

falls. Now it is a geological fact, that it is fish of the higher orders that appear first on the stage, and that they are found to occupy exactly the same level during the vast period represented by five succeeding formations. There is no progression. If fish rose into reptiles, it must have been by sudden transformation — it must have been as if a man who had stood still for half a lifetime should bestir himself all at once, and take seven leagues at a stride. There is no getting rid of miracle in the case — there is no alternative between creation and metamorphosis. The infidel substitutes progression for Deity ; Geology robs him of his god.

But no man who enters the geological field in quest of the wonderful, need pass in pursuit of his object from the true to the fictitious. Does the reader remember how in Milton's sublime figure, the body of Truth is represented as hewn in pieces, and her limbs scattered over distant regions, and how her friends and disciples have to go wandering all over the world in quest of them ? There is surely something very wonderful in the fact, that, in uniting the links of the chain of creation into an unbroken whole, we have in like manner to seek for them all along the scale of the geologist ; — some we discover among the tribes first annihilated — some among the tribes that perished at a later period — some among the existences of the passing time. We find the present incomplete without the past — the recent without the extinct. There are marvellous analogies which pervade the scheme of Providence, and unite, as it were, its lower with its higher parts. The perfection of the works of Deity is a perfection entire in its components ; and yet these are not contemporaneous, but successive : it is a perfection which includes the dead as well as the living, and bears relation, in its completeness, not to time, but to eternity.