

sometimes to detach one ingredient, or to add another, or to alter the proportions of a third—and all in order, not to ascertain the invariableness of Nature, for of this we have had instinctive certainty from the beginning; but in order to ascertain what the actual footsteps of her progressions are, so as to connect each effect in the history of Nature's changes with its strict and proper cause. Meanwhile, amid all the suspense and the frequent disappointments which attend this search into the processes of nature, our confidence in the rigid and inviolable uniformity of these processes remains unshaken—a confidence not learned from experience, but amply confirmed and accorded to by experience. For this instinctive expectation is never once refuted, in the whole course of our subsequent researches. Nature, though stretched on a rack, or put to the torture by the inquisitions of science, never falters from her immutability; but persists, unseduced and unwearied, in the same response to the same question; or gives forth, by a spark, or an explosion, or an effervescence, or some other definite phenomenon, the same result to the same circumstances or combination of data. The anticipations of infancy meet with their glorious verification in all the findings of manhood; and a truth which would seem to require Omniscience for its grasp, as coextensive with all Nature and all History, is deposited by the hand of God, in the little cell of a nursling's cogitations.