

but it may show only that their force has been increased or diminished.

This, then, is one example of special divine interposition. Is there any other? Most writers, theologians as well as others, would probably answer in the negative. For they admit only two classes of events in the universe — the miraculous and the ordinary; the supernatural and the natural. And yet most of them maintain that God exercises over the world a special providence. It is, indeed, true, that very wide differences exist as to the meaning of this phrase. One theologian tells us that the providence of God “over the human family is termed special,” and that “over those persons who are distinguished for virtue and piety is called most special.”* Another calls that providence special “which relates to the church.”† Another regards providence “special when it relates to moral beings, to men and human affairs.”‡

But whatever may be the views of this phrase among technical theologians, the leading idea attached to it among Christians generally is, that God provides and arranges the circumstances in which men are placed, so as to meet the exigencies of individuals, just as he would have them met, and so as will be best for them. In other words, he provides means exactly adapted to meet the specific wants of individuals.

Now, it is an interesting inquiry, whether this can be accomplished by the ordinary and unmodified operation of the laws of nature. We confess ourselves unable to conceive of but two modes in which it can be done.

It is not difficult to imagine how God, at the beginning, when

* Storr and Flatt's Biblical Theology, p. 240.

† Buck's Theological Dictionary.

‡ Knapp's Theology, Vol. I. p. 501.