

pression of Lord Bacon,* has (to use the words of Dugald Stewart) "made it fashionable to omit the consideration of final causes entirely, as inconsistent with the acknowledged rules of sound philosophizing. The effect of this has been to divest the study of Nature of its most attractive charms, and to sacrifice to a false idea of logical rigour, all the moral impressions and pleasures, which physical knowledge is fitted to yield."

Geology discovers to us proofs of the awful revolutions which have in former ages changed the surface of the globe, and overwhelmed all its inhabitants : it reveals to us the forms of strange and unknown animals, and unfolds the might and skill of creative energy, displayed in the ancient world : indeed, there is no science, which presents objects that so powerfully excite our admiration and astonishment. We are led almost irresistibly to speculate on the past and future condition of our planet, and on man its present inhabitant. What various reflections crowd upon the mind, if we carry back our thoughts to the time when the surface of our globe was agitated by conflicting elements, or to the succeeding intervals of repose, when enormous crocodilian animals scoured the surface of the deep, or darted through the air for their prey ;—or again, to the state of the ancient continents, when the deep silence of nature was broken by the bellows of the mammoth and the mastodon, who stalked the lords of the former world, and perished in the last grand revolution, that preceded the creation of man. Such speculations are somewhat humbling to human pride on the one hand, but on the other, they prove our superiority over the rest of the animal creation ; for it has been regarded by the wisest philosophers in ancient times, as a proof of the high future destiny of man, that he alone, of all terrestrial animals, is endowed with those powers and faculties, which impel him to speculate on the past, to anticipate the future, and to extend his views and exalt his hopes, beyond this visible diurnal sphere.

The following observations on the study of geology, taken from Professor Sedgwick's truly eloquent address to the Geological Society of London, in 1831, are so just and beautiful, and are so closely related to what I have before stated, that I am certain my readers will be highly gratified by their insertion.

"If I believed that the imagination, the feelings, the active intellectual powers bearing on the business of life, and the highest capacities of our nature were blunted or impaired by the study of our science (Geology,) I should then regard it as little better than a moral sepulchre, in which, like the strong man, we were burying ourselves and those around us, in ruins of our own creating. But I believe too firmly in the immutable attributes of that Being, in whom all truth, of

* "*Causarum finalium inquisitio sterilis est, et tanquam virgo Deo consecrata nihil parit.*"