

that such was the fact with nearly all the limestone on the globe, occupying at least a seventh part of its surface. In fact, we seem fast coming to regard as sober truth the ancient adage, apparently so extravagant: *Omnis calx e vermibus; omne ferrum e vermibus; omnis silex e vermibus*. Indeed, it is the opinion of so competent a geologist as Dr. Mantell. that "probably there is not an atom of the solid materials of the globe which has not passed through the complex and wonderful laboratory of life. *Wond. of Geology*, vol. ii, p. 670. What a vast field here opens before us to contemplate the far-reaching plans, the benevolence, and the wisdom of the Deity!

In the third place, geology show us that the present system of organic life on the globe is but one link of a series, extending very far backward and infinitely forward.

Revelation describes only the existing species, leaving to science the task and the privilege to lift up the veil that hangs over the past, and to disclose other economies that have passed away. How many of them have existed we do not certainly know. If, with Agassiz, we characterise them by their predominant tribes, we might say that all the period previous to the new red sandstone constituted the reign of fishes; from thence to the chalk, the reign of reptiles; from thence to the drift, the reign of mammifera. But this is a less philosophical view than that of Deshayes, who finds five great groups of animals specifically independent of one another. But who will attempt to fix the chronological limits of these systems? We can only say that they must have been exceedingly long, if we can place any dependence upon existing analogies; and we know that each one of them is made up of numerous subdivisions, or minor groups, widely, though not entirely different in composition and organic contents. We know that the more we examine the whole series, the deeper does our conviction become that its commencement runs back far, very far, into the depths of past eternity. We know, also, from the joint testimony of Scripture and geology, that another change is to pass over the world, to prepare it for inhabitants far more elevated than those now living upon it, and in possession of perfect holiness and perfect happiness. And it may be it will experience far greater changes, adapting it for higher and higher grades of being, through periods of duration to which we can assign no limits. O, what a vast chain