

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. What, in that early age, would have been the effect of the argument of Hume? Simply this,—that though the producing Cause of all that appeared was competent to the formation of gases and earths, metals and minerals, it would be unphilosophic to deem Him 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 comparatively low standing. And how now, and with what effect, does the argument apply? It is now rendered evident, that in the earlier creation the producing Cause had exerted but a portion of His power, and that He could have done greatly more than He actually did, seeing that we now find Him adequate to the origination of vitality and organization in its two great kingdoms, plant and animal. But, still confining ourselves with cautious scepticism within the limits of our argument, we continue to hold that, as fishes of a high and reptiles of a low order, with trees of the cone-bearing family, are the most perfect specimens of their respective classes which the producing Cause has originated, it would be rash to hold, in the absence of proof, that He *could* originate aught higher or more perfect. And now, as yet other ages pass away, the creation of the great Secondary division takes the place of that of the vanished Palæozoic; and we find in its few dicotyledonous plants, in its reptiles of highest standing, in its great birds, and in its some two or three humble marsupial mammals, that in the previous, as in the earlier creation, the producing Cause had been, if I may so express myself, working greatly under His strength, and that in this