

natures, and producing the infinite variety of nature, and keeping in play her countless and unceasing agencies. It was only necessary that he should impress attenuated matter with these laws, and then put the machine in motion, and it would go on for ever, without any need of God's presence or agency; so that he might henceforward give himself up to undisturbed repose.

I know, indeed, that La Place, and some other advocates of this latter hypothesis, do not admit any necessity for a Deity even to originate matter or its laws; and to prove this was the object of the nebular hypothesis. But how evident that in this he signally failed! For even though he could show how nebulous matter, placed in a certain position, and having a revolution, might be separated into sun and planets, by merely mechanical laws, yet where, save in an infinite Deity, lie the power and the wisdom to originate that matter, and to bring it into such a condition, that, 'by blind laws alone, it would produce such a universe, so harmonious, so varied, so nicely adjusted in its parts and relations as the one we inhabit? Especially, how does this hypothesis show in what manner these worlds could be peopled by countless myriads of organic natures, most exquisitely contrived, and fitted to their condition? The atheist may say that matter is eternal. But if so, what but an infinite mind could in time begin the work of organic creation? If the matter existed for eternal ages without being brought into order, and into organic structures, why did it not continue in the same state for ever? Does the atheist say, All is the result of laws inherent in matter? But how could those laws remain dormant through all past eternity, that is, through a period literally infinite, and then at length be aroused into intense action? Besides, to impute the present wise arrangements and organic creations of the world to law, is to endow that law with all the attributes with which the Theist invests the Deity. Nothing short of intelligence, and wisdom, and benevolence, and power, infinitely above what man possesses, will account for the present world. If there is, then, a power inherent in matter adequate to the production of such effects, that power must be the same as the Deity, and, therefore, it is truly the Deity, by whatever name we call it. In short, the fact that La Place did not see that his hypothesis utterly failed to account for the universe without a Deity,