

causes ; and that the apparent methods which Nature makes use of for reproduction, do not appear to have any connection with the effects resulting therefrom ; we shall be still obliged to ask, what is the secret mode by which she enables different bodies to propagate their own species ?

This question is very different from the first and second ; it gives liberty of enquiry and admits the employment of imagination, and therefore is not insolvable, for it does not immediately belong to a general cause ; nor is it entirely a question of fact, for provided we can conceive a mode of reproduction dependent upon, or not repugnant to, original causes, we shall have gained a satisfactory answer ; and the more it shall have a connection with other effects of nature, the better foundation will it be raised upon.

By the question itself it is, therefore, permitted to form hypotheses, and to select that which shall appear to have the greatest analogy with the other phenomena of nature. But we must exclude from the number all those which supposes the thing already done ; for example, such as suppose that all the germs of the same species were contained in the first seed,