

1. The sciences which have at present acquired any considerable degree of completeness, are those in which an extensive and varied collection of phenomena, and their proximate causes, have been reduced to a few simple general laws. Such are Astronomy and Mechanics, and perhaps, so far as its physical conditions are concerned, Optics. Other portions of human knowledge can be considered as perfect sciences, in any strict sense of the term, only when they have assumed this form; when the various appearances which they involve are reduced to a few principles, such as the laws of motion and the mechanical properties of the luminiferous ether. If we could trace the endless varieties of the forms of crystals, and the complicated results of chemical composition, to some one comprehensive law necessarily pointing out the crystalline form of any given chemical compound, Mineralogy would become an exact science. As yet, however, we can scarcely boast of the existence of any other such sciences than those which we at first mentioned: and so far therefore as we attempt to give definiteness to our conception of the Deity, by considering him as the intelligent depositary and executor of laws of nature, we can subordinate to such a mode of conception no portion of the creation, save the mechanical movements of the universe, and the propagation and properties of light.

2. And if we attempt to argue concerning the nature of the laws and relations which govern those provinces of creation whither our science has not yet reached, by applying some analogy borrowed from cases where it has been successful, we have no chance of attaining any except the most erroneous and worthless guesses. The history of human speculations, as well as the nature of the objects of them, shows how certainly this must happen. The great generalizations which have been established in one department of our knowledge, have been applied in vain to the purpose of throwing light on the