

“ Shall it any longer be said,” remarks Dr. Buckland, “ that a science which unfolds such abundant evidence of the being and attributes of God, can reasonably be viewed in any other light than as the efficient auxiliary and handmaid of religion? Some few there still may be whom timidity, or prejudice, or want of opportunity, allow not to examine its evidence; who are alarmed by the novelty, or surprised by the magnitude and extent, of the views which geology forces on their attention; and who would rather have kept closed the volume of witness which has been sealed up for ages beneath the surface of the earth than to impose on the student in natural theology the duty of studying its contents; a duty in which, for lack of experience, they may anticipate a hazardous or laborious task, but which, by those engaged in it, is found to be a rational, and righteous, and delightful exercise of the highest faculties in multiplying the evidence of the existence, and attributes, and providence of God. The alarm, however, which was excited by the novelty of its first discoveries, has well nigh passed away; and those to whom it has been permitted to be the humble instruments of their promulgation, and who have steadily persevered, under the firm conviction that ‘ truth can never be opposed to truth,’ and that the works of God, when rightly understood, and viewed in their true relations, and from a right position, would at length be found to be in perfect accordance with his word, are now receiving their high reward in finding difficulties vanish, objections gradually withdrawn, and in seeing the evidences of geology admitted into the list of witnesses to the truth of the great fundamental doctrines of theology.” *Bridgewater Treatise*, vol. i, p. 593.

Such, then, in conclusion of the subject, is the religion of geology. It has been described as a region divided between the barren mountains of scepticism and the putrid fens and quagmires of infidelity and atheism; producing only a gloomy and a poisonous vegetation; covered with fogs, and swept over by pestilential blasts. But this report was made by those who saw it at a distance. We have found it to be a land abounding in rich landscapes, warmed by a bright sun, blest with a balmy atmosphere, covered by noble forests and sweet flowers, with fruits savoury and healthful. We have ascended its lofty mountains, and there have we been greeted with prospects of surpassing loveliness and overwhelming sublimity.