

in a department where revelation was not designed to give information.”\* The testimony of the word of heaven does not lie at our disposal. We have not the power of conceding any thing from it ; and I am confident that the distinguished Professor did not intend to intimate that mortals have such a power or right. He was referring indeed to the *interpretation* of Scripture ; but, in this view, the expression is unhappy. Interpretation, as well of the Bible as of other ancient writings, is to be conducted by a rigorous process of examination into words and phrases ; a process solely grammatical, and which must not be checked or turned out of its straight-forward course by any foreign considerations.†

The design of this lecture and the following, is to enumerate methods that have been proposed for removing the difficulty, or apprehended inconsistency, which arises from a survey of God’s visible works and comparing them with the declarations of his word ; and to submit those remarks which they respectively seem to require.

It cannot be without some anxiety that I enter upon this part of my duty, being perfectly aware of the strong

\* Bridgewater Treatise ; Vol. I. p. 14. I cannot too much recommend the diligent study (not an indolent running over) of this admirable work, to all who desire to gain true and accurate information. Such students, however, will consult their own advantage by *previously* acquiring a satisfactory acquaintance with the Mineralogical part of Geological science. Dr. Buckland’s work is chiefly occupied with the description of the animal and vegetable remains found in the successive strata of the earth ; conveniently called the Palæontological department of Geology.

† The excellent Bishop of Chester has perhaps approached to the same inadvertence, in saying, “ The concessions, if they may be so called, of the believers in revelation on this point, have been amply remunerated by the sublime discoveries as to the prospective wisdom of the Creator, which have been gradually unfolded by the progressive improvements in astronomical knowledge. We may trust with the same confidence as to any future results from geology.” This was written in 1813 or earlier. Dr. Bird Sumner on the Records of Creation ; Vol. I. p. 271.