

design altogether. There are a few sciences, however, which have been hitherto chiefly passed by, because they were not supposed capable of throwing any light of consequence upon theology. Let us see whether these sciences are as barren of religious interest as has been supposed.

Geology is a branch of knowledge, which, a few years ago, would have been at once selected as not only destitute of any important religious applications, but as of a positively injurious tendency; and even now, such is the feeling probably of a majority of the religious world. True, it touches religion, natural and revealed, at many points; but so novel and startling are its conclusions, that they are thought to unsettle more minds than they confirm. They fall in with many of the views of scepticism, and especially confirm its doubts concerning the age of the world, and compel the religious man to give up long-cherished opinions upon this point, and on other collateral subjects. But we have gone into a careful examination of the religious applications of this science, and have we not found it most fertile in its illustrations both of natural and revealed religion? Let us just recapitulate the conclusions at which we have arrived.

In the first place, geology furnishes important illustrations of revealed religion. It confirms the statement that the present continents of our globe were once, and for an indefinite time, beneath the ocean, and that they were subsequently lifted above the waters by internal agencies. It agrees with revelation in making water and heat the two great agents of geological change upon and within the earth, and that the work of creation, after the production of matter, was progressive. It shows us equally with revelation, that the existing races of animals and plants on the globe were created at a comparatively recent epoch, and that man commenced his existence not more than six thousand years ago. It shows us, also, that the earth contains within itself the volcanic agency necessary for its future destruction by combustion, as described in the Bible.

But, perhaps, the most important illustration of revealed truth, which geology affords, is the light which it casts upon certain passages of the Bible relating to the creation. As those texts which represent the earth as immoveable, and the heavenly bodies as moving diurnally around it, were not rightly understood, until astronomy had discovered the true theory of the solar system, so those passages which relate to the period