

has recently fixed the date of the oldest of them at only 716 years before Christ.

Y. Geologists have sometimes contended that the period of time requisite for the formation of the primitive structure of the earth, argues that the world is much older than the Mosaic account seems to intimate.

T. But Geologists of equal eminence have been of a contrary opinion; and the great differences among those who profess this science, render objections of this kind of little weight. Besides, two things are assumed in the objection without any proof: 1. That the primitive strata were not *created* in their present composite form: 2. That if progressively formed, the processes were always as slow as at present:—neither of which can be proved.

Y. Has not the general *deluge* been objected to?

T. It has; but the whole earth bears testimony to the fact. It is not only preserved in the traditions of all nations, but after all the philosophical arguments which were formerly urged against it, philosophy has at length acknowledged that the present surface of the earth must have been submerged under water. "Not only," says Kirwan, "in every region of Europe, but also of both the old and new continents, immense quantities of marine shells, either dispersed or collected, have been discovered." This and several other facts seem to prove, that at least a great part of the present earth was, before the last general convulsion to which it has been subjected, the bed of an ocean which at that time was withdrawn from it. Other facts seem also to prove with sufficient evidence, that this recession of the waters, which once covered the parts now inhabited by men, was not gradual but *violent*, such as may be supposed from the brief but emphatic relation of Moses. The violent action of water has left its traces in various undisputed phenomena. "Stratified mountains of various heights

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