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*Referred to at page 285.*

IN a recent publication, "The Stranger's Intellectual Guide to London, for 1839-40," by Mr. A. Booth, an account is given of the Geological Society; and in it occurs the following passage.

"The meetings of the Geological Society are perhaps the most popularly interesting to their attendants of any in town, and each member having the opportunity of admitting two visitors, the capacious meeting-room is generally well filled. The principal interest of these meetings is however derived from the discussions which arise after the papers are read, and which sometimes do not assume a very scientific character. Geology is not generally popular with the public, and has not as yet sufficient claims to make it so, the opinions of its advocates being split into party theories, and the papers that are read before the Society giving rise to discussion neither the most rational nor acceptable. What is wanted in the reason is made up for in the jocularly of the discussions, and sallies of wit usurp the place of the grave deliberations of science; what is wanted in argument made up from deductions from close investigation, is met with in the sophistry of the forum or debating-room. Sometimes it is to be lamented that these discussions take a different character, being directed against the fundamentals of revealed religion, and have a tendency to subvert those doctrines which are the basis of our modern civilization. From these circumstances the Society takes especial care that their proceedings shall not be reported: the attendance of every person from whom these might emanate being carefully excluded from the meetings. Their own reports indeed appear carefully worded, and supplied by their own secretaries, in the Literary Gazette and the Athenæum, but in these accounts all allusion to their discussions is avoided. In these respects the Geological Society does not court the freedom of public discussion, which, through the medium of the press, is allowed by every other Society in the metropolis."—Pp. 77, 78.

It may be requisite to assure the reader, that this paragraph is copied with literal accuracy. The writer's representation of the general character of Geology may be very safely left to itself, as an instance of the ancient practice not yet become uncommon, that persons "speak evil of the things which they understand not." But it contains insinuations and assertions which call for attention: and I should think myself wanting in the observance of moral duty, were