

education, his outward circumstances, and in his appearance on the stage at a time when geology had gathered in some of its greatest harvests of facts, and was waiting for a master-mind to arrange them, had a great opportunity, which Lyell had the energy and ability to seize. He was thus able to become a guiding mind among his contemporaries in geological theory, and to hold his pre-eminence down to the end of his life, and through all the great changes which occurred in the rapid development of the science.

“The position which he occupied is one to which he was in every way justly entitled. His large and judicial mind had always a clear perception of the true method of natural history. He saw that the foundations of our knowledge of geology were to be laid in extensive and accurate collections of facts, and in reasoning on these by severely inductive methods. This idea he carried out in his ‘Elements of Geology.’ But in his ‘Principles’ he opened up a new field, not, as has been crudely conceived by some commentators on his work, one of the nature of deduction, as distinguished from induction, but rather another inductive investigation, leading to general conclusions as to the changes now in progress, in