

beds for the oceans, and elevations for continents. Nay, by the action of the waves and the atmosphere, soils might be accumulated upon the surface. But, in spite of all that merely natural operations could do, what a scene of utter desolation and loneliness would it present! That wonderful power which we call life, and the still more mysterious principle of mind, would be absent. How, then, were the numberless forms of organism, animal and vegetable, possessed of life and instinct, and some of them with powers of intellect,—how were these introduced? If miraculous interposition be not necessary here, we know of no exigency in which it can be; and we may as well dismiss the idea from our philosophy and our theology. Just see what the problem is: nothing less than to take a world of rock, more or less comminuted by water, and to convert it into essentially such a world as the present; to take a world utterly dead and desolate, and spread through its atmosphere, its waters, and its solid surface, ten thousand forms of life and beauty. Has nature any hidden inherent power to do all this? Why, then, can we not lay our finger upon a single manifestation of creative power in nature in these latter times? O, that power is the prerogative of the Deity alone. Who shall have the boldness, and even the impiety, to transfer to blind, unintelligent law, what demands infinite intelligence and infinite power, miraculously exerted?

And yet there have always been men who have done this; not, indeed, in the bold language in which we have stated the principle. Yet some of them have confessed that their object was to sustain atheism. Others have said merely that they meant to show that every thing, even the creation of animals and plants, was accomplished through the inherent self-creating power of law; but they left the origin of the laws to each