

prayer as the antecedent, and a returning favour as the consequent, that more than any other of the numberless successions which take place whether in the mental or the material creation, introduces anarchy or offers violence to the harmonies of nature.

18. Now, instead of looking to the prayers which reciprocate between man and man, and which move in perpetual circulation throughout the mass of society—let us consider those prayers which ascend by a direct path to the throne of Heaven—being addressed to the ear, and submitted to the immediate cognizance of Him who sitteth thereon. Is it unlikely, that He who hath ordained a system of things under which the influence that we now speak of is in busy and constant operation among the creatures whom He hath made; and who yet, instead of disturbing therewith the constancy of nature, has in fact turned it into one of those laws by which the constancy is upholden—is it unlikely that He may cause that very influence to pass and repass between the Father who is above, and the family that are beneath Him, which finds its way in a thousand beneficent sympathies from one member of it to another? When men are the askers and men also are the givers, He can, amid all the caprices of human appetite and fancy, still uphold the regularities both of a moral and a natural economy. And will his wisdom so fail Him in that case, when Himself called upon to be the Giver, that in the immutability whether of His perfections or of His works, there shall be a barrier which He cannot overpass between the importunities of His