

nature, and which therefore demands special divine interference to bring it about? Now, then, the question is, Can the creation of man be explained by the ordinary laws of nature? Science shows unequivocally that there was a period when he did not exist on this globe; nay, she can nearly fix the epoch of his appearance.

Was he brought in by natural law? There is, indeed, a dreamy hypothesis that attempts to explain the origination of organic beings by the inherent force of law. But to explain thus the appearance of a moral and intellectual being as unique and exalted as man, has so ridiculous an aspect to common sense, that the boldest scepticism, with perhaps a few exceptions, dare not directly advocate it. It is so obvious that some new and special power must have been concerned in his creation, that unbelief is baffled and confounded — just as it would be now if another being, as much superior to man as he is to other animals, should start into life before our eyes.

But it is said that, after all, man's creation, like every other great event of the universe, must have taken place according to law; for how absurd to suppose God ever to act without law! that is, without a settled principle of action; and if an event is conformed to law, does it not take away the idea of special divine power? In other words, is not a miracle, according to the common understanding of the term, an impossibility?

I fully admit that there is a law of miracles, as well as of common events; but this law may contravene, intensify, or weaken nature's ordinary laws, and therefore it requires God's wisdom and power to introduce and give it effect. It is an alteration of the established course of things; nor does the fact, that God acts according to fixed rules, make such a