

without destruction to the whole fabric? Why has their present stability been so wonderfully secured? Again, with respect to the atmosphere; why has any atmosphere been thrown around this globe? and why such manifest provisions to secure its ubiquity, and unvarying constitution?

Viewed alone, and without reference to organized beings, all these things appear to want an object. This globe might have revolved about the central luminary—might have occupied its point in the universe, without any “gathering together of the waters,”—without any circumambient air. But the scheme of the great Creator extended beyond the mere adaptation of inanimate matter. “Before its foundations were laid,” He had destined this earth to teem with life; and throughout, has displayed his original design of rendering it a fit habitation for living beings. For this purpose, and acting, at the same time, in strict conformity to those laws, by which He had chosen to limit himself, He has, by means of successive convulsions and changes, so contrived to mix and blend the different elements; and finally, so to arrange the dry land apart from the sea; that, taken as a whole, and with reference to the present order of things, their relative proportions will scarcely admit of material change. While, to crown his works, and as it were, the more strongly to evince his design and his wisdom, He has surrounded this