

*mankind, or the other less suited, or perhaps altogether useless to that end."*

This passage exhibits, we conceive, that combination of feelings which ought to mark the character of the religious natural philosopher; an earnest piety ready to draw nutriment from the contemplation of established physical truths; joined with a philosophical caution, which is not seduced by the anticipation of such contemplations, to pervert the strict course of physical inquiry.

It is precisely through this philosophical care and scrupulousness that our views of final causes acquire their force and value as aids to religion. The object of such views is not to lead us to physical truth, but to connect such truth, obtained by its proper processes and methods, with our views of God, the master of the universe; through those laws and relations which are thus placed beyond dispute.

Bacon's comparison of final causes to the vestal virgins is one of those poignant sayings, so frequent in his writings, which it is not easy to forget. "Like them," he says, "they are dedicated to God, and are barren." But to any one who reads his work it will appear in what spirit this was meant. "Not because those final causes are not true and worthy to be inquired, being kept within their own province." (Of the Advancement of Learning, b. ii. p. 142.) If he had had occasion to develope his simile, full of latent meaning as his similes so often are, he would probably have said, that to these final causes barrenness was no reproach, seeing they ought to be, not the mothers but the daughters of our natural sciences; and that they were barren, not by imperfection of their nature but in order that they might be kept pure and undefiled, and so fit ministers in the temple of God.