

more than a century ago geology had no generally acknowledged name and place in the circle of human studies. At the present day it can boast a voluminous literature, hundreds of associations all over the world dedicated to its cultivation, and a state organization in almost every civilized country for its systematic prosecution. I propose to trace some of the leading steps in this magnificent progress. Even speculations that have been thrown aside, and theories that have been long forgotten, may be found to have been not without their use in promoting the general advance.

If all history is only an amplification of biography, the history of science may be most instructively read in the life and work of the men by whom the realms of Nature have been successively won. I shall therefore dwell on the individual achievements of a few great leaders in the onward march of geology, and indicate how each of them has influenced the development of the science. At the same time I shall trace the rise and progress of some of the leading principles of the science, which, though now familiar as household words, are seldom studied in regard to their historical development. Thus, partly in the life-work of the men, and partly in the growth of the ideas which they promulgated, we shall be able to realise by what successive steps geological science has been elaborated.

The subject which I have chosen, if treated as fully as it might fitly be, would require a full course of lectures or more than one printed volume. Within the limits which I have prescribed to myself, I can only attempt to present an outline of it. Instead of trying