

necessarily derived from it; and it is no more possible for the molecules of matter, arranged in a certain manner, not to produce thought, than for brass, when smitten, not to return a sound, or for creatures formed by this matter, after such and such laws, not to walk, not to breathe, not to reproduce; in a word, not to exercise any of the faculties which result from their peculiar mechanism of organization."—*Dict. Clas. D. Hist. Nat. art. Matière.*

This may seem, upon a superficial view, to be settling this matter at once. But it merely shifts the difficulty from one part of the subject to another. Admitting the premises of the materialist to be correct, it does indeed show us the proximate cause of thought. But the mind immediately inquires how a certain organization became possessed of such wonderful power. Is it inherent in matter, or is it a power communicated to organization by a supreme Being? If the latter, it is just what the Theist contends for; if the former, then there is just as much necessity for the original interposition of the Deity, in order to give matter such an astonishing power, as there is, on the theory of the immaterialist, to impart a spiritual and immortal principle to matter. The materialist will, indeed, say that matter has possessed this power from eternity. But this supposition, evidently absurd, does in fact invest matter with the attributes of Deity; since those attributes, and those alone, are sufficient to account for the phenomena. And besides, how is the fact to be explained that this power was not exerted till six thousand years ago?

But with the exception of the materialist, I am sure that most reasoning minds will feel as if the creation of the human family was one of the most stupendous, perhaps the most stupendous, exercise of infinite power and wisdom which the universe exhibits. If any change whatever demands a Deity for its accomplishment, it must be this; and, therefore, geology presents, in the case of man, the most striking example which nature could furnish of a beginning of organic and intellectual life on the globe. It shows us that there was a time, and that not remote, when the first link of the curious chain of the human family, now constantly lengthening by inflexible laws, was created.

I might now refer to certain recent discoveries in astronomy, which have the same bearing upon the general argument as the examples that have been quoted from geology, although