

masters of Inductive Philosophy, it signifies the high point to which every faithful inquirer after truth is advancing, however slowly, in his peculiar branch of study; it is the unchangeable summit of a cone whose base continually enlarges to include every known fact appertaining to the subject; and whose every part is linked in harmony according to one simple and intelligible principle. Science is perfect only when it is in the form of a truly general theory; and perhaps it is not too much to believe that the utmost efforts of the human mind may fail in the attempt to comprehend all natural phenomena perceptible by our organisation in *one such theory*.

Even if, hereafter, it should be found possible to include the most comprehensive theory of ponderable matter, gravitation, and the undulatory theory of light and heat, into one wider generalisation for all inorganic matter, there would still remain the mysterious phenomena of life; and beyond all these the relation of mind and sensation. Now these are a few of the legitimate branches of the study of nature, which the providence of the Almighty Creator of the universe has committed to human reason. Their development is for man a physical revelation, continually enlarging its power and influence on the mind and heart; yet it leaves, almost without touching, except to support, a large circle of moral and religious truths of yet higher importance, and more lasting and powerful interest.

Geology dares not claim, as yet, the possession of a sound and general theory, such as is here described; but in common with astronomy, and chemistry, and mechanics, and every other part of natural science, its infancy was amused with baseless speculations, and hypotheses which have fallen into contempt. For these errors of their fathers its modern cultivators have dearly paid, and fairly atoned. The wanton and ignorant abuse lavished on the magnificent problems to which their lives are devoted, has been endured with patience; the principles which have guided other and easier