

V

*Extract from the Review of the Bridgewater Treatise.*

"If there are any lovers of science yet ignorant of the extent and fertility of the field which Geology has laid open—of the intensity and variety of interest by which those who explore it are repaid—here is a work to astonish and delight them. If there are any persons yet deterred from the study of this fascinating science, by the once prevalent notion, that the facts, or theories, if you will, that it teaches, tend to weaken the belief in revealed religion, by their apparent inconsistency with the scriptural account of the creation of the globe,—*here*, in the work of a dignitary of the Church, writing *ex-cathedra*, from the head quarters of orthodoxy, they will find the amplest assurances that their impression is not merely erroneous, but the very reverse of the truth: for that while its discoveries are not in any degree at variance with the correct Interpretation of the Mosaic narrative, there exists no science which can produce more powerful evidence in support of natural religion—none which will be found a more potent auxiliary to revelation, by exalting our conviction of the power, wisdom and goodness of the Creator.

Several hypotheses have been proposed, with a view of reconciling the phenomena of geology, with the brief account of creation which we find in the book of Genesis and others. It has been plausibly stated that the Six Days of Creation must, each of them, be understood to imply, not as now, a single revolution of the globe, but some other cyclic period of unknown extent. Dr. Buckland, however, prefers that explanation which is supported by the high authority of Dr. Pusey, the Regius Professor of Hebrew in Oxford, and has the sanction of Dr. Chalmers, Bishop Gleig, and other eminent contemporary divines,—namely, that the phrase employed in the first verse of Genesis, '*In the beginning* God created the Heaven and the Earth,' may refer to an epoch antecedent to the 'first day,' subsequently spoken of in the fifth verse, and that, during this indefinite interval, comprising perhaps, millions and millions of years, all the physical operations disclosed by geology were going on. Many of the Fathers quoted by Professor Pusey, appear to have thus interpreted the commencement of the sacred history, understanding from it, that a considerable interval took place between the *original creation of the universe*, related in the first verse, and that series of events of which an account is given in the third and following verses.

'Accordingly,' says Professor Pusey, 'in some old editions of the English Bible, where there are no divisions into verses, you actually find a break at the end of what is now the second verse; and in Luther's Bible (Wittenburg, 1557) you have in addition, the figure **1** placed against the third verse, as being the beginning of the account of the creation on the first day. This is just the sort of confirmation which one wished for, because,