

its acts, and constantly acting upon all parts of the physical universe."* And again, Nature, he affirms, consists of non-physical objects, which are neither beings, nor bodies, nor matter. It is composed of motion; of laws of every description; and has perpetually at its disposal space and time.†

With respect to the agency of this vicegerent of Deity, he observes that Nature is a blind power without intelligence which acts necessarily.‡ That matter is her sole domain, of which however she can neither create nor destroy a single atom, though she modifies it continually in every way and under every form,—and causes the existence of all bodies of which matter is essentially the base;—and that in our globe it is she that has immediately given existence to vegetables, to animals, as well as to other bodies that are there to be met with. §

From these statements, though he appears to admit the existence of a Deity, and that he is the primary author of all things, yet he considers him as having delegated his power to *nature* as his vicegerent, to whose disposal he has left all material subsistences, and who, according to him, is the real creator of all the forms and beings that exist, and who maintains the physical universe in its present state. It is not quite clear what opinion he held with respect to the creation of matter, as he nowhere expressly ascribes it to God; though, since he excludes nature from it, we may infer, unless he thought it to be eternal, that he meant it should be ascribed to the Deity; but, if such was his opinion, he ought to have stated it distinctly and broadly; which he certainly would have done had he felt any anxiety to prevent misrepresentation. As it is, his God is an exact counterpart of the God of Epicurus, who leaving all to

* N. Dict. D'Hist. Nat. xxii. Art. Nature, 377.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid. 364.

§ Ibid. 369, 376.