

WITNESS OF TRUTH.

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NATURE AND GRACE.

No. 1.

THERE are two extremes into which mankind have fallen, both of which are repugnant to Scripture and common sense. One class of men deny miracles,—admit nothing supernatural,—but assert that the laws of nature are fixed and immutable,—that there never has been and never can be any deviation from their regular course. Another class, not so incredulous, while they admit the great truth that God has deviated from the fixed laws of nature for good and wise purposes, also believe and assert that the *direct*, *peculiar*, and *miraculous* power of God is still exercised in the physical and spiritual worlds. The first are deistical, the second superstitious. The former believe too little, the latter too much.

Of the necessity of revelation, and the necessity of miracles, (“the sign manual of heaven,”) in attestation of its authenticity, I need not now write. Let it suffice to say, that without miracles there could be no revelation; without revelation there could be no moral law; without the moral law there could be no morality; and without morality there could be no happiness, order, or peace amongst men.

As soon as the Christian religion was authenticated by miracles and made *credible* by the faithful testimony of many witnesses, and the “many infallible proofs” were given,—it became an *established system*. And as there is now existing a system of nature with its laws and order; so also there is now existing a *system of grace* with its laws and order.

The acorn produces the sapling, and the sapling produces the oak; without the acorn there could be no sapling—without the sapling no full grown oak. Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God,* and obedience springs from faith.† Without the hearing of the word there could be no faith—without faith there could be no obedience.‡

There was a magnificent display of the divine energy and wondrous power in first creating the means of vegetation, and ordaining the existing plan of re-production; yet it would be derogatory to the

* Romans xx. 17. † James ii. 18. ‡ Heb. xi. 6.