

helpless ignorance and incapacity what a mere pretender he is.

But while no hypothesis of development can neutralize or explain away the great geologic fact, that every true species had a beginning independently, apparently, of every preceding species, there was demonstrably a general progress, in the course of creation, from lower to higher forms, which seems scarce less fraught with important consequences to the natural theologian than this fact of *beginning* itself. For while the one fact effectually disposes of the "infinite series" of the atheist, the other fact disposes scarce less effectually of those reasonings on the sceptical side which,—framed on the assumption that creation is a "singular effect,"—an effect without duplicate,—have been employed in urging, that from that one effect only can we know aught regarding the producing Cause. Knowing of the Cause from but the effect, and having experience of but one effect, we cannot rationally hold, it has been argued, that the producing Cause could have originated effects of a higher or more perfect kind. The creation which it produced we know ; but, having no other measure of its power, we cannot regard it, it has been contended, as equal 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. It has been well said of the author of this ingenious argument,—by far the most sagacious of the sceptics,—that if we admit his premises we shall 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,