

suspicion by the greater portion of the religious community, and that most theological writers, who have found it in their way, have rather availed themselves of the best excuses for dismissing its pretensions, than shown any disposition to entertain them very courteously. Times without number have these lines of Cowper been quoted.

‘Some drill and bore

The solid earth, and from the strata there

Extract a register by which we learn

That He who made it, and revealed its date

To Moses, was mistaken in its age.’

TASK, B. iii.

In Cowper’s day Geology was only in its infancy, and had no matured claim to respect and confidence. At all stages of its history it has had reckless advocates, who have opposed their own crude suggestions about terrestrial phenomena to the clearest statements and strongest proofs of an accredited revelation. Perhaps it is well to scorn these scorers, and answer such fools according to their folly. But no one who is conversant with the facts will allege that our more celebrated geologists are speculators of