

ture of the earth, then almost totally unknown; the time was not then come when the knowledge of natural phenomena was sufficiently advanced to admit of any profitable investigation of this question; but the discoveries of the last half century have been so extensive in this department of natural knowledge, that, whether we will or not, the subject is now forced upon our consideration, and can no longer escape discussion. The truth is, that all observers, however various may be their speculations, respecting the secondary causes by which geological phenomena have been brought about, are now agreed in admitting the lapse of very long periods of time to have been an essential condition to the production of these phenomena.

It may therefore be proper, in this part of our enquiry, to consider how far the brief account of creation, contained in the Mosaic narrative, can be shown to accord with those natural phenomena, which will come under consideration in the course of the present essay. Indeed some examination of this question seems indispensable at the very threshold of an investigation, the subject matter of which will be derived from a series of events, for the most part, long antecedent to the creation of the human species. I trust it may be shown, not only that there is no inconsistency between our interpretation of the phenomena of nature and of the Mo-