

strations of his wisdom. For then, *i. e.* such laws and limitations being laid down, it is as though one Being should have fixed certain rules; and, if we may so speak, provided certain materials; and afterwards have committed to another Being, out of these materials, and in subordination to these rules, the task of drawing forth a creation: a supposition which evidently leaves room, and induces indeed a necessity for contrivance. Nay, there may be many such agents, and many ranks of these.”* This admirable passage from Paley is so much in point, and so exactly expresses our opinions regarding physical agents, that, as in a former instance, we have chosen it as a text for illustration. We shall proceed, therefore, to take a summary view of “the limits within which the Deity has confined his operations;” that is to say, of the laws by which matter, and those subordinate agents by which matter is capable of being influenced, have been made to mutually act, and react upon each other.

The principles of activity, or *forces*, which operate as subordinate agencies throughout nature, may be considered as of two kinds; those agencies which operate universally upon every individual atom of matter, without reference to its sensible properties; as the forces producing the

* Natural Theology, chap. iii.