

ideal majesty, we should never think of addressing it as a conscious and a living agent. We should hold it to be idolatry, did we offer to it the worship of any adoration, and a more abject superstition still, did we lift the voice of supplication at its shrine—did we ask it, for example, to modify any of its own processes, or to suspend for some caprice and convenience of ours a constancy which heretofore has been unexcepted and unalterable.

5. Now let us conceive this way of viewing the principle of gravitation to be transferred to the principle of a Deity. We might readily award to this last a power of the same force and the same unity—the same pervading agency, simple perhaps in its origin, but most munificent and most prolific in its beneficial results—the same mathematical certainty of guidance and direction over all the processes of nature—and the same unfailing necessity of movement, which it were utterly hopeless should ever at the forth-putting of human desire be changed or arrested in its course. The two principles are viewed as alike in regard to their absolute control over all the subordinate phenomena, and alike both as to the sureness of these phenomena and the inflexibility of that moving force from which they have emanated. We may perceive how natural the transition is then, by which God is regarded as a principle, and ceases to be regarded as a person. The admiration may be heightened into a sort of intellectual adoration. The delight wherewith one beholds the utilities of a law in nature, may, when we reflect on the Divinity as its supreme law, be mingled with a