

to their real importance in the boundless universe. It seems impossible to include the fixed stars among those bodies which are said (Gen. i. v. 17.) to have been set in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth; since without the aid of telescopes, by far the greater number of them are invisible. The same principle seems to pervade the description of creation which concerns our planet: the creation of its component matter having been announced in the first verse, the phenomena of Geology, like those of astronomy, are passed over in silence, and the narrative proceeds at once to details of the actual creation which have more immediate reference to man.\*

\* The following observations by Bishop Gleig (though, at the time of writing them, he was not entirely convinced of the reality of facts announced by geological discoveries) show his opinion of the facility of so interpreting the Mosaic account of creation, as to admit of an indefinite lapse of time prior to the existence of the human race.

“ I am indeed strongly inclined to believe that the *matter* of the corporeal universe was all created at once, though different portions of it may have been reduced to *form* at very different periods; *when* the universe was created, or how long the solar system remained in a chaotic state are vain enquiries, to which no answer can be given. Moses records the history of the earth only in its present state; he affirms, indeed, that it was *created*, and that it was without form and void, when the spirit of God began to move on the surface of the fluid mass; but, he does not say how long that mass had been in the state of chaos, or whether it was, or was not the wreck of some former system, which had been inhabited by living creatures of different kinds from those which occupy the present. I say this, not to meet