

CHAPTER XX

SOLUTION OF THE WORLD-PROBLEMS

A Glance at the Progress of the Nineteenth Century in Solving Cosmic Problems—I. Progress of Astronomy and Cosmology—Physical and Chemical Unity of the Universe—Cosmic Metamorphoses—Evolution of the Planetary System—Analogy of the Phylogenetic Processes on the Earth and on Other Planets—Organic Inhabitants of Other Heavenly Bodies—Periodic Variation in the Making of Worlds—II. Progress of Geology and Palæontology—Neptunism and Vulcanism—Theory of Continuity—III. Progress of Physics and Chemistry—IV. Progress of Biology—Cellular Theory and Theory of Descent—V. Anthropology—Origin of Man—General Conclusion

AT the close of our philosophic study of the riddles of the universe we turn with confidence to the answer to the momentous question, How nearly have we approached to a solution of them? What is the value of the immense progress which the passing nineteenth century has made in the knowledge of nature? And what prospect does it open out to us for the future, for the further development of our system in the twentieth century, at the threshold of which we pause? Every unprejudiced thinker who impartially considers the solid progress of our empirical science, and the unity and clearness of our philosophic interpretation of it, will share our view: the nineteenth century has made greater progress in knowledge of the world and