

esting *Wanderings in New South Wales, &c.*, relates that it is common for the females of the aboriginal tribes, if they experience much suffering in their labour, to threaten the life of the poor infant, which when born they barbarously destroy.* This is a fearful counteraction of instinct flowing from an *evil* source.

The Deity himself, doubtless when there is—*Dignus vindice nodus*—sometimes suspends the action of an instinct. It is related in the Holy Scripture, that when the ark of God was taken by the Philistines, in order to ascertain whether the plagues that were sent upon them were from God, they yoked two milch kine that had calves to the cart in which it was sent to Bethshemesh, and the kine went straight to that place, their instinct being mastered by a strong hand, though they went lowing after their calves all the way.† Here the Deity ruled the instinct. God interferes with the instincts of animals also when he prescribes their course, and sends them in any particular direction to answer his purpose: as in the case of the prophet Jonah. Properly speaking, those interpositions of the Deity by which the law of instinct is suspended, to answer a particular purpose of his Providence, like that just related, must be regarded as miraculous; but yet, though unrecorded, they may happen oftener than we are aware in the course of his *moral* government; sometimes perhaps also to remedy some *physical* evil. This appeared therefore a proper place to advert to them.

* I. 122.

† 1 Sam. vi. 7, 12.