

the earth's crust pointed most unmistakably to man as an act of prospective benevolence.

3. It looks like the same benevolence that prepared by slow processes a richer soil to greet man than had ever before existed, and afford him nourishment.

4. So, too, there is reason to suppose that certain miasms, such as an excess of carbonic acid, were gradually removed from the atmosphere to adapt it to his health and happiness.

5. *Geology proves repeated special divine interpositions, or miracles, in nature as well as special providences.*

A miracle is an event that can not be explained by the laws of nature, but takes place in opposition to those laws or by their agency intensified or diminished.

A special Providence is an event brought about apparently by second causes, but those causes have been so arranged or modified by Divine agency out of sight, that some specific object is accomplished, which would not otherwise be effected.

Geology abounds with examples of miracles and special providences as thus defined. We know that the time was when no animal or plant lived on the globe, because it was a molten world. What but a miracle could have filled it with inhabitants? We know that in after ages whole races died out and new ones came in, so that numerous entire changes of population occurred. A miracle certainly was essential at each change—to create the new ones, if not to destroy the old races. Or if we set aside all these cases, we know that man was introduced among the latest of animals; and if his creation was not a miracle, no event could be.

So the various circumstances mentioned under the last head as examples of prospective benevolence, all pointed through long ages so significantly to man, that true philosophy must regard them as arranged with special reference to him by the Deity, and are therefore indicative of special providence.

Thus may we with confidence put down miracles and special providences as articles in the creed of natural religion, where they have not till lately been found. They of course take away all presumption against analogous doctrines in revelation.

6. *In spite of these evidences of Divine benevolence, geology unites with all other sciences, and with experience, in showing the world*