

the present. Some voice bidding men to consider the pit out of which they were digged, and the hole of the rock whence they were hewn, has always been the event that has ushered in a new and better era. If the trumpet is sounded distinctly and at the right time, opinion receives the shock that sends it onward. Men then begin to learn again, that the true interpretation of looking for the old paths, consists not in recurring to dogmas which have become obsolete in the using, but in ascending anew to the principles of eternal truth, and from them taking a fresh departure. If this invitation is well proclaimed, and duly carried forth into practice, a reform springs up in the hour in which it is given. Authority is discarded for a time. Old edifices are pulled down. Stumbling blocks are removed. Nature or Revelation, are once more studied in their own light. An infusion of new principles is poured into the cistern of human knowledge. A certain amount of false doctrine and practice is laid aside; fierce conflicts of mind take place; the activity becomes even more remarkable than the previous lethargy, and the era is memorable in the exact proportion of the time it has endured, the degree of intellect it has engaged, and the number and quality of the new speculations with which it has enriched itself. The best days of each science and art, date from such points. In the order of things, they can happen only from time to time. The call of necessity must be loudly and repeatedly uttered, before they can occur. They arrive at the best season when they happen, before men have had opportunity to repeat themselves more than enough—before they have had time to revolve round fixed points; until energy is quite extinct. The description which the Bible gives us of itself, will bear us out in the assertion, that it is the roll of a book which is intended to be gradually drawn out. The actual progress of society, corres-