

which it was no part or object of his divine commission to make known. Nor could the Israelites, for whose immediate benefit this history was intended, have comprehended such matters: for who can suppose that they knew any thing of the nature of comets, or the planetary constitution of the earth?" J. G. Rosenmülleri *Antiquissima Telluris Historia, à Mose Gen. iº. descripta*; Ulm, 1776; pp. 6, 10, 11, 12, 71.

It is with peculiar pleasure that I copy the following passages of the learned and pious Bishop of Chester; and they are the more estimable as they were written before 1814, at a time when geological facts and doctrines were less accurately known than they are at present.

"—Any curious information as to the structure of the earth ought still less to be expected, by any one acquainted with the general character of the Mosaic records. There is nothing in them, either to gratify the curiosity or *repress the researches* of mankind, when brought, in the progress of cultivation, to calculate the motions of the heavenly bodies or speculate on the formation of the globe. The expressions of Moses are evidently *accommodated* to the first and familiar notions derived from the sensible appearances of the earth and heavens: and the absurdity of supposing that the literal interpretation of terms in Scripture ought to *interfere with the advancement* of philosophical inquiry, would have been as generally forgotten as renounced, if the oppressors of Galileo had not found a place in history.—No rational naturalist would attempt to describe, either from the brief description in Genesis or otherwise, the process by which our system was brought from confusion into a regular and habitable state. No rational theologian will direct his hostility against any theory which, acknowledging the agency of the Creator, only attempts to point out the secondary instruments he has employed." Dr. Bird Sumner on the Records of Creation; vol. I. p. 270, 283.

Let us hear another distinguished clergyman.

"As to the first point [the antiquity of the earth,]—not the mere theoretical views of geologists alone, but the conclusions which appear, by the most cogent logical necessity, to result from the phenomena of the structure of the earth's surface, and the variety and order of the very numerous successive series of organic remains imbedded in the strata, do undoubtedly appear to require periods of very considerable duration; and to indicate that very many ages had elapsed before (—"the diapason closing full in man,"—) a new exertion of the Creative Energy made, in its own image, a being of higher intellectual and moral capacities, as the head of its other terrestrial works. Now,