

P R E F A C E.

THE object of "The World before the Deluge" is to trace the progressive steps by which the earth has reached its present state, from that condition of chaos when it "was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep," and to describe the various convulsions and transformations through which it has successively passed. In the words of the poet—

" Where rolls the deep, there grew the tree ;
O Earth, what changes hast thou seen !
There, where the long street roars, hath been
The silence of the central sea."

It has been thought desirable that the present edition of the work should undergo a thorough revision by a practical geologist, a task which Mr. H. W. Bristow has performed. Mr. Bristow has however confined himself to such alterations as were necessary to secure accuracy in the statement of facts, and such additions as were necessary to represent more precisely the existing state of scientific opinion. Many points which are more or less inferential and therefore