

village, as fitting them for the duties of this life, and above all teaching them to seek, through Divine grace, for the pardon of their sins and their everlasting happiness in a world to come. Elizabeth was interested and delighted with all that she saw; and left the school with evident reluctance and a hope that they might shortly visit it again.

"Now, my dear," said Mrs. Owen, after a short silence, "can you forgive Miss Myles for living in a small house, and for choosing to wear a plainer dress than our friends, the Hartlands?"

"Oh, mother!" replied Elizabeth, with tears in her eyes, "I am quite ashamed of the disdainful thoughts that were in my mind while you were talking to her this morning. Dear, kind Miss Myles! I little knew the good she was doing with her money."

"Henceforth, my child," said Mrs. Owen, "endeavour to form your estimate of persons, not from mere outward circumstances, the style they live in, or the clothes they wear, but according to their real qualities of mind and character. Let us also learn another lesson from the self-denying charity of Miss Myles. Let us seek to imitate her, in our measure, by sometimes giving up our own gratification or enjoyment, when others may be benefitted by the sacrifice; always remembering that acts of kindness when proceeding from a right motive, are graciously regarded with favour by Him who has said, 'that whosoever giveth to a disciple a cup of cold water in the name of Christ, shall in no wise lose his reward.'"

#### BEWARE OF THE FIRST STEP IN SIN.

There is no such thing as a little sin. A sin that God has seen fit to condemn, and disapprove, cannot be a small sin. The first setting out in sin is like the letting out of waters. It is the first half-uttered oath that paves the way for another, and that for another, till you become a profane swearer. It is the first shilling that is taken from the drawer, that prepares the way for a dishonest character. It is the first sip at the glass of wine that prepares the way for you to die the death of the drunkard. It is the first rebellious word that you utter against Heaven, that prepares you to be the cold sceptic or the sneering infidel. The temple of sin has many apartments, and there are the mysteries of iniquity within them, and they all have descending floors when once you have entered them, the first place for caution, and resolution, and firmness, is at the threshold. If you will not cross that, you are safe. A very little resolution and effort, by the grace of God, can keep you from temptation and sin; but when once you have yielded, you are carried away as on the waters of a flood. I once knew of two apprentices who lived

in a Christian family. They were very intimate—at the same table, and slept in the same bed. There was a very unusual attention to religion in that village. They were both interested, and apparently both equally so. One evening, there was to be a very solemn meeting—what we call, an "inquiry meeting." It was the first of the kind that had been held. The young men set out together, and walked nearly to the room. They then stopped, and one said he would not go in. The other said he would. Up to that point, they were both apparently on their way towards the kingdom of Heaven. The one who went to the meeting soon found peace in believing; and in a few months he publicly made a profession of religion. The same day, the other young man was locked up in a State Prison for crime! Oh, beware of the first step in sin!

## Religion and Science.

### GEOLOGY POINTING TO A NEW HEAVENS AND A NEW EARTH.

BY THE REV. JAMES INGLIS.

The speculations of science are poor proofs of the doctrines of revelation; (and happily we are not left to seek a hope for the future in a knowledge of nature either in the past or the present;) yet there is something more than a gratification of curiosity in tracing the analogies of nature and revelation, and in beholding science lay its latest and best acquisitions as humble tributaries at the feet of faith. The ingratitude with which human science repays those ennobling influences which have changed astrology into astronomy, and transmuted alchemy into chemistry, is characteristic of the race which rejected and crucified the Son of man. She has omitted no opportunity of seeking a stealthy treacherous advantage over Christianity. On her descent into any new and unexplored mine of nature's treasures, the first report she invariably brings back is the discovery of a complete refutation of the Scriptures. On such occasions the faithful are at first startled by the confidence of her boasting. But, by and bye, Christian intelligence sends an exploring party into the mine to "see if things be so," and as invariably they return laden with new testimony in favour of revelation to shame the adversary. This has been strikingly exemplified in the progress of geology. Whilst it was only beginning to assume the form of a distinct branch of science, and men were beginning in a dim twilight to scan the records of creation, its votaries spoke, with confidence, of driving Moses from the world as an impostor. But their tone is changed as the light of day gives certainty to their observation, and at last we find the most devoted Christians amongst the most successful cultivators of the science.

To point out the illustrations and verifications of the Mosaic account of creation, of the antediluvian age, and of the general deluge which sci-

ence furnishes, would be aside from the purpose of the *Observer*. And it may not be thought probable that this science of the past will throw much light upon the great hope of the future; yet there are analogies which, though they would avail little as independent proof, are not without value as corroborations of the great doctrine of a pre-millennial advent and the glory that shall follow. In submitting a few ~~hints~~ <sup>remarks</sup> regarding these corroborations, suggested by an able analysis of Hugh Miller's *Foot-Prints of the Creation*, in the *North British Review*, it may be premised that nothing is to be built upon the conclusion of geology, either in the shape of a theory of the millennial state, or of an argument in favour of the near approach of that great change. Our knowledge of that state, and of the time of its introduction, is derived from a more sure word of prophecy, and theorizing is forbidden by the nature of the case. The utmost we expect to accomplish is, to interest and attract some who have not otherwise been induced to investigate the Advent views. And it may be, these hints will aid in expanding the views of some who, embracing the doctrine, fail to rise to a just sense of the inheritance. The essential greatness of that inheritance does indeed lie above and beyond the illustration of science; but a proper estimate of its circumstances may lead on to a better appreciation of its essence.

Although the majority of the readers of the *Observer* have probably devoted little attention to geology, many of them are aware that an opinion is abroad in the world, that we are no more to regard the six days of creation, as enumerated in the first chapter of Genesis, as so many periods of twenty-four hours, than we are to imagine "that the whole process of a general judgment will be limited to the compass of a natural day as we count time." Without discussing this opinion, we may take it as established, that beneath the soil upon which man lives, and in which he is buried, there lie the remains of successive acts of creation, which stretch back into an immeasurable antiquity. The rocks which lie beneath that soil are arranged in strata distinct in their characters, and formed at different periods. An examination of these strata, justifies Mr. Miller's description of them as "platforms of death." Each is crowded with organic structures, which lived and died where we find them. And it is evident they must have perished by a sudden destruction, which was effected by a force too subtle and quiet to disturb their habitation. In descending through successive strata, we find still lower and ruder forms of life. Thus it appears that mammiferous quadrupeds preceded man. Next in order we find the remains of birds. In lower strata we find the remains of reptiles, and in lower still the remains of fishes; showing that creation advanced from what may be called rude beginnings, to its present state.

It has been a favourite scheme of infidelity, that this progress has been a natural development of life, in which the rude improves towards perfect organization, without the interposition of creative power. So that "immortal and intellectual man, is but the development of the brute—itsself the development of some onard or mollusc, which has