

7. Yet the immutability of Nature has ministered to the atheism of some spirits, as impressing on the universe a character of blind necessity, instead of that spontaneity which might mark the intervention of a willing and a living God. To refute this notion of an unintelligent fate, as being the alone presiding Divinity, the common appeal is to the infinity and exquisite skill of Nature's adaptations. But to attack this infidelity in its fortress, and dislodge it thence, the more appropriate argument would be the very, the individual adaptation on which we have now insisted—the immutability of Nature, in conjunction with the universal sense and expectation, even from earliest childhood, that all men have of it; being itself one of the most marvellous and strikingly beneficial of these adaptations. When viewed aright, it leads to a wiser and sounder conclusion than that of the fatalists. In the instinctive, the universal faith of Nature's constancy, we behold a promise. In the actual constancy of Nature, we behold its fulfilment. When the two are viewed in connection, then, to be told that Nature never recedes from her constancy, is to be told that the God of Nature never recedes from His faithfulness. If not by a whisper from His voice, at least by the impress of His hand, He hath deposited a silent expectation in every heart; and He makes all Nature and all History conspire to realize it. He hath not only enabled man to retain in his memory a faithful