

that request upon the other. Man applies, God complies. Man asks a favour, God bestows it. These are conceived to be the two terms of a real interchange that takes place between the parties—the two terms of a sequence, in fact, whereof the antecedent is a prayer lifted up from Earth, and the consequent is the fulfilment of that prayer in virtue of a mandate from Heaven.

11. We must not disguise it—that this view of prayer is the object of a strong philosophical antipathy—as implying a perpetual invasion on those established and general laws of nature which are conceived to be unchangeable. It is painfully offensive to a mind habituated to the investigation of causes, to admit of any fitful or capricious deviation from the march and regularity of those magnificent progressions which in its view compose the history of our universe. It cannot bear that the certainties of nature and of science should be so intermeddled with—and grievously would it mar the luxury of many a philosophic contemplation, if, instead of a universe whose efficient principles gave birth to their respective trains of subordinate and strictly dependent phenomena, and whose phenomena could all be traced to the operation of fixed and invariable principles—the harmonies of so noble a mechanism were to be thwarted at every turn, by the power which lay in the inclinations of man to call forth through that efficacy which is ascribed to prayer, the special interventions of the Deity. There is no conception which so adheres to the mind of a philosopher as the unaltered, if not the **unalterable** constancy of Nature; or, in other