

assure us of the constancy of Nature; but to tell what the terms of her unalterable progressions actually are. The human mind from its first outset, and in virtue of a constitutional bias coeval with the earliest dawn of the understanding, is prepared, and that before experience has begun her lessons, to count on the constancy of Nature's sequences. But at that time, it is profoundly ignorant of the sequences in themselves. It is the proper business of experience to give this information; but it may require many lessons before that her disciples be made to understand what be the distinct terms even of but one sequence. Nature presents us with her phenomena in complex assemblages; and it is often difficult, in the work of disentangling her trains from each other, to single out the proper and causal antecedent with its resulting consequent, from among the crowd of accessory or accidental circumstances by which they are surrounded. There is never any uncertainty, as to the invariableness of Nature's successions. The only uncertainty is as to the steps of each succession; and the distinct achievement of experience is to ascertain these steps. And many mistakes are committed in this course of education, from our disposition to confound the similarities with the samenesses of Nature. We never misgive in our general confidence that the same antecedent will be followed by the same consequent; but we often mistake the semblance for the reality, and