

to the forming and proclaiming of strong opinions, with so scanty a portion of knowledge, yet at the same time so fearlessly, as in relation to Geology. There have been and perhaps still are persons who, not judging it necessary to use hard-working pains and long perseverance, to obtain a competent acquaintance with facts, have, with much dignity, framed their systems of the world; and have not shown the most charitable dispositions towards those who decline to bow down to the idols thus set up. Let it, however, be recollected that the disposition to make these assumptions, and the facility of admitting them, have risen, in a great measure, from a cause which is entitled to our reverence and esteem, religious feeling; though mistaken in its application. The opinion, or suspicion, is roused to meet us, on almost every occasion, that Geology and a religious regard to the Scriptures are opposed to each other. This notion has been diligently held up to the Christian public, and in a style well adapted to excite alarm. Hence, some have been led to propose and others to receive, for the overcoming of the apprehended difficulties, theories which, either, on the one hand, have grievously misrepresented principal facts in the natural history of the earth, or, on the other, have exercised arbitrary power upon the sacred books, in despite of the fair methods of interpretation by which alone we are warranted to treat ancient writings.

When we are compelled, by the force of conviction, to make observations of this kind, it is proper to show that we do not stand alone. I consider it to be an advantage for aiding the mind in the pursuit of truth, and therefore to be eminently my duty, to adduce a small number of citations from Christian Philosophers, whose knowledge on these subjects is the hard-earned fruit of fair labour in toiling over hundreds of miles of rocky mountains, and of close study for the rigid scrutiny of results.