

informed that it owes its present appearance to the violent convulsions which have upheaved the crust of the earth, and that it offers a proof of wise and benevolent design, they will either express their wonder or incredulity. But the geologist estimates the importance of the cause that led to the result he sees. He knows that if the strata which compose the exterior or crust of our earth had remained in the horizontal position in which they were formed, no bed or channel would have been provided for the superficial waters, except those uncertain excavations which its own feeble motion could produce; and that, under these circumstances, the earth would have been an unfit residence for man. And if these causes had been less violent than they were, the repositories of the metals and coals, which are now in some places exposed on the surface, would have been buried beyond the most curious research of man. The geologist, therefore, can hardly fail to esteem this appearance, which excites no devotional feeling in the mind of the multitude, as one of a series of facts proving an intelligent design, and the choice of appropriate agents. This phenomenon, however, is an instance of provision for the welfare of man, prior to his wants; and was produced by an arrangement of causes calculated to secure a future state of things best suited to sustain the permanence and happiness of animated existence.

From the study of nature, then, we can hardly fail to gather ennobling views of the Universal Governor, or to deduce that a knowledge of his character is essentially important, as our happiness and safety are immediately under his control. It is difficult for those who have derived their opinions from revelation, to determine how far the attributes of Deity and his relation to man might be gathered from nature; but there can be no doubt that the sources of knowledge illustrate each other, and that we are surrounded by sensible proofs of his superintending care.

The cultivation of an acquaintance with the nature and effects of physical causes has some influence in raising our standard of happiness, by impressing us with the true dignity of the human mind. One design in the creation of the human mind was, probably, to secure the appreciation of the wisdom evinced in the action of natural causes, and the praise of the Creator as the necessary result; while, at the same time, the investigation of nature is a noble pursuit to