

planet. The geographical distribution of existing faunas and floras is often made clear and intelligible by geological evidence; and in a similar way, light is thrown upon some of the remoter phases in the history of man himself.

A subject so comprehensive as this must require a wide and varied basis of evidence. One of the characteristics of geology is to gather evidence from sources which, at first sight, seem far removed from its scope, and to seek aid from almost every other leading branch of science. Thus, in dealing with the earliest conditions of the planet, the geologist must fully avail himself of the labors of the astronomer. Whatever is ascertainable by telescope, spectroscope, or chemical analysis, regarding the constitution of other heavenly bodies, has a geological bearing. The experiments of the physicist, undertaken to determine conditions of matter and of energy, may sometimes be taken as the starting-point of geological investigation. The work of the chemical laboratory forms the foundation of a vast and increasing mass of geological inquiry. To the botanist, the zoologist, even to the unscientific, if observant, traveller by land or sea, the geologist turns for information and assistance.

But while thus culling freely from the dominions of other sciences, geology claims, as its peculiar territory, the rocky framework of the globe. In the materials composing that framework, their composition and arrangement, the processes of their formation, the changes which they have individually undergone, and the grand terrestrial revolutions to which they bear witness, lie the main data of geological history. It is the task of the geologist to group these elements in such a way that they may be made to yield up their evidence as to the march of events in the