

We have seen that the infusoria lived and died in countless myriads, and furnished the tripoli and the opal—that river-snails and sea-shells elaborated the marble for our temples and palaces, and polyparia the limestone of which our edifices are constructed; and that grass, herb, and tree, have been converted either into materials to enrich the soil, or a mineral which should serve as fuel in after ages, when such a substance became indispensable to the necessities and luxuries of civilized man. Thus it is that geology has thrown a new interest around every grain of sand, and every blade of grass; and that the pebble, rejected by the moralist and the divine,* becomes in the hands of the philosopher a striking proof of Infinite Wisdom.

But ought we to rest content in the assumption that all these wonderful manifestations of Creative Intelligence were solely designed to contribute to our physical necessities and gratifications?—Say, rather, that this display of beauty, power, and goodness, was designed to fill the soul with high and holy thoughts—to call forth the exercise of our reasoning powers—to excite in us those ardent and lofty aspirations after truth and knowledge, which elevate the mind above the sordid and petty concerns of life, and give us a foretaste of that high destiny, which we are instructed to hope may be our portion hereafter !

* Paley. The remark alludes to the celebrated argument of this distinguished author.