

volence than could possibly be obtained within the narrow limits of six thousand years? But I will not enlarge; for I hope I may be allowed, in future lectures, to enter this rich field of thought, when we have more leisure to survey its beautiful prospects, and pluck its golden fruit.

Finally. If the geological interpretation of Genesis be true, then it should be taught to all classes of the community. It is, indeed, unwise to alter received interpretations of Scripture without very strong reasons. We should be satisfied that the new light, which has come to us, is not that of a transient meteor, but of a permanent luminary. We should, also, be satisfied, that the proposed change is consistent with the established rules of philology. If we introduce change of this sort before these points are settled, even upon passages that have no connection with fundamental moral principles, we shall distress many an honest and pious heart, and expose ourselves to the necessity of further change. But on the other hand, if we delay the change long after these points are fairly settled, we shall excite the suspicion that we dread to have the light of science fall upon the Bible. Nor let it be forgotten how disastrous has ever been the influence of the opinion that theologians teach one thing, and men of science another. Now, in the case under consideration, is there any reason to doubt the high antiquity of the globe, as demonstrated by geology? If any point, not capable of mathematical demonstration in physical science, is proved, surely this truth is established. And how easily reconciled to the inspired record, by an interpretation entirely consistent with the rules of philology, and with the scope of the passage, and the tenor of the Bible! It seems to me far more natural, and easy to understand, than that interpretation which it became necessary to introduce when the Copernican system was demonstrated to be true. The latter must have seemed to conflict strongly with the natural and most obvious meaning of certain passages of the Bible, at a time when men's minds were ignorant of astronomy, and, I may add, of the true mode of interpreting the language of Scripture respecting natural phenomena. Nevertheless, the astronomical exegesis prevailed, and every child can now see its reasonableness. So it seems to me that the child can easily apprehend the geological interpretation and its reasons. Why, then, should it not be taught to children, that they may not be