

The second point in which the facts delivered in the sacred record are brought into contact with the deductions of Geology is, the Antiquity of the Earth. It has been objected to the authority of that record that it does not allow a sufficient period for the successive deposition of the secondary strata, containing as they do the remains of successive races of animals, which appear to have lived and died where they are now found, while the deposits in which they are buried were gradually accumulating.

Before proceeding to consider the force of this objection, we are first desirous again to recal to our readers, that the great subject to which revelation relates, is the Providential history of man : the antiquity of the human race is therefore an essential feature of that revelation ; but the questions whether any other state of our planet preceded that in which it became the habitation of intellectual and moral agents, and if so, what convulsions may have happened to it during that state, are points with which it has no direct connection ; a perfect knowledge of these could have furnished no topics calculated either to awaken the slumbering, or to reassure the penitent, conscience.

Now with regard to the antiquity of the human race, the conclusions deducible from geological reasoning appear strictly in accordance with the declarations of Revelation, no human remains having yet been found excepting in beds of undoubtedly very little antiquity.\*

With regard to the time requisite for the formation of the secondary strata, we have the choice of the following hypothesis.

1st. If we adhere to the common interpretation of the periods of creation as having been literally days of twenty-four hours, and refuse to admit the existence of another order of things previous to that recorded by the inspired writer, we might still perhaps find a sufficient space of time for the purposes required in the interval between the creation as thus limited, and the deluge. Upon this hypothesis we must suppose the present continents (in the greater part of their extent) to have been included in the channel of the primitive ocean, and to have gradually emerged thence during this period, becoming occupied, as they appeared, by the land animals whose remains we find among the diluvial gravel ; the primitive continents may upon this supposition either have been limited por-

\* It may be enquired why we have not met with human remains in the diluvial gravel : to this it may be answered that there appears little reason to conclude from the sacred narrative that the antediluvian population had become numerous, and that it appears to have been concentrated in countries which have not as yet received examination.