

body is supposed to understand it; to every one it seems to suggest a useful meaning.

In the scientific portion of this history we have seen how the word has been introduced, notably through cosmology and geology, to denote gradual succession of slow developments and changes; how it was then taken up by biology, and how, in these three fields of research, it marks a contrast to two other views, the uniformitarian and catastrophic views, of which the former emphasised the fixity, the latter, the suddenness of change in natural things and processes. From this more restricted and well-defined use the word has been introduced into other regions of science, history, and thought with less well-defined meanings.

To historians and philosophers the word recommends itself for yet other reasons, which seem to stand in no immediate connection with the movements of scientific thought to which I just referred.

A great change has come over the writing of history in the course of the nineteenth century. History, even if it be only political history, no longer consists solely of a record of wars, battles, invasions, and revolutions, nor in the biography of kings, rulers, warriors, and statesmen. An account of the manners and customs of different peoples in different ages is not relegated to isolated chapters, or to the meagre appendix of a political history.¹ The idea, which was already expressed by

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The social
point of
view in
history.

¹ As it was by David Hume, who nevertheless emphasises the importance of these subjects. "Where a just notion is not formed of these particulars (viz., government, manners, finances, arms, trade, learning), history can be little instructive and often will not be intelligible" ('History of England,' Appendix to chap. xlix.)