

it is evident that these arrangements, so immediately calculated to lead to practical difficulties, have been the result of *choice*. For we cannot but believe that an omnipotent Creator, if He had so willed, could have made the elements innocuous, as well as the compounds; nay, to our limited understanding, this would have been the easiest, and most natural, mode of proceeding. Why then did He choose the apparently more difficult course? Why, to use the language of Paley, but "that He might let in, and thereby exhibit, demonstrations of his wisdom." Throughout nature, the exigences and incongruities necessarily arising from the arrangements we have been considering, have given occasion for the display of the most astonishing wisdom and power. And instead of that jarring and clashing, which might have been expected from so many conflicting elements, the qualities and quantities of these elements have, upon the whole, been so wonderfully adjusted to each other, that they neutralize and balance each other's evils; and the general result has been, that all have finally settled down together, into that harmonious state of equilibrium, before alluded to, so admirably adapted for the existence of organic life.

Fifthly. We have hitherto confined our attention to general principles, and arrangements; but the commonest chemical process may be made