

the most recent being of course at the lowest depth, till violent ejection takes place.\*

IX. As we ascend in the order of the strata, we find the appearances of the action of fire become fainter. The pervading influence of a high temperature diminishes, till little or no sensible effect from it remains; and, though

\* It would be mean injustice to refrain from acknowledging the obligations under which Geology lies to Dr. James Hutton. His "Theory of the Earth," published in 1788, propounds the doctrines of the igneous action, its propulsions, and its effect on deposited masses, by felicitous anticipations and reasonings of extraordinary sagacity: the most important of which he lived to see confirmed by visible facts. He died in 1797. Few persons during his life-time, could appreciate the value of his discoveries and the force of his arguments: and still fewer were willing to do so. The charge of impiety and infidelity was made against him: and he seems to have given himself little disquiet about it. Whether he was really a disbeliever in religion, I know not. His day of life and his connexions were extremely unfavourable to the just treatment of religious questions, and the cultivation of enlightened faith. Inferences which his adversaries drew from his writings, but which were not just inferences, they spared not to lay upon him. His manner of expression was often inconsiderate, obscure, or unguarded; and sometimes exposed to unjust censure. But the fact ought not to be lost sight of, that his fundamental principles are now admitted and their great importance felt, by all geologists; few, if any, being excepted. The impartial lover of truth would do well to read an article in the *Edinburgh Review*, (No. cxl. July, 1839,) upon Mr. Lyell's *Elements of Geology*, both for its general value and for its discussion on the merits of James Hutton. That any physicists and philosophers are hostile and scornful with regard to Christianity, is deeply to be lamented. Such a fact, in whatever degree it may exist, is due to prejudice, ignorance, irreligious education, or other moral causes: but to treat them with injustice is not the way which Jesus Christ would have adopted, and it can tend only to render their prejudices more inveterate. See also another admirable article in the same *Review*, No. cxxx. April, 1837, on Dr. Buckland's *Bridgewater Treatise*, pp. 4—14.—It is highly gratifying to meet with such a sentence as the following, from one who deservedly stands so high as a mathematician and a philosopher: "I would venture to express my belief that, among the most eminently distinguished philosophers of the present day in this country, there exists even a profoundly religious spirit." Prof. Baden Powell's *Tradition Unveiled*; p. 65; 1839.