action and enjoyment, without the intervention of such an elaborate materialism. And in like manner, for there is an identity of principle in the two cases, the mature virtue and unsullied felicity of heaven