

pernicus and Kepler came to clear the way for Newton: and why may not Natural History one day have her Newton?"*

These aspirations have been realized, so that I may, with propriety, introduce a paragraph from one who is entitled to write in this strain:

"The gradual advance of Geology, during the last twenty years, to the dignity of a science, has arisen from the laborious and extensive collection of facts, and from the enlightened spirit in which the inductions, founded on those facts, have been deduced and discussed. To those who are unacquainted with this science, or indeed to any person not deeply versed in the history of this and kindred subjects, it is *impossible to convey a just impression* of the nature of that evidence by which a multitude of its conclusions are supported: evidence in many cases so irresistible, that the records of the past ages, to which it refers, are traced in language more imperishable than that of the historian of any human transactions; the relics of those beings, entombed in the strata which myriads of centuries have heaped upon their graves, giving a present evidence of their past existence with which no human testimony can compete."†

* Discours, p. 2. I cannot but here borrow the words of a masterly writer: "The geologist was prohibited from looking beyond the Mosaic chronology,—and the peaceful deluge of the Scriptures was the only catastrophe to which he durst ascribe the convulsions and dislocations which had everywhere shaken the interior of the earth. While our [*i. e.* English] geologists were thus working in chains, the unfettered genius of CUVIER was ranging over those primeval ages when the primary rocks rose in insulated grandeur from the deep, and when the elements of life had not yet received their DIVINE COMMISSION. From the age of solitude he passed to the busy age of life: when plants first decked the plains, when the majestic pine threw its picturesque shadows over the earth, and the tragic sounds of carnivorous life rung among her forests. But these plains were again to be desolated, and these sounds again to be hushed. The glories of organic life disappeared, and new forms of animal and vegetable being welcomed the dawn of a better cycle. Thus did the great magician of the charnel-house survey from his pyramid of bones, the successive ages of life and death: thus did he conjure up the spoils of pre-existing worlds, the noblest offering which reason ever laid upon the altar of its SOVEREIGN." Edinburgh Review, Vol. LXV. p. 12.

† Ninth Bridgewater Treatise, by Charles Babbage, Esq. p. 47.