

tion of vegetables on the third day,—necessarily imply the presence and the operations of the sun: unless we resort to some gratuitous supposition of multiplied miracles, of the most astounding magnitude. Those who can satisfy themselves with such suppositions, made without evidence and at their own good pleasure, are beyond our reach of reasoning. No difficulty, no improbability, no natural impossibility, appals them. They seem to have the attribute of Omnipotence at their command, to help out any hypothesis, or answer any exigency. But I must confess that such modes of resolving difficulties do not approve themselves to my conviction. The Creator has formed a finite and dependent world, the extent and complication of which overwhelm our faculties; but, in all that extent and complication, we have demonstrations without number that the great Sovereign and Conservator of the universe rules it according to a PLAN; and that plan, in its physical aspect, is the one grand and simple law of attraction, with its correlates and conseqences. That plan is but the method of the divine agency, pervading, upholding, and efficiently directing all beings and all events. God “worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:”—and his “counsel standeth for ever.” It would be blasphemous to doubt whether his method of proceeding be the perfection of wisdom. A miracle is not a destroying, or even a suspending of it: it is not an amending, or repairing, or correcting it; it is not a break in the chain; not an occurrence for which no provision had been made in the construction of the eternal purpose. A miracle is an event which, supposing a given connexion of time, place, and persons, would not have come to pass in the ordinary course of things; but for the instrumental causality of which *the divine plan had fixed* the requisite provision. It is no less a part of “the immutability of his counsel,” than is any other fact in