

obtain enlarging convictions of the pernicious consequences of ignorance and false opinions. From the want of knowledge in some branches of science, many a flattering project has been marred, much property has been thrown away, families have been ruined, and the public has been injured. This has been remarkably the case from the want of geological knowledge. Almost incredible might appear the history of disappointments and pecuniary losses which have been produced by this cause, in laying down lines of road, in selecting materials for road-making and stone for building, in making cuttings and tunnels, in sinking for coal, and in the economy of metallic mines. Hence we may derive lessons, by reasonable analogy, to enforce the scriptural precept, in its moral aspects, as well as in every other: "Buy the truth and sell it not." It is a treasure above all price, and nothing can compensate for the loss of it. Ignorance and error, in relation to God, our duty to him and expectations from him, are the causes of unbelief, impenitence, insensibility to the evidences and claims of revealed religion, and all sinful affections and conduct; what the inspired author calls "foolish and pernicious lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition."* But a mind which ingenuously loves Truth, will "search for it as for hidden treasure;" and will see a beauty in moral and religious truth transcending every other kind of excellence, and connecting itself with the glories of eternity.

Well-conducted studies also tend to promote a right estimation of Evidence universally, a wise discrimination of its various kinds, and the habit of regarding it with integrity and fidelity.

These qualities of mind are congenial with others, which advance still higher the holy edifice in our minds: such are a profound sense of the universal presence and

* 1 Tim. vi. 9.