

rays, of the visible properties of things? This appears to be altogether inconceivable.

Every particle of matter possesses an almost endless train of properties, each acting according to its peculiar and fixed laws. For every atom of the same kind of matter these laws are invariably and perpetually the same, while for the different kinds of matter the difference of these properties is equally constant. This constant and precise resemblance, this variation equally constant and equally regular, suggest irresistibly the conception of some cause, independent of the atoms themselves, by which their similarity and dissimilarity, the agreement and difference of their deportment under the same circumstances, have been determined. Such a view of the constitution of matter, as is observed by an eminent writer of our own time, effectually destroys the idea of its eternal and self-existent nature, "by giving to each of its atoms the essential characters, at once, of a *manufactured article* and a *subordinate agent*."*

That such an impression, and the consequent belief in a divine Author of the universe, by whom its laws were ordained and established, does result from the philosophical contemplation of nature, will, we trust, become still more evident by tracing the effect produced upon men's minds by the discovery of such laws and properties as those of which we have been speaking; and we shall therefore make a few observations on this subject.

* Herschel on the Study of Nat. Phil. Art. 28.