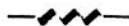


Preliminary Notice.



It seems requisite here to observe that the present work, which is in great measure original, was nevertheless founded on the little volume published in 1818, and entitled a 'Selection of Facts,' &c. Soon after its publication, I received a letter from the Rev. W. D. Conybeare, in which he offered me several corrections, and the contribution of much original information, on the assumption that a second edition would be called for. These offers were gratefully accepted; and not very long afterwards I received from him, among other important communications, the detailed view of the several Coal-formations of England and Wales, forming the conclusion of the first part of this work. When the proportion of his contribution had so materially increased, I wrote to the Rev. W. D. Conybeare, requesting him to become the Editor of this work, and offering for his acceptance every thing which my industry as a compiler had enabled me to collect; his reply was, that he preferred giving me his assistance, and the repetition more than once of my request, produced only a repetition of his first reply; finally, his consent was obtained for the appearance of our names in the title page as joint Editors; his assistance however has been gratuitous, for he has no other interest in the work than as having contributed towards it.

The reader will readily perceive that a very large proportion of the whole is by the pen of the Rev. W. D. Conybeare, whose name or initial is annexed to his contributions. Not only have these contributions given to it the air of an original work; but the grand division of the whole series of our Formations, their sub-divisions, and the accounts of analagous formations in other countries, together with the Synoptical Tables prefixed to each Book, as well as the principal part of the Plate of Sections, and many material corrections and additions to the little Map, are exclusively his.

Feeling therefore how great has been the share of my coadjutor, and how comparatively little my own (for mine has chiefly been that of a compiler), I have not hesitated thus to lay before the reader, a statement of the facts so intimately connected with the production of the work.

I wish also to state the obligations I feel to the liberality of G. B. Greenough, Esq. late President of the Geological Society, for the presentation to me of a copious selection of his Notes on the Geology of our island, of which considerable use has been made.