

In the first, we find the flood imputed to a forty days' rain and the overflowing of the ocean; and its reduction to a wind. In the destruction of the cities of the plain, the phenomena described correspond very well with the effects of volcanic agency; and we find accordingly, that the region where those cities stood shows marks of that agency. In the passage of the Red Sea, the removal of the waters, to allow the Israelites to pass, is imputed to a strong east wind all night. Nevertheless, the pillar of a cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night were a manifest and standing miracle in this transaction.

Now, may it not be that, in all these cases, so far as natural agencies were concerned, they were made to conspire with the miraculous in the manner which I have described, namely, by such a modification of some of the remote causes by which they were brought into action, as exactly to answer the divine purpose in the catastrophe of the deluge, of Sodom, and in the passage of the Red Sea?

*A third mode by which the purposes of special providence can be brought about without miracles, is by such an adjustment of the direct and lateral influences on which events depend, that the time and manner of their occurrence shall exactly meet every exigency.*

Although it expresses a truth to represent the second causes of events as constituting the links of a chain, it is not the whole truth. For, in fact, those causes are connected together in the form of a network, or, more exactly still, by a sphere filled with interlocked meshes; or, to speak more mathematically, the forces by which events are produced are both direct and indirect. It would be easy to calculate the effect of a single direct force; but if, in its progress, it meets with a multitude of oblique impulses, striking it at every possible angle, what human mathematics can make out the final resultant? Yet, in fact such is the history of almost every event. The lateral influences, which meet and modify the direct force, are so numerous, and unexpected often, that men are amazed at the result, sometimes as unexpected as a miracle. "When an individual," says Isaac Taylor, "receives an answer to his prayer, the interposition may be made, not in the line which he himself is describing, but in one of those which are to meet him on his path; and at a point, therefore, where, even though the visible constancy of nature should be violated,