

than can be expected from most individuals, though there are eminent men who have personally achieved wonders in this respect. There are Geologists who have devoted severe and self-denying toil, exposure to great perils, and vast expense, through the best years of life, to this object ; and, with a noble disinterestedness, they communicate the results of their untiring exertions. Those results are, by themselves and other qualified persons, brought together, scrutinized, compared, connected ; and then, by publication, exposed to the renewed criticism of the scientific world : so that, in the issue, ample knowledge has been obtained, and that knowledge resting upon rigorously examined evidence, of the geological conditions of Europe generally ; of large districts in North and South America, India, and Central and Western Asia ; and of some portions of Africa, Australia, and the Isles of the Pacific Ocean.

It may not unreasonably be alleged, that few persons are qualified to this extent. To this objection we reply,

1. Though they may be few, compared with the general population of any country, yet, if we take the aggregate of persons possessed of the qualifications required, in an eminent degree, we shall find them to rise to a very high amount, in Europe and the European settlements throughout the earth. Here might be mentioned a long line of illustrious names, both British and foreign, whom it would be a delight to honour ; but I deny myself the pleasure of so doing, because, though the catalogue of those whose names instantly rise in an admiring and grateful memory would be very considerable, many of high and probably equal merit would be omitted, and thus no little injustice would be inflicted.*

* I venture to adapt to this topic the words of Leclerc. "Whoever attempts this study should well understand what a task he undertakes, and by what laws he must be governed : or else he will be a most infeli-