

indeed, who refuses to recognize in them proofs of the most exalted attributes of the Creator.

“ Another valuable contrivance in the structure of the globe is, that nearly all its materials are such as to afford by their decomposition a soil fit for the support of vegetable life ; and that they are calculated to undergo and have undergone a superficial decomposition. Here is an instance of relation between the vegetable and mineral kingdoms, and of the adaptation of one to the other, which always implies design in the surest manner : for had not the surface of the earth been thus prepared for their reception, where would have been the use of all that admirable system of organization bestowed upon vegetables ? And it is no small proof of design in the arrangement of the materials that compose the surface of our earth, that whereas the primitive and granitic rocks are least calculated to afford a fertile soil, they are for the most part made to constitute the mountain districts of the world, which, from their elevation and irregularities, would otherwise be but ill adapted for human habitation ; whilst the lower and more temperate regions are usually composed of derivative or secondary strata, in which the compound nature of their ingredients qualifies them to be of the greatest utility to mankind by their subserviency to the purposes of luxuriant vegetation.

“ Thus Geology contributes proofs to Natural Theology strictly in harmony with those derived from other branches of natural history ; and if it be allowed, on the one hand, that these proofs are in this science less numerous and obvious, it may be contended, on the other, that they are calculated to lead us a step farther in our inferences. The evidences afforded by the sister sciences exhibit indeed the most admirable proofs of design and intelligence originally exerted at the Creation : but many who admit these proofs still doubt the continued superintendance of that intelligence, maintaining that the system of the Universe is carried on by the force of the laws originally impressed on matter, without the necessity of fresh interference or continued supervision on the part of the Creator. Such an opinion is indeed founded only on a verbal fallacy ; for “ laws impressed on matter ” is an expression, which can only denote the continued exertion of the will of the Lawgiver, the prime Agent, the first Mover : still however the opinion has been entertained, and perhaps it nowhere meets with a more direct and palpable refutation, than is afforded by the subserviency of the present structure of the earth’s surface to final causes ; for that structure is evidently the result of many and violent convulsions subsequent to its original formation. When therefore we perceive that the secondary causes pro-