

after year, the lower half of the system, — a division more than three thousand feet in thickness, — had failed, though there were hands and eyes busy among its deposits, to yield any vertebrate remains. During the earlier half of the first great period of organic existence, though the polyparia, radiata, articulata, and mollusca, existed, as their remains testified, by myriads, fish had, it was held, not yet entered upon the scene ; and the assertors of the development theory founded largely on the presumed fact of their absence. “ It is still customary,” says the author of the “ Vestiges of Creation,” in his volume of “ Explanations,” “ to speak of the earliest fauna as one of an elevated kind. When rigidly examined, it is not found to be so. IN THE FIRST PLACE, IT CONTAINS NO FISH. There were seas supporting crustacean and molluscan life, but *utterly devoid of a class of tenants who seem able to live in every example of that element which supports meaner creatures.* This single fact, that only invertebrated animals now lived, is surely in itself a strong proof that, in the course of nature, *time* was necessary for the creation of the superior creatures. And if so, it undoubtedly is a powerful evidence of such a theory of development as that which I have presented. If not, let me hear an equally plausible reason for the great and amazing fact, that seas were for numberless ages destitute of fish. I fix my opponents down to the consideration of this fact, so that no diversion respecting high molluscs shall avail them.” And how is this bold challenge to be met ?

Most directly, and after a fashion that at once discomfits the challenger.

It might be rationally enough argued in the case, that the author of the “ Vestiges ” was building greatly more on a piece of purely negative evidence, — the presumed absence