its polar regions, nor aught save the merest tatters of an
aurora flitting occasionally over them,—greatly too dense in
itself, and surrounded by a greatly too dense atmosphere,—
with its huge mountains, vast oceans, wide steppes, and arid
deserts, with its snows, its frosts, its drenching rains, its hor-
rible tempests, its terrible thunder-storms, and devastating
earthquakes,—all alike frightful defects, not in the original
plan,—is not only, unlike the primæval world, not very good,
or, unlike the antediluvian world, tolerably good, but not
good at all. "On taking a bird's-eye view of the geographi-
cal and hydrographical features or superficies of the globe," says
this bold writer, "any unprejudiced person must at once ad-
mit, that in either of these departments there is scarce a trace
of that beautiful, tasteful, and economical design which we have
a right to expect from the admitted qualities of the great Au-
thor, and his avowed object in the structure and report of it
when newly finished." It is added, however, that "its *present
object*, as the *Siberia*—the penal settlement—of expatriated
rebels, it is in its *present state* well calculated to fulfil."

It may be worth mentioning, that the writer who sets him-
self after a fashion so peculiar to assert and justify the ways
of Providence against the geologists resides in one of the
loveliest districts in Scotland,—a district, however, shaggy
with rock, and overshadowed by great mountains, and occa-
sionally visited by earthquake tremors, and both snow and
thunder-storms, and so, with all its wild beauty to other eyes,
merely, I must suppose, one of the rougher districts of the
penal Siberia in his. He is, indeed, particularly severe upon
mountains; though not, as he tells us, wholly devoid of a
lurking prejudice in their favour. But what weak prejudice
might palliate or plead for, his better judgment condemns.
"See," says this judicious writer, "vast districts of the globe
disfigured by tremendous masses of rugged and almost barren
mountains. . . . What! cry some, would you bury as