

descent or degradation of the Supreme Being, than that any one antecedent in Creation should be followed by its consequent. It is wrong to represent it as a kind of subservient accommodation on the part of the Creator to the creature. It is simply the Creator carrying into effect His own established processes. Present the Deity with certain conditions—and He is always sure to act in a certain manner. But this is not because He is overruled by the conditions. It is because He rules over the conditions—and, being a God who changeth not, He rules over them in a certain manner. When heat acts upon a liquid, He follows it up with evaporation. When it acts upon a solid substance, He follows it up with liquefaction. When the kindness of one heart acts upon another, He follows it up with gratitude. When the imploring cry of a sufferer acts upon the sensibilities of a fellow of the species, He follows it up with the sympathy and compliance of Him to whom it is addressed. And when this imploring cry is directly lifted to Himself—He, in virtue of a sequence as firmly established and as essentially implicated with the general system of the universe, as any other of the trains, and sequences that enter into its vast machinery, follows it up with some wise and gracious ministrations.

20. Thus it is that the doctrine of the efficacy of prayer just introduces another train of sequences into the universe, of as uniform a character as any other of the innumerable trains which enter into the history whether of the moral or of the material world. The whole system of things remains as