

though he may possibly be right as a naturalist,—though we think that matter admits of being tried, for it is far from settled,—he may be none the less wrong on that account as a theologian. His inferences may be right and legitimate in themselves, and yet the main deduction founded upon them be false in fact. Let us illustrate. There is nothing more certain than that the human species is of comparatively recent origin. All geological science testifies that man is but of yesterday ; and the profound yet exquisitely simple argument of Sir Isaac Newton, as reported by Mr Conduit, bears with singular effect on the same truth. Almost all the great discoveries and inventions, argued the philosopher, are of comparatively recent origin. Perhaps the only great invention or discovery that occurs in the fabulous ages of history is the invention of letters. All the others,—such as the mariner's compass, printing, gunpowder, the telescope, the discovery of the New World and Southern Africa, and of the true position and relations of the earth in the solar system,—lie within the province of the authentic annalist ; which, man being the inquisitive, constructive creature that he is, would not be the case were the species of any very high antiquity. We have seen, since the death of Sir Isaac, steam, gas, and electricity introduced as new forces into the world : the race, in consequence, has in less than a century and a half grown greatly in knowledge and in power ; and by the rapid rate of the increase, we argue with the philosopher that it can by no means be very ancient. Had it been on the earth twenty, fifty, or a hundred thousand years ago, steam, gas, and electricity would have been discovered hundreds of ages since, and it would at this date have no such room to grow. And the only very ancient history which has a claim to be authentic,—that of Moses,—confirms, we find, the shrewd inference of Sir Isaac. Now, with this fact of the recent origin of the race on the one hand, and the other fact, that