

the time. In a limited sense it may be true, but this evidence must be always received with caution, for it may mislead, in consequence of the circumstances that interfere with the results. Let us take one example. Deposits are now forming in the beds of rivers and oceans ; but can it be for a moment supposed, that when they are exposed to the examination of geologists at some future age, the fossils will enable him to ascertain the temperature of the place at the time of deposition ? Certainly not. Rivers bring down in their courses not only the detritus of older rocks, but also their fossils, and animal and vegetable remains from various climes ; all these are mingled together in the bed that is forming, and will at some future time be its fossils, and geologists may find in them the products of many climes and many ages. We do not, however, deny the value of organic remains, as affording a means of ascertaining some facts in relation to the past history of the earth ; but we may sometimes misapply their evidence, or imagine them to give more information than they are calculated to afford.

CONCLUSION.

If the explanation that has been given of the phenomena which are observed on the surface of the earth should in any degree accomplish the intention of the author, it will induce the reader to acquaint himself with the physical sciences. It must not, however, be supposed, that a knowledge of philosophical facts is all that we wish to inculcate. Knowledge, of whatever kind it may be, is only valuable as it adds to the enjoyments of life, increases the happiness of society, and gives new energy to the intellectual character of man. There would be as much wisdom in learning a language for the sake of knowing by what articulate sounds a community of men express to each other the ideas they individually entertain, as in acquiring the sciences for the purpose of knowing what has been ascertained. If wisdom consists in the knowledge of ourselves and our Maker, we must study nature with the hope of ascertaining some principles which shall enable us to gather fresh conceptions of these important elements of knowledge. God has, in not illegible characters, written his attributes on his works ; and he has at the same time taught man his dependance upon his power, his wisdom, and good-