

principles must of course serve merely to establish a discrepancy between the actual *state* of things, and what is to be *believed* regarding it. And thus, instead of serving purposes of truth, they are made to subserve purposes of error; for the existence of truth in the mind is neither more nor less than the existence of certain conceptions and beliefs, adequately representative of what actually *is*, or what really *has taken place*.

I cannot better illustrate this direct tendency of the anti-miracle argument to destroy truth in the mind, by bringing the mental beliefs into a state of nonconformity with the possible and actual, than by a quotation from La Place himself: "We would not," he says, "give credit to a man who would affirm that he saw a hundred dice thrown into the air, and that they all fell on the same faces. If we had ourselves been spectators of such an event, we would not believe our own eyes till we had scrupulously examined all the circumstances, and assured ourselves that there was no trick or deception. After such an examination, we would not hesitate to admit it, notwithstanding its great improbability; and no one would have recourse to an inversion of the laws of vision in order to account for it." Now, here is the principle broadly laid down, that it is impossible to communicate by the evidence of testimony, belief in an event which *might* happen, and which, if it happened, *ought* on certain conditions to be credited. No one knew better than La Place himself, that the *possibility* of the event which he instanced could be represented with the utmost exactitude by figures. The probability, in throwing a single die, that the ace will be presented on its upper face, is as one in six, — six being the entire number of sides which the cube can possibly present, and the side with the ace being one of these; — the