

constant change ; partly mechanical, but chiefly chemical. In every part of our globe, on its surface, in its crust, and we have reason to suppose, even in its deep interior, these changes are in constant progress ; and were they not, universal stagnation and death would be the result. We have reason to suspect, also, that changes analogous to those which the earth has undergone, or is now undergoing, are taking place in other worlds ; in the comets, the sun, the fixed stars and the planets. In short, geology has given us a glimpse of a great principle of *instability*, by which the *stability* of the universe is secured ; and at the same time, all these movements and revolutions in the forms of matter essential to the existence of organic nature, are produced. Formerly the examples of decay so common everywhere, were regarded as defects in nature ; but they now appear to be an indication of wise and benevolent design ;—a part of the vast plans of the Deity for securing the stability and happiness of the universe.

## 2. BEARINGS OF GEOLOGY UPON REVEALED RELIGION.

Since many truths are common to natural and revealed religion, it is not easy to draw the line exactly between the bearings of geology upon these two departments of theology.

There are, too, some erroneous notions widely prevalent on the subject, which need to be corrected before a person can look at it in its true light.

One is, that geologists in their writings have arrayed the facts of their science against revelation. But the fact is, that the whole range of geological literature scarcely furnishes an example of this sort from any geologist of distinction. Such attacks, when made, have come from mere sciolists in the science, or from men learned in other departments, but no geologists.

Another is, that the bearings of geology upon religion are those of conflict rather than of illustration and corroboration. The fact is, that most cases of supposed collision have turned out already to be mere illustration : just as modern astronomy has shown us how to understand certain passages of the Bible relating to the rising of the sun and immobility of the earth, so has geology cast similar light upon passages relating to the age of the world and the introduction of evil. And although some few points may still have an aspect of collision, the reverse is almost universally true ; and