

physically possible—without calling in the aid of miracles in a case where natural successions are sufficient to account for the facts.

4. *It has been supposed that the succession of geological events may have happened in the first ages of the world, after the creation of man.*

This supposition is wholly irreconcilable with facts. The great series of geological events was inconsistent with the existence of man upon the earth: they precluded even the existence of terrestrial quadrupeds, which both geology and the scripture history assign to a late period in the order of things, the same period in the close of which man himself first appears; they were, until the period immediately preceding, incompatible with the existence of any beings that required more land than amphibious reptiles; and the vast deposits of fossilized and of crystallized rocks that preceded the period of reptiles, demanded an alternate and concomitant prevalence of water on the surface, and of fire beneath, which were entirely hostile to the quiet and firm state of the surface, such as we see it now. Beyond the effects of just such agents as are now in operation, water, temperature, storms, volcanos, earthquakes, &c. we have no reason to suppose that the earth has undergone any very important changes, affecting the integrity of its entire crust, since man appeared in the world.

5. *It has been supposed that a general deluge will account for all the geological events that have been described.*

This view is entirely inadmissible, except as to those superficial ruins which have been already spoken of as diluvial. In geology, without reference to sacred history, a deluge is a sudden rise and overflow of water. It has no exact limit in time, altitude or violence.

The facts revealed by geology demand many partial deluges, and they are admitted by all geologists, with greater or less extent, to account for the transport and deposition of those things which water alone could convey; it is necessary also to suppose, that both fresh and salt water, either by rise of water, or subsidence of land, alternately prevailed and retired after continuing an indefinite period; sufficiently long, however, to give time for the various animals and plants to be deposited and entombed, which we find in successive strata, now marine or littoral, or pelagian, now of fresh water, fluvial, or lacustrine. The rise and subsidence of the land, by subterranean efforts and collapses, arising from igneous action, was the probable cause of these alternate movements.