

proves that the Congregationalists of New England are far behind many orthodox divines of the Church of England, or even the Church of Rome, as shown by Dr. Wiseman's lectures, in the liberality of their opinions on this head, and that the establishment of the true theory of astronomy satisfied the Protestant world, at least, that the Bible was never intended as a revelation of physical science. No doubt it is most true, that within the last forty years many distinguished writers and dignitaries of the English Church have expressed their belief very openly in regard to the earth's antiquity, and the leading truths established by geology. "The Records of Creation," published in 1818, by the present Archbishop of Canterbury (Dr. Sumner), the writings of the present Dean of Westminster (Dr. Buckland), those of the Dean of Llandaff (Dr. Conybeare), and of the Woodwardian Professor of Cambridge (The Rev. A. Sedgwick), and others, might be adduced in confirmation. All of these, indeed, have been cited by the first teachers of geology in America, especially in the "orthodox universities" of New England, as countenancing the adoption of their new theories; and I have often heard scientific men in America express their gratitude to the English Churchmen for the protection which their high authority afforded them against popular prejudices at a critical moment, when many of the State Legislatures were deliberating whether they should or should not appropriate large sums of the public money to the promotion of geological surveys. The point, however, under discussion in the Congregationalist Church, to which I have alluded, is in reality a different one, and of the utmost importance; for it is no less than to determine, not whether a minister may publish books or essays declaratory of his own individual views, respecting the bearing of physical science on certain portions of Scripture, but whether he may, without reproach or charge of indiscretion, freely and candidly expound to all whom he addresses, rich and poor, from the pulpit, those truths on which few well-informed men now any longer entertain a doubt. Until such permission be fairly granted, the initiated may, as we well know, go on for ages embracing one creed, while the multitude holds fast to another, and looks with suspicion and distrust on the phi-