

indispensable volumes, to make such explanations and corrections for themselves. It is not, I trust, in me an unbecoming hope, that these lectures may furnish, in some degree, the means of so doing. Yet a work which the Council of the Royal Society, two years ago, honoured by the adjudication of the Royal Medal, a work of which Sir John Herschel says, "I now read it for the third time, and every time with increased interest," a work whose luminous and lively diction makes even so interesting a subject more attractive,—cannot have its merits exploded by a few though serious faults, and from which it is a pleasing and reasonable hope that it will be expurgated. If I may venture on the expression of my own opinion, it is, that the day is not distant when the chief points of difficulty will be satisfactorily cleared up; and that, in particular, the great question between catastrophes and uniformity of action, brought to comparison upon a scale of appropriate amplitude, will be found to shade off into a fair coalescence. All will fall under the universal principle that, through a series of dependent agencies, extensive and complicated beyond our mental grasp, GOD "worketh all things, according to the counsel of his own will." Professor Sedgwick, while he did not spare the language of frank and strong criticism, uttered the impressions of his honourable mind with impartiality as noble as it was splendid in eloquence. Speaking of Mr. Lyell's first volume in the first edition, he said, "Nineteen twentieths of his (Mr. Lyell's) work remain untouched by these remarks. His excellent and original historic narrative, his dignified philosophic views and clear descriptions, his admirable account of the effects brought about by the great causes, whether aqueous or igneous, now acting on the crust of the globe, contribute to make his volume in the highest degree both popular and instructive: and I cannot but express a wish that, in