

to refer to his happy illustration—does not now stand alone. Instead of one, we see many foot-prints, each in turn in advance of the print behind it, and on a higher level ; and, founding at once on an acquaintance with the past, extended throughout all the periods of the geologist, and on that instinct of our nature whose peculiar function it is to anticipate at least one creation more, we must regard the expectation of “new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness,” as not unphilosophic, but as, on the contrary, altogether rational and according to experience.

Such is the bearing of geological science on two of the most important questions that have yet been raised in the field of natural theology. Nor does it bear much less directly on a controversy to which, during the earlier half of the last century, there was no little importance attached in Britain, and which engaged on its opposite sides some of the finest and most vigorous intellects of the age and country.

The school of infidelity represented by Bolingbroke, and, in at least his earlier writings, by Soame Jenyns, and which, in a modified form, attained to much popularity through Pope's famous “Essay,” assigned to man a comparatively inconsiderable space in the system of the universe. It regarded him as but a single link in a chain of mutual dependency,—a chain which would be no longer an entire, but a broken one, were he to be struck out of it, but as thus more important from his position than from his nature or his powers. You will remember that one of the sections of Pope's first epistle to his “good St John” is avowedly devoted to show what he terms the “absurdity of man's supposing himself the final cause of the creation ;” and though this great master of condensed meaning and brilliant point is now less read than he was in the days of our grandfathers, you will all remember the elegant stanzas in which he states the usual claims of the