

PREFACE.

THE occasion which gave rise to this and the accompanying Treatises is explained in the following notice: but the Author of the present Treatise thinks it right to add, that, although encouraged by the honour of having been recommended by His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, he should have shrunk from his present attempt, had he considered that any exact elucidation of the details of science was required in the execution of it.

As, however, the intention of Lord Bridgewater, and the very extent and diversified nature of the subject, seemed to him almost necessarily to exclude any great exactness of elucidation, and to require a popular rather than a scientific exposition of facts; and as the whole tenour of his pursuits during the last thirty years of his life accorded with the character of the proposed subject; he the more readily undertook a task, to the execution of which he