

ently conflicting and irregular in their action, have been so controlled, and directed, and made to conspire, as to provide for the wants of civilized life untold ages before man's existence. In those early times, vast forests, for instance, might have been seen growing along the shores of estuaries; and these, dying, were buried deep in the mud, there to accumulate thick beds of vegetable matter over large areas; and this, by a long series of changes, was at length converted into coal. This could be of no use whatever till man's existence, nor even then, till civilization had taught him how to employ this substance for his comfort, and for a great variety of useful arts. Look, for instance, at the small island of Great Britain. At this day 15,000 steam engines are driven by means of coal, with a power equal to that of 2,000,000 of men; and thus is put into operation machinery equalling the unaided power of 300,000,000 or 400,000,000 of men. The influence thence emanating reaches the remotest portions of the globe, and tends mightily to the civilization and happiness of the race. And is all this an accidental effect of nature's laws? Is it not rather a striking example of special prospective providence? What else but divine power, intent upon a specific purpose, could have so directed the countless agencies employed through so many ages as to bring about such marvellous results?

Or take an example on a still more gigantic scale. It is already ascertained that, by the same process of vegetable growth and decay in the hoary past, thick beds of coal have been accumulated in the rocks of the United States over an area of more than 200,000 square miles, and probably many more remain to be discovered. Yet, upon a moderate calculation, those already known contain more than 1100 cubic miles of coal; one mile of which, at the rate it is now used,