

additional number of beneficial arrangements in nature. And further, it may not be out of place to observe, that there appear to be two distinct ways by which an artificer might make manifest the wisdom of his contrivances. He may either be conceived of, as forming a substance, and endowing it with the fit properties; or as finding a substance with certain given properties, and arranging it into fit dispositions for the accomplishment of some desirable end. Both the former and the latter of these we ascribe to the divine artificer—of whom we imagine, that He is the Creator as well as the Disposer of all things. It is only the latter that we can ascribe to the human artificer, who creates no substance, and ordains no property; but finds the substance with all its properties ready made and put into his hands, as the raw material out of which he fashions his implements and rears his structures of various design and workmanship. Now it is a commonly received, and has indeed been raised into a sort of universal maxim, that the highest property of wisdom is to achieve the most desirable end, or the greatest amount of good, by the fewest possible means, or by the simplest machinery. When this test is applied to the laws of nature—then we esteem it as enhancing the manifestation of intelligence, that one single law, as gravitation, should, as from a central and commanding eminence, subordinate to itself a whole host of most important phenomena;