

whatever of any intromission with the processes of nature, as far at least as these processes are visible. She seems to move in her wonted order without deviation. By the most careful and searching experiments, there cannot be detected the vestige of any unseen power that has been at work with the sure and regular march of her sequences. In a word all the successions both in mind and matter to the extent in which they have been perceived and classified are to all sense invariable, so as that the same consequents palpably come forth of the same antecedents. And how, in the face of all this observation, shall we expect to shift the order of events by our supplication, or how can we have confidence in the efficacy of prayer?

21. After all the generalities which have been hitherto advanced by us, this remains a palpable and obstinate phenomenon which would need if possible to be disposed of. Prayer with its fulfilment must be admitted as one of those innumerable sequences which obtain in nature—had we but the evidence for its reality. But if indeed an actual sequence, we should be able, it is thought, to discover the traces of it when it came to be complicated with and so to modify or disturb the order of other sequences. It is quite conceivable that prayer and its fulfilment might be one of the many laws in nature, and yet nature *on the whole* maintain her constancy. But the stubborn fact, and a fact which stands in the way of this alleged efficacy of prayer, is, that, notwithstanding the intervention of this supposed and additional law, *visible* nature maintains her constancy, and as far