

The opposers of the argument of design, who assert the existence of "necessary and eternal laws of nature," need no other refutation, than the facts detailed throughout these Treatises. Those who allege that design cannot be *proved*, may be thus answered :

We have been gifted with mental faculties, by which we recognise certain abstract truths, or necessary existences ; which abstract truths, or necessary existences, we cannot doubt, without doubting the existence of ourselves. We have been gifted with other faculties, by which we recognise the existence, and compare the properties, of things *external* to ourselves : but, so far as we can discover, neither the existence of these external things, or the existence of their properties, is *necessary* ; they might have existed quite otherwise than they are,—they even might never have had any existence. Now our knowledge of the manifestations of design, among the objects of nature, is derived entirely from those faculties, by which we recognise the existence, and compare the properties, of objects external, to ourselves. Hence nothing can be proved, either for, or against, what we term design in nature, by any argument founded on *necessity* ; that is to say, by any *à priori* reasoning, founded on mere abstract truths, or necessary existences ; and all such attempts must be not only unsatisfactory, but absurd.