

be by virtue of electric action, as shown within the last few years by Crosse and Becquerel. The seas obeyed the impulse of gentle breezes, and rippled their sandy bottoms, as seas of the present day are doing; the trees grew as now, by favor of sun and wind, thriving in good seasons and pining in bad: this while the animals above fishes were yet to be created. The movements of the sea, the meteorological agencies, the disposition which we see in the generality of plants to thrive when heat and moisture were most abundant, were kept up in silent serenity, as matters of simply natural order, throughout the whole of the ages which saw reptiles enter in their various forms upon the sea and land. It was about the time of the first mammals that the forest of the Dirt-Bed was sinking in natural ruin amidst the sea sludge, as forests of the Plantagenets have been doing for several centuries upon the coast of England. In short *all the common operations of the physical world were going on in their usual simplicity, obeying that order which we still see governing them*; while the supposed extraordinary causes were in requisition for the development of the animal and vegetable kingdoms. There surely hence arises a strong presumption against any such causes. It becomes much more likely that the latter phenomena were evolved in the manner of law also, and that we only dream of extraordinary causes here, as men once dreamt of a special action of Deity in every change of wind and the results of each season, merely because they did not know the laws by which the events in question were evolved."

How, let us suppose, would David Hume — the greatest thinker of which infidelity can boast — have greeted the auxiliary who could have brought him such an *argument* as a contribution to the cause? "Your objection, so far as you have