

The prior existence of water and air, as compared with that of plants and animals, is established by the fact, that water and air *can* exist without plants and animals; but that plants and animals *cannot* exist without water and air. Hence, as water and air must have existed, with all their present properties, before plants and animals were created; the question naturally arises, how water and air came to be endowed with their present properties? *We* suppose that water and air were created with their present properties, with reference to the future existence of plants and animals; and on this supposition the whole becomes intelligible. Further, that this is the true explanation, and that water and air have not obtained their present properties, by chance, or accident, is rendered still more probable by the following considerations. We have said that water and air can exist without plants and animals: now as far as we know, water and air might have existed *for ever* without plants and animals; at least the contrary cannot be proved, or even rendered probable. Moreover, plants and animals, as involving new principles of a higher order (those of life), never could, by any law of nature, necessary or probable, have resulted from an inferior agency. Hence, there is no necessary relation of cause and effect, between the prior existence of water and air, and the subsequent existence of plants