

rience of but one effect, we could not rationally hold, it has been argued, that that producing Cause could have originated effects of a higher or more perfect kind. The creation which it had produced we knew; but, having no other measure of its power, we could not, it was contended, regard it as competent to the production of a better or nobler creation, or, of course, hold that it could originate such a state of things as that perfect future state which Faith delights to contemplate. Now, it has been well said of the author of this ingenious sophism, — by far the most sagacious of the skeptics, — that if we admit his premises, we will find it difficult indeed to set aside his conclusions. And how, in this case, does geology deal with his premises? By opening to us the history of the remote past of our planet, and introducing us, through the present, to former creations, it breaks down that *singularity* of effect on which he built, and for one creation gives us many. It gives us exactly that which, as he truly argued, his contemporaries had not, — an *experience in creations*. And let us mark how, applied to each of these in succession, his argument would tell. There was a time when life, animal or vegetable, did not exist on our planet, and when all creation, from its centre to its circumference, was but a creation of dead matter. To what effect in that early age would have been the argument of Hume? Simply to this effect would it have borne, — that, though the producing Cause of what appeared was competent to the formation of earths, metals, and minerals, it would be unphilosophic to deem it adequate to the origination of a single plant or animal, — even to that of a spore or of a monad. Ages pass by, and the Palæozoic creation is ushered in, with its tall araucarians and pines, its highly organized fishes, and its reptiles of a comparatively low standing. And how now, and with what effect, does the argument apply? It is now found that in the earlier creation the producing Cause had exerted but a portion of its