

are not jumbled confusedly—fresh water productions with salt, land animals with fishes, present with extinct genera or species; but they lie as methodically as the shelves of specimens in a cabinet, being to all appearance successive sedimentary depositions gradually accumulated through a period of very long duration; the footsteps of animals on the once soft moist sand (now hard rock), and the ripple marks of water, being in many cases still visible, and the most delicate and brittle species of shells being unfractured. At the bottom are numerous strata of slate, shell, limestone, and sandstone, containing vegetable and animal sea-water remains now wholly unknown. Over these come sand and clay, interlaid with vast forests of coal, and other land and fresh water productions. Then come limestone, and sandstone, and clay; all containing organic remains quite distinct from those of the former groups. Then come the upper fossiliferous rocks; in which, for the first time, appear land animals; but even these quite distinct from those that now inhabit the world. These ten miles of strata upon strata bear marks of successive changes in the crust of the earth, both by dislocation and gradual accretion, every particle of clay or sand, for example, being so much pulverized rock; and the vast masses of fossiliferous stone, often composed almost entirely of shells, having every appearance of being the sediment at the bottom of oceans for very lengthened periods; how long no man can calculate; but this we know, not through eternal ages, for the very first announcement of Holy Writ is, that God created all things; they were therefore not self-derived or eternal. But to pretend that there is any proof in Holy Writ, that God created them about six thousand years ago, and that to doubt this is infidelity, is to foist the received interpretation in the place of the inspired word, as well as to deal very harshly by our Christian neighbour who thinks otherwise. The geologist only asks a hearing; but he is not heard; he is taunted, declaimed against, and silenced; whilst the infidel stands by and admires the proceedings of the Protestant inquisition, as often as a new Galileo demonstrates a truth which accords not with some received interpretation. 'Let God be true, and every man a liar;' but we are not to lie for God, or, what comes nearly to the same, to refuse to open our eyes to truth, because we are apprehensive, as the Roman Catholics are in regard to transubstantiation, that our senses and our faith will contradict each other. We may feel quite easy on that score; for the more we know of God's works, the more clearly shall we see their accordance with his word; though not, it may be, with some popular comments on it."*

* Baconianus Christianus; in the Christian Observer, March 1839; p. 147.