

periods of time which it demands fully conceded, neither geologist nor theologian could, in any new scheme of reconciliation, shape his first proposition more skilfully than it was shaped by Chalmers a full half-century ago. It has formed since that time the preliminary proposition of those ornaments of at once science and the English Church, the present venerable Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Bird Sumner, with Doctors Buckland, Conybeare, and Professor Sedgwick ; of eminent evangelistic Dissenters too, such as the late Dr Pye Smith, Dr John Harris, Dr Robert Vaughan, Dr James Hamilton, and the Rev. Mr Binney,—enlightened and distinguished men, who all came early to the conclusion, with the lecturer of St Andrews, that “the writings of Moses do not fix the antiquity of the globe.”

In 1814, ten years after the date of the St Andrews lectures, Dr Chalmers produced his more elaborate scheme of reconciliation between the Divine and the Geologic Records, in a “Review of Cuvier’s Theory of the Earth ;” and that scheme, perfectly inadequate to bring the Mosaic narrative into harmony with what was known at the time of geologic history, has been very extensively received and adopted. It may, indeed, still be regarded as the most popular of the various existing schemes. It teaches, and teaches truly, that between the first act of creation, which evoked out of the previous nothing the *matter* of the heavens and earth, and the first act of the first day’s work recorded in Genesis, periods of vast duration may have intervened ; but further, it insists that the days themselves were but natural days of twenty-four hours each ; and that, ere they began, the earth, though mayhap in the previous period a fair residence of life, had become void and formless, and the sun, moon, and stars, though mayhap they had before given light, had been, at least in relation to our planet, temporarily extinguished. In short, while it teaches that the successive creations of the geologist may