

The Deity has chosen to prescribe limits to his power, and to establish certain laws, to which He at all times rigidly adheres; and, again adopting the language of Paley, "when a particular purpose is to be effected, it is not by making a new law, nor by the suspension of the old ones, nor by making them wind, and bend, and yield to the occasion; but it is by the interposition of an apparatus corresponding with those laws, and suited to the exigency which results from them, that the purpose is at length attained." In the instance before us, the attainment of the particular purpose of organic life is effected, not by any departure from the great scheme, but by new and different combinations. To suppose, therefore, that the organic agent can, for example, combine oxygen and hydrogen, in exactly the same proportion, and in the same manner, in which they are combined, when they exist as water; and, from these elements so combined, can yet produce something different from water, is contrary to all reason, and would be, in truth, to accuse the Deity of subverting, and of acting in opposition to, his own laws. We have dwelt the more strongly on these points, because among physiologists a vague notion seems to have prevailed, that organic agents have the power, not only of changing the inherent and peculiar properties of bodies; but likewise, of causing the results of their combination to be