

masters of the facts, are qualified to judge of their importance and of their bearing. The subject requires, for full illustration, the study and exhibition of a great mass of facts, either in the fields, mines and mountains, or, as an imperfect substitute, in the cabinet. Persons who are entirely ignorant of this species of information, are destitute of the means of forming a correct judgment on the subject; they can never have acquired the habit of comparing one fact in geology with another, and of thus estimating their relation to each other, and to the entire planet. On the subject of geology, it is, therefore, very difficult to find access, to many minds, otherwise enlightened, and habituated to receive and weigh evidence, with candor and intelligence. The reason obviously is, that they are not in possession of the first elementary conceptions; and when the facts are stated, if they are not denied, they are neglected, because they are inconsistent with previous and habitual impressions; thus they fail to make the impression on the mind which they must always produce, when fully understood and realized.

In a country like this, where the moral feeling of the people is identified with reverence for the scriptures, the questions are often agitated:—When did the great series of geological events happen? If the six days of the creation were insufficient in time, and the events cannot all be referred to a deluge, to what period and to what state of things shall we assign them? This is a fair topic of enquiry, and demands a satisfactory answer. This answer is given by the whole series of geological facts, and the question will never remain of doubtful issue in the mind of any one who has fully studied and mastered them. The subject of geology is possessed of such high interest, that it will not be permitted to slumber; it will proceed with increasing energy and success; a great number of powerful minds and immense research are now employed upon it, and many collateral branches of science are made tributary to its progress. Its conclusions have been supposed to jar with the scripture history: this is contemplated with alarm and displeasure by some, and with satisfaction by a few; but there is no cause for either state of feeling: the supposed disagreement is not real; it is only apparent. It is founded upon the popular mistake, that, excepting the action of a deluge and of ordinary causes still in operation, this world was formed as we now see it, and that all its immense and various deposits were made in a very short period of time. Both these are fundamental errors, which have misled both the learned and the unlearned, and are still extensively prevalent. Although the materials were created by almighty power, they were evidently left