

weaken the line of defence by extending it. They multiply their vulnerable points by spreading their detachments and their outworks over too great a surface, when they might have concentrated their strength within the limits of an impregnable fortress. They raise too loud an outcry of alarm, and lift too high a note of preparation, on the assault by their enemies of some insignificant outpost which might with all safety be conceded to them—so that when it does come to be occupied by assailants, there is just as tremendous a shout of victory on the one side, as there was of misplaced dread and violence upon the other. Meanwhile the citadel abideth in its ancient security, as commanding in its site and as strong in all its essential battlements as ever—and, in the consciousness of this strength, might they who look abroad from its turrets, eye with perfect tolerance, if not with complacency, the petty warfare that is occasionally breaking out at their remoter outskirts. It is right to be vigilant—but it is not right to waste the strength or the credit of a good cause upon the defence of an untenable position—and more especially, if that position be wholly insignificant. It is thus that in the management of what may be called intellectual tactics, it is good to keep by the strong points of an argument, and to abstain by all means from laying any more of weight on the minor or collateral reasonings than these reasonings will bear.

26. We have long regarded the contest between the cause of revelation on the one hand, and the infidelity of the geological schools upon the other,