

and our fathers were on this subject no wiser than ourselves.' ”

We may smile at the ignorance of the inhabitants of the fabled cities, but are we in a condition to give a more satisfactory reply should it be inquired of us, What are the physical changes which the country you inhabit has undergone?—and yet cautious observation, and patient and unprejudiced investigation, are alone necessary to enable us to answer the interrogation.

Dismissing from his mind all preconceived opinions, the student must be prepared to discover that the earth's surface has been, and still is, subject to perpetual mutation,—that the sea and land are continually changing place,—that what is now dry land was once the bottom of the deep, and that the bed of the present ocean will, in its turn, be elevated above the water and become dry land,—that all the solid materials of the globe have been in a softened, fluid, or gaseous state,—and that the remains of countless myriads of animals and plants are not only entombed in the rocks and mountains, but that every grain of sand, and every particle of dust wafted by the wind, may teem with the relics of beings that lived and died in periods long antecedent to the creation of the human race. Astounding as are these propositions, they rest upon evidence so clear and incontrovertible, that they cannot fail to be admitted by every intelligent and unprejudiced reader, who will bestow but a moderate share