

losopher more necessary than in geology,—“that we should remember, knowledge is a temple, of which the vestibule only has been entered, and we know not what is contained within those hidden chambers, of which the experience of the past can afford us neither analogy nor clue.”

46. FINAL CAUSES.—Geology, then, does not affect to disclose the first creation of animated nature; it does not venture to assume that we have physical evidence of a beginning; *it does not warrant the attempt to explain the miraculous interpositions of Providence, by the operation of natural laws*; but it unfolds to us a succession of events, each so vast as to be beyond our finite comprehension, yet the last as evidently foreseen as the first. It instructs us, “that we are placed in the middle of a scheme—not a fixed but a progressive one—every way incomprehensible; incomprehensible in a measure equally with respect to what has been, what now is, and what shall be hereafter.”*

The new page in the volume of natural religion, which Geology has supplied, has been so fully illustrated by Dr. Buckland, in his celebrated Essay, that I need not dwell at length on the evident and beautiful adaptation of the organization of numberless living forms, through the lapse of indefinite periods of time, to every varying physical condition of the earth, and by which its surface was ultimately fitted for the abode of the human race.

* Bishop Butler.